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Exhumation of St Sofian’s relics: The time has come for the Lord’s chosen ones to be moved from the cemetery to the church



On Monday morning, Assistant Bishop Timotei of Prahova officiated the exhumation service of the holy relics of Saint Sofian of St Anthimos Monastery at Căldărușani Monastery near Bucharest.

The venerable relics were placed in the cemetery church for a specific service before being transported to St Anthimos Monastery.

“A specific rite was observed for such a moment, with prayers that, on the one hand, ask for the forgiveness of the sins of the one who is exhumed and, on the other hand, for the sharing of the unspeakable joy of the Lord,” explained the Assistant Bishop of the Archdiocese of Bucharest.

“Elder Sofian, though he served for a long time in the city of Bucharest, chose this place with an ancient monastic order, where monks, hierarchs, and many saints

have passed throughout the history of this well-known monastery."

"The time has come for the Lord's chosen ones to be moved from the cemetery to the church and to be a source of joy and a model for the faithful, just as he was during his life. Father Sofian endeavoured to show his disciples, whether they were residents of St Anthimos Monastery, intellectual believers of Bucharest, or hierarchs, cultural figures, writers, and educated people who met him, speaking to them all about the joy of meeting the Saviour Jesus Christ."

Known as the "Spiritual father of Bucharest," he was born on October 7, 1912, in Cuconeștii Vechi, Bălți County, in Bessarabia. He entered the monastic life at Dobrușa Monastery and crossed the Prut River into Romania after the Soviet occupation of Bessarabia.

He led the community at St Anthimos Monastery in the capital and was sentenced to hard labour along with intellectuals and clerics from the "Burning Bush" hesychast movement. He reposed in the Lord on September 14, 2002.

The exhumation was conducted ahead of time to adhere to Church regulations concerning the preparation of holy relics. Specifically, previous experiences related to the canonization of saints from the Archdiocese of Bucharest were considered.

This exhumation aimed to properly prepare the relics for placement in the silver reliquary currently being crafted at the Romanian Patriarchate's workshops in preparation for the canonization proclamation at the beginning of 2025.

The Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church decided on his canonization during sessions held on July 11-12, 2024, along with 15 other venerable and confessor saints. The canonization proclamations will occur in 2025, marking the Romanian Patriarchate's centennial.

On the same day, the relics of Saint Dumitru Stăniloae were also exhumed.


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