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Patriarch Daniel marks 35 years of episcopal ministry in the Romanian Orthodox Church



On Tuesday, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of the Romanian Orthodox Church celebrates 35 years since his episcopal ordination.

He was ordained as an Assistant Bishop of the Archdiocese of Timișoara at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Timișoara on March 4, 1990, shortly after the fall of communism.

Early Life and Education
Born in Dobrești, Timiș County, in 1951, Patriarch Daniel is the third child of the Ciobotea family.

He earned a degree in Theology from the Orthodox Theological Institute in Sibiu in 1974 and pursued doctoral studies under the guidance of Saint Dumitru Stăniloae. He furthered his studies at the universities of Strasbourg (France) and Freiburg im Breisgau (Germany).

His doctoral thesis, Christian Reflection and Life Today: An Essay on the Relationship Between Theology and Spirituality, was defended at both the University of Strasbourg (1979) and the Orthodox Theological Institute in Bucharest (1980).

Currently, His Beatitude is a professor at the “Patriarch Justinian” Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Bucharest.

Monastic Life and Theological Leadership

In 1987, Patriarch Daniel embraced monasticism at Sihăstria Monastery in Neamț County, with Saint Cleopas of Sihăstria as his spiritual godfather. That same year, he was ordained as a hierodeacon and later as a hieromonk.

In 1988, he was elevated to the rank of protosyncellus and appointed a Patriarchal Counselor, serving as Director of the Department for Contemporary Theology and Ecumenical Dialogue, while also lecturing at the Orthodox Theological Institute in Bucharest.

On June 7, 1990, he was elected Metropolitan of Moldavia and Bukovina, where he initiated several significant projects.

Institutional Growth and Outreach

During his tenure, he established the Providența (Providence) Diagnostic and Treatment Center in Iași, which became the first church-affiliated hospital accredited by the Ministry of Health in 2008. He also founded Ziarul Lumina (The Light Newspaper) and Radio Trinitas, expanding the Church’s media presence.

On September 12, 2007, he was elected Archbishop of Bucharest, Metropolitan of Muntenia and Dobruja, and Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, being enthroned on September 30, 2007, at the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest.

As Patriarch, he further strengthened Orthodox media institutions, establishing Trinitas TV and the Basilica News Agency, transforming the Iași-based newspaper and radio station into official communication channels of the Romanian Patriarchate under the Basilica Media Center.

Another major focus of his tenure has been expanding the Church’s mission in the

Romanian diaspora, particularly after Romania's accession to the European Union—the same year he became Patriarch.

The National Cathedral and Canonizations

One of Patriarch Daniel's most defining legacies is the construction of the National Cathedral, a dream of many generations that was delayed by a world war and then suppressed by communist atheism.

Also known as the Romanian People's Salvation Cathedral, it stands on Arsenal Hill in Bucharest, behind the Parliament Palace. This monumental church is dedicated to the sacrifices of generations of Romanians who preserved their Orthodox faith, national identity, and communion with the other Sister Churches.

Leadership in the Light of Providence

Reflecting on his 35-year ministry, Archbishop Timotei of Arad—the only living bishop who participated in Patriarch Daniel's episcopal ordination—praised his leadership.

"He has focused on everything constructive and representative for the Church and society, ensuring that Romania's history and identity are upheld with dignity," said Archbishop Timotei.

Patriarch Daniel's tenure coincided with the Centennial of the Romanian Patriarchate, during which two of his spiritual mentors were canonized—an event that reaffirmed the faithful's confidence that God's providence guides their national Church.

At the same time, he has emphasized the need for Romanians to rediscover God's will in their own lives and to be more attentive to the needs of their neighbors, rebuilding their nation as a strong, united community.

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