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Patriarch of Bulgaria leads St. Nedelya celebrations in Sofia



On 7 July 2024, the Metropolitan Cathedral “St. Nedelya” in Sofia celebrated its main feast day, dedicated to St. Nedelya the Great Martyr, with great solemnity.

On the eve of this significant day for the citizens of Sofia, the newly elected Bulgarian Patriarch Daniel was welcomed at the cathedral as the patriarch of the Sofia Diocese. Before the liturgy began, dozens of clergy and laity awaited the arrival of the Bulgarian Church’s first hierarch, who was accompanied by Metropolitan Joseph of America, Canada, and Australia, along with other bishops.

The cathedral, crowded and beautifully decorated, observed the festive evening worship in prayerful silence. Worshippers lined up in front of the festal icon of St. Nedelya, bowing in reverence before heading to the hierarchical throne to receive Patriarch Daniel’s blessing.

Following tradition, a procession took place around the Church during Vespers. At the end of the service, Patriarch Daniel delivered his first patriarchal address to the

Sofia congregation. In his homily, he called for overcoming divisions among the Orthodox churches, encouraged clergy to be diligent in their worship and service to God, and invited believers to strive for timeless values that will benefit them in eternal life.

He emphasised the meaning of Christian life and ministry as sanctification and union with Christ. He urged everyone to labour for their salvation and walk towards the Kingdom of God, testifying that sanctification and union with God are achievable today.

His Beatitude highlighted the importance of conscientious, honest, and diligent service, through which the Holy Spirit’s grace flows into human hearts. Patriarch Daniel assured that God’s grace is abundant, but what is scarce is our faith and desire to follow Him. He called on everyone to preserve unity and joyfully unite, take refuge in faith, and testify to all that God is alive and expects repentance and salvation.

Patriarch Daniel thanked all those present for sharing in the joy of the feast. Together with the clergy, he proceeded to the grave of the late Patriarch Neophyte, where a Trisagion (memorial service) was performed, honouring his memory and contributions to the Church.

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