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Patriarch Daniel of Bulgaria: “Let us imitate the life of Saint Marina”



The memory of St. Marina, the Great Martyr, was celebrated with a Patriarchal Divine Liturgy on 17 July 2024 in the Church built in her honour in the courtyard of the Holy Metropolis of Sofia.

The small church in the centre of the city, decorated with fresh flowers, welcomed the faithful early in the morning, despite the busy and hot July day, who came to pay their respect and love to the Christian martyr. They venerated her relic, which was displayed in a shrine outside the church, anointed themselves with blessed oil for health, lit candles, and entered the church to participate in the Divine Liturgy.

His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of Bulgaria entered the Metropolitan Courtyard. The devout community eagerly awaited the arrival of the Patriarch, and each received his first Patriarchal blessing.

The hymns of the Divine Liturgy were sung according to the Eastern Psalmody by Associate Professor Dr. Lyubomir Ignatov, Ivan Tuparov, and Dr. Kalin Kirilov.

Metropolitan Kipriyan of Stara Zagora also prayerfully participated in the Divine Liturgy.

At the end of the liturgy, Patriarch Daniel delivered an inspired pastoral address to the numerous participants, recalling the wonderful life of the beautiful and faithful daughter of faith, Saint Marina. He emphasised the strength of her prayers before God, due to her spiritual and physical purity, and her total surrender to God, having renounced worldly things.

“It is very important not to give our bodies and souls to sin, and with God’s grace to purify them from passions, so that the grace of God truly dwells in us, for which we pray in the Divine Liturgy. Saint Marina achieved this, and her prayer, which comes from her pure soul after a strong spiritual battle, is fervent and rises to the throne of God, for the benefit of us all. Let us imitate her life! Today there are no tortures, but there are trials and difficulties, which, though unjust, if endured with gratitude to God, purify our hearts from doubt, resentment, indifference, complaints against God, trust in material things, and our acquaintance with superior people. If we endure sorrows and difficulties without complaining, without grumbling, then, as the Holy Fathers say, we receive the same martyr’s crown as the martyrs who suffered torture without being guilty, and even prayed for their torturers. In this way, our hearts and souls are purified, and the grace of God fills and sanctifies our bodies. Let us strive for this with the prayers of Saint Marina!” – His Beatitude wished and gave his first patriarchal blessing to the large congregation.

Text and photos by Vesela Ignatova
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