

The National Cathedral's bronze doors: Over 50 Saints depicted



The entrance to the National Cathedral in Bucharest is made possible through 27 bronze doors depicting our Saviour Jesus Christ, the Mother of God, the Holy Apostles, as well as several Romanian saints.

The doors are a distinctive feature of the church; each weighs approximately 800 kilograms and is operated by an automatic opening and closing system.

For the solemn consecration on October 26, brochures have been prepared to help the faithful better understand the symbolism of the elements of the National Cathedral of Romania.

Please find below the French, Italian and Greek translations of the text.

The bronze doors of the National Cathedral

Entrance into the Romanian People's Salvation Cathedral is made through a series of monumental gates that are not merely access points, but symbolically mark the crossing from the profane to the sacred, from earth to heaven.

Ascending the steps towards the entrance of the National Cathedral, we are

greeted – upon the main doors – by the Mother of God and by our Saviour Jesus Christ. To the left and right of the main doors are three other doors, each depicting two of the Twelve Apostles of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Saint Andrew the Apostle is placed next to the Mother of God, as he is the Protector of Romania and the second patron saint of the National Cathedral (the principal patronal feast is the Ascension of the Lord).

The iconographic programme continues on all sides of the holy edifice, with over 20 Romanian Saints and 7 Daco-Roman Saints, including hierarchs, martyrs, and venerable monastics.

In this way is fulfilled the vision of His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel, who stated in 2017 that this Cathedral is truly “the Cathedral of the Romanian Saints of all times and from all regions of the country.”

The saints are arranged as follows:

Principal Entrance Doors

- Right: Our Lord Jesus Christ
- Left: The Mother of God

In the proximity of the main entrance (on the façade)

- Right: The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, Philip and Matthew, Thomas and Bartholomew
- Left: The Holy Apostles Andrew and John, Simon and James, Jude Thaddeus and James the son of Alphaeus

Narthex

- Right: Saint John Jacob of Neamț and Saint George the Trophy-bearer; Saints Photios the Great and Niphon, Patriarchs of Constantinople; Saints Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Nicholas; Saint Hyacinthus of Vicina and Saint Bretanion of Tomis
- Left: Saints Theodora of Sihla and Paraskeva of Iași; Saints Callinicus of Cernica and Joseph the New of Partoș; Saints Anthimos of Iberia and Gregory the Teacher; Saints Simeon Stephen and Andrew Șaguna; Saints Barlaam and Dositheus of Moldavia

Nave

- Right: The Holy Brâncoveanu Martyrs; Saints Montanus and Maxima, Martyrs;

Saints Paisius of Neamț and Nicodemus of Tismana; Saints Germanus of Dobruja and John Cassian

- Left: Saints Theotimus and Ephrem of Tomis; Saints John the Wallachian and John the New of Suceava, Martyrs; Saints Parthenius and Raphael of Agapia; Saint Sophronius of Cioara, Martyr, and Saint Bessarion Sarai, Venerable Confessor

Altar

- Right: Saint Theoctistus and Saint Peter Mogila, Metropolitan of Kyiv
- Left: Saint Stephen the Great, Prince of Moldavia, and Saint Daniel the Hesychast

Beyond their spiritual beauty, the 27 bronze doors, crafted by the German company Strassacker, conceal a complex security system designed to safeguard the approximately 5,000 people that the Cathedral can accommodate.

The system is monitored from three distinct command rooms and is fully integrated into the Building Management System (BMS).

In the event of a fire, the system is programmed to simultaneously open all 54 door panels. This coordinated action ensures not only the rapid evacuation of people but also the expulsion of smoke.

Each door panel weighs around 800 kilograms. To prevent accidents, the opening is continuously monitored, and a magnetic braking system controls the uncontrolled acceleration of the doors.

The doors are connected both to the main electrical grid and to a backup generator. Should the main supply fail, the generator automatically starts, ensuring uninterrupted operation of the safety system.

The more than 50 saints, sculpted upon each bronze door, stand as steadfast guardians watching over the National Cathedral — silent, yet no less present witnesses to the holiness of this place, the Church of Christ, the dwelling place of the Most Holy Trinity.

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