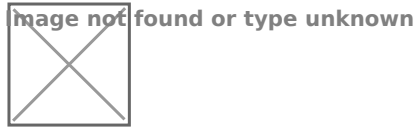


## Mother's tragedy inspires new Orthodox addiction center blessed in Iași by Metropolitan Teofan



Metropolitan Teofan of Moldova and Bukovina blessed the “Maximilian” Orthodox Addiction Recovery Center, inaugurated last Monday in Iași, Romania, as a ministry of the city’s “St. Basil the Great” Parish. It was inspired by the tragic story of a young addict.

The project has been realised with the support of the Archdiocese of Iași, in collaboration with specialists from Romania and abroad with extensive experience in treating addictions.

The blessing was preceded by the Divine Liturgy celebrated by Metropolitan Teofan.

God gives us strength

“Brothers and sisters, with fear and trembling let us work out our salvation, but we are weak, as you know very well, we are addicted to all kinds of sins, and attitudes, and we do not have the strength in ourselves to rise up,” His Eminence said.

“But this is what Holy Apostle Paul says after he testifies and exhorts men: Brothers, with fear and trembling let us work out our salvation. He says that God gives us both the power to will and the power to do afterwards, that is to say, St Paul knows very well that we are weak and by our strength, we cannot rise, we cannot have the will, much less the power to accomplish, but the man who opens himself a little to God’s help receives from Him both the power to will and the power to fight.”

“May this also be fulfilled here, in a care centre that is opening today, a preamble to a more sustained program that we hope, with the Lord’s help, to accomplish one day,” concluded the Metropolitan.

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As a sign of gratitude for their support in creating the centre, Dr Beatrice Herrman and Frantz Floyd, an addiction specialist with Orthodox Christian Mission Centre in Florida, US, were granted the Moldovan Cross, a distinction of the Metropolis of Moldova and Bukovina.

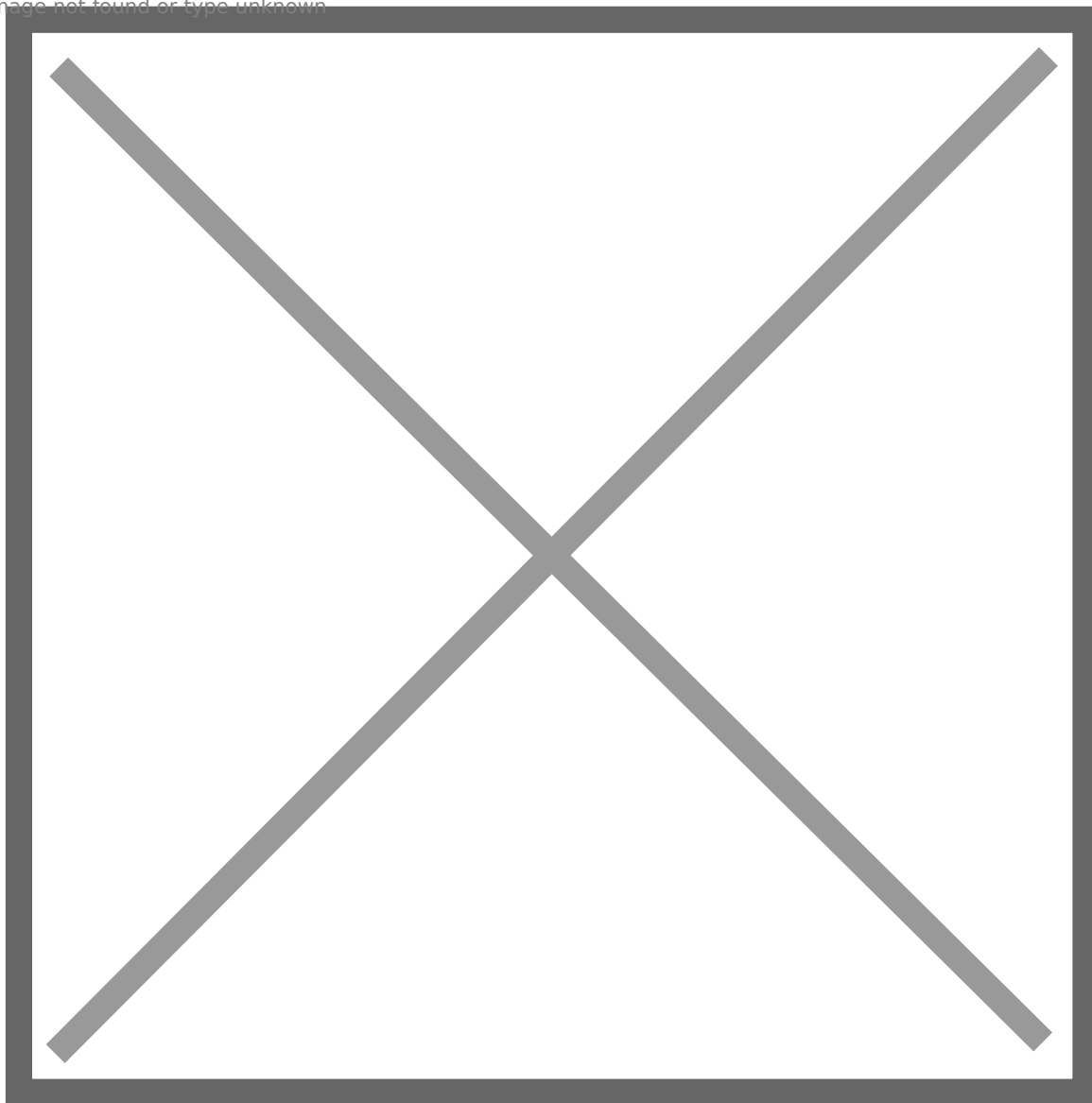
Father Iulian Negru, psychotherapist and addiction counsellor, was granted Holy Hierarch Iosif the Merciful's Cross.

Behind every addiction is a trauma

"We try to address various addictions, not only alcohol or drug addictions, but also behavioural addictions, gambling addiction – which is on a meteoric rise, even codependence, because the whole family suffers around an addict," declared Father Iulian Negru for [Doxologia.ro](http://Doxologia.ro).

"It is said that where there is one addict, there are at least four coaddicts, who have specific manifestations, and addiction is a family disease. Unless the whole family environment is healed, the addict will find it difficult to recover and may even be dragged down by those in the home."

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***A parish in Iași, Romania, created the “Maximilian” Orthodox Addiction Recovery Centre. Foto: Doxologia.ro / Flavius Popa***

“As with all other things, sickness brings along the humbling of your mind, as you realize you are powerless. This is why we consider addiction as a disease and we want this centre to be not just a social centre, but a place of holistic healing, because this aspect is very important. Addiction is just the tip of the iceberg, it is not a problem in itself, but a symptom of the real problems which, most of the time, if not in all cases, are spiritual”, added the priest.

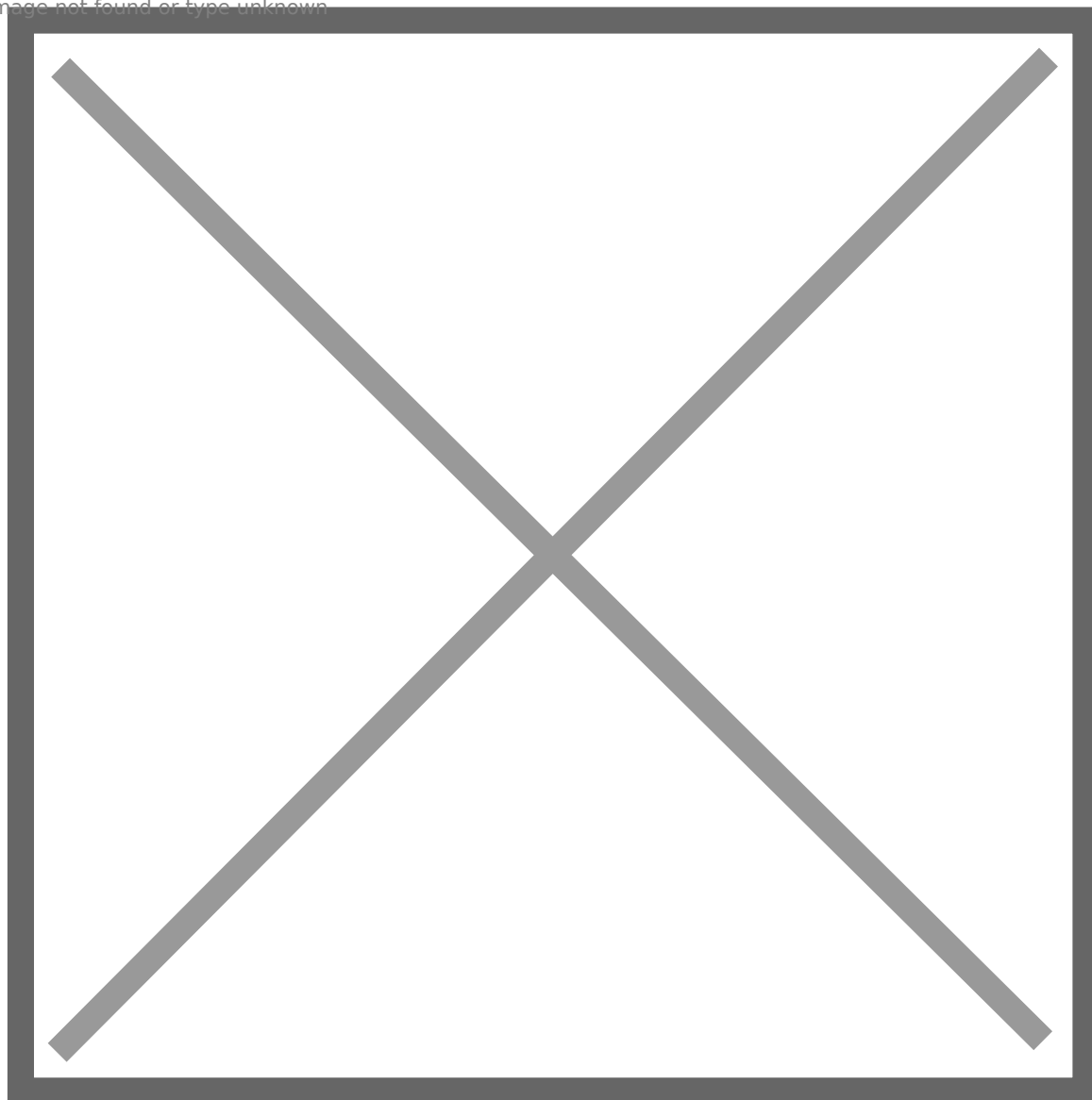
“There are many traumas, wounds, behind every addiction is a trauma. One cannot stop consuming psychoactive substances unless the trauma that causes the need for anaesthesia is healed.”

“Alcohol, drugs and all the addictions you can imagine are nothing more than forms

of anaesthesia, numbing or escape from these states, which are spiritual or emotional. We do an anamnesis, to identify the cause, so that the patient no longer needs to resort to them”, Father Iulian Negru explained.

“Maximilian healed my selfishness”

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***Dr. Beatrice Herrmann from Switzerland contributed to the establishment of the centre in loving memory of her son, Maximilian, who lost his life after an overdose. Photo: Doxologia.ro / Flavius Popa***

The “Maximilian” Orthodox Addiction Recovery Centre was set up with substantial support from Dr Beatrice Herrmann from Switzerland, who decided to fight addiction after she lost her 26-year-old son to an overdose.

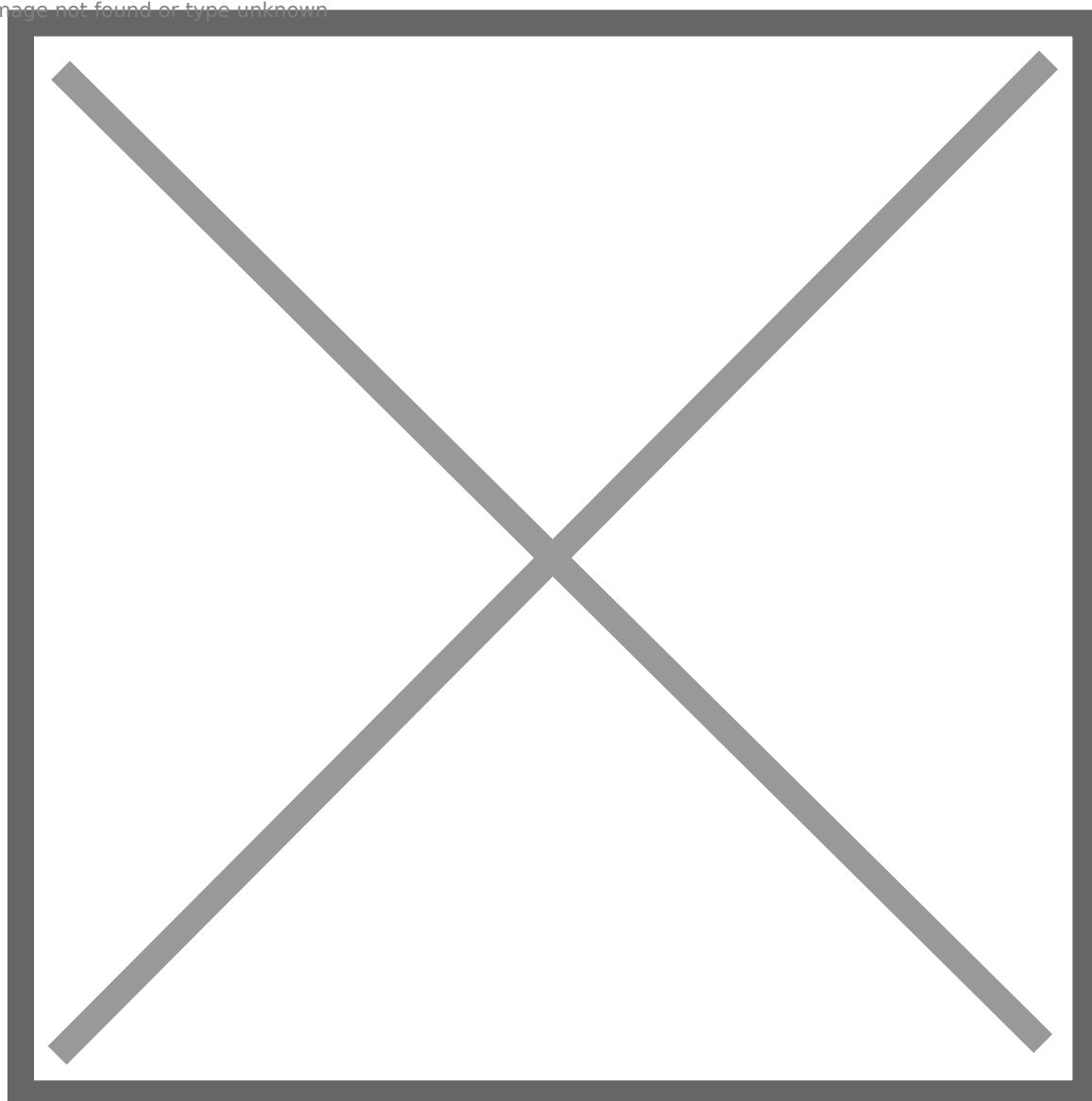
“I owe my presence here to my son, Maximilian, who passed away to the Lord a year and a half ago, being sick. Without Maximilian’s journey through life, I would not have got to know Father Julian, I would not have got to know this wonderful

mission that he has been carrying out for over 20 years and I would not have get involved,” said Dr Beatrice Herrmann.

“Maximilian, by his illness and his sacrifice, cured me with the help of the Good Lord. He healed my selfishness and made me realise that the plans we have in life are often selfish.”

“Going through a great pain, a great loss, our souls heal in love, and I learnt this from Maximilian, from my son. He went away and, without words, left me this mission: If you loved me so much that you would have given your life for me, now it is your turn to do it for others”, Beatrice Herrman said.

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***The centre offers both daycare and residential care. Photo: Doxologia.ro / Flavius Popa***

The centre has 8 beds for residential care, but it also functions on a daycare basis.

It is located in Iași, on 40 Vasile Lupu St and it will offer treatment and support for people afflicted by addictions – including alcohol addiction, gambling addiction, drug addiction and other addictions. It is part of a wider addiction counselling and treatment programme of the Archdiocese of Iași.

Photo credit: Doxologia.ro / Flavius Popa

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