

Patriarch Daniel: Faith endured among Romanians through deep-rooted Orthodox tradition, nearly 200 Saints canonized



On the second Sunday after Pentecost, when all Romanian Saints are remembered, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of the Romanian Orthodox Church emphasized the spiritual unity of all Romanian saints—whether canonized or not—and explained why faith has endured so deeply among Romanians.

First, the Patriarch noted that the Romanian people were Christianized gradually, together with their formation as a people.

“The Romanian people were not Christianized in a specific year, by the order of a prince, king, or emperor, as was the case with some neighboring peoples—such as the Bulgarians or the Russians,” he said.

How Faith Endured Among Romanians

The Christianization of the Romanians took place slowly, from the bottom up, beginning with simple people and Christian soldiers from the Roman legions who came to Dacia. Then, through the work of Christian missionaries, especially Greek—and Latin-speaking ones, the Patriarch of Romania noted.

“The Christianity received and cultivated by the Romanian people, while this people was being formed as a new people in history from the Romanized Geto-Dacians, is an Orthodox, Eastern, Latin Christianity, with deep roots in the soul of the Romanian people. That is why it endured during the invasions of migratory peoples such as the Goths, Huns, Gepids, Avars, Slavs, Bulgars, Pechenegs, Cumans, Tatars, and Turks, as well as during many later religious and ideological proselytizing pressures.”

The Communion of Romanian Saints

“Today we commemorate the communion of the Romanian saints—namely, the holy hierarchs, priests, and deacons; the holy martyrs and confessors; the holy monks and nuns from monasteries, sketes, and hermitages; the rulers and Romanian soldiers who defended the homeland and the faith; and the multitude of

saintly lay faithful, men and women, known and unknown by name, who fasted much and prayed much, who confessed the faith in difficult times, built churches and monasteries, bore, raised, and educated children in the love of Christ and in the love of His Church and our nation.”

Through the Romanian saints, the Patriarch continued, “Our people have in heaven more intercessors or supplicants for them before the Most Holy Trinity, so that they may keep the Orthodox faith, pass it on to future generations, cultivate holiness of life and works of merciful love.”

Almost 200 Romanian Saints

His Beatitude noted that in the Romanian Orthodox Church’s calendar, there is not a single month without the commemoration of at least one Romanian saint.

“But today, on the Sunday of Romanian Saints, all Romanian saints are commemorated together—those known or canonized by the Church and those unknown by name to people, but whom God knows are saints.”

“It should be remembered that almost 200 Romanian saints have been added to the calendar to date.”

Patriarch Daniel stated that others will be added to the sixteen saints proclaimed on the Centennial of the Romanian Patriarchate.

“In the autumn, we will also have four Romanian saints from Mount Athos, Athonite hesychasts, whose inclusion in the calendar is decided by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, since they ended their earthly lives on the canonical territory of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in the Holy Mount Athos. And for the coming year, canonizations are planned for several holy women, who over the centuries in the Romanian people showed Orthodox faith and lived in prayer, in pure life, and in love for the Church and the nation.”

In the second part of his address, the Patriarch specifically referred to Saint Gregory the Teacher, Metropolitan of Wallachia, whose feast day this year coincided with the Sunday of Romanian Saints.

His Beatitude said that this saint “remained in the memory of the Church as a hardworking, worthy, humble, and very wise hierarch.”

Because of his pure life and his many missionary activities—especially organized through the translation of patristic works—Metropolitan Gregory the Teacher was canonized in 2005 by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

The Patriarch of Romania participated Sunday in the Divine Liturgy at the historic Chapel of the Great Martyr George of the Patriarchal Residence.

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