

Patriarch of Bulgaria leads memorial service for late Metropolitan Nathanael of Nevrokop



The memory of Metropolitan Nathanael of Nevrokop brought together clergy and Orthodox Christians on the final day of celebrations for the 130th anniversary of the founding of the Nevrokop Diocese. His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of Bulgaria, presided over the Divine Liturgy and conducted a memorial service in honour of the late spiritual leader of the diocese.

“We gather today to remember and seek the blessing of the ever-memorable Metropolitan Nathanael of Nevrokop, our spiritual father, a guide in faith and spiritual life,” said Patriarch Daniel in his address. He spoke about the efforts of Metropolitan Nathanael to secure recognition of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church during the schism of 1992–2004, a time when church authorities faced significant challenges. “Many hierarchs of the Holy Synod worked tirelessly to elevate the Church’s standing, but Nathanael’s efforts were particularly notable,” he added.

Patriarch Daniel further reflected on Metropolitan Nathanael’s unwavering faith and

dedication, his prayers, and teachings, which encouraged all to prioritize Christ-centered lives. He expressed gratitude for the blessing of having served under Nathanael's leadership.

Patriarch Daniel was joined by Metropolitan Gregory of Peristeri from the Church of Greece, Metropolitan Seraphim of Nevrokop, Metropolitan Naum of Strumica, from the Ohrid Archdiocese, Metropolitan Gregory of Vratsa and other bishops and clergy, with hymns performed by the Hieromonk Neofit Rilski Choir.

Metropolitan Gregory of Peristeri shared personal memories of Metropolitan Nathanael's dedication to the unity of the Orthodox Church. "He often reminded us that we are all from the same lineage and called to build the body of Christ together," said Metropolitan Gregory, recalling Metropolitan Nathanael's advocacy for the canonical Church during the schism.

Metropolitan Seraphim of Nevrokop thanked Patriarch Daniel and all attendees for commemorating the diocese's anniversary and honouring Metropolitan Nathanael's memory. "Saying 'thank you' is not enough to express the gratitude we feel. Nathanael's legacy continues, and his memory truly blesses us," he concluded.

The three-day commemorations, which included a memorial service at Metropolitan Nathanael's grave, marked a heartfelt tribute to the Nevrokop Diocese, an enduring spiritual foundation that has nurtured devout clergy and faithful Christians serving both in Bulgaria and abroad.

Photographs: Angel Karadakov





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