

Five nuns tonsured at Cășiel Monastery



On the day that the Orthodox Church commemorates the Elevation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross, five nuns of Cășiel Monastery in Valea Cășielului in northern Romania bravely took up their own crosses, offering their monastic vows.

The rite of tonsuring was celebrated by His Eminence Metropolitan Andrei of Cluj following the Vigil on the eve of the feast on September 13. The monastery is also dedicated to the Holy Cross.

In receiving the monastic tonsure, the candidates renounced their own will, taking the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and receiving a new monastic name, along with the pectoral cross, prayer rope, and mantia, and other monastic garments.

The new nuns received the names Parascheva, Anatolia, Mina, Paisia, and Antonia.

The novice Sister Mihaela was also tonsured as a riassaphore nun, which does not include the monastic vows.

Met. Andrei celebrated the Liturgy for the feast the next day at the summer altar. "You can't be a true Christian if you don't love, you don't honour the Holy Cross," he said in his homily.

"It is our identity sign. We must not be ashamed to make the Sign of the Holy Cross wherever we find ourselves ... because we confess our belonging to the Christian world," His Eminence added.

Căşiel Monastery was founded in 1765 by Monk Pahomie Georgiu. The wooden church, today recognized as a historical monument, dates to the 18th century. The monastery had no monks from 1863 to 1956, serving as a village church during this time.

The first group of nuns was gathered in 1956 by Archbishop Justinian (Chira), but they were forced to leave 3 years later when the communist authorities closed the monastery. The church again served as a village church for more than 30 years.

The Holy Synod of the Romanian Church approved the reestablishment of the Căşiel Monastery of the Holy Cross in 1991, and in 1994, the chapel of the Annunciation was consecrated.

There are currently 30 nuns labouring at the monastery, led by Abbess Barbara (Georgiu) and their spiritual father, Fr. Seraphim Bădilă.

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