31/10/2025

Romania marks Day of Military Clergy at National Cathedral, highlighting enduring bond between Church and Army



The Day of the Military Clergy in Romania was celebrated on Thursday at the National Cathedral with a Te Deum service officiated by His Grace Patriarchal Auxiliary Bishop Varlaam of Ploiești.

The event was attended by the Minister of National Defence, members of the Royal Family, the Chief of the General Staff, all military chaplains, and other guests.

In his address, Bishop Varlaam emphasised the historic bond between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Army, a relationship that has been strengthened over the centuries.

“Today we honour the Military Clergy, which this year celebrates 175 years since its institutional organisation. Of course, priests have stood beside the Army since the time of Saint Emperor Constantine the Great, who, after his visions at the gates

of Rome in the year 312, called the bishops of the Church to him — they prepared him, introduced him to the mysteries of the Christian faith, and his army became a Christian army, bearing the victorious sign of the Cross of our Savior Jesus Christ on its banner.”

“Since the founding of the Romanian principalities, both the rulers and the soldiers of the national army have always had beside them the servants of the Church, whose holy calling was to encourage those who fought under the national flag, to hear their confessions, to prepare and strengthen them before battles, and to commemorate those who made the supreme sacrifice on the battlefields,” explained Bishop Varlaam of Ploiești.



Saint Demetrius, Protector of Military Chaplains
His Grace Bishop Varlaam noted that the Army is spiritually linked to Orthodoxy through its patron saints, and that as of today, the Military Clergy has received Saint Demetrius the Myrrh-Gusher as its heavenly protector.

Bishop Varlaam also presented the Romanian Armed Forces’ Military Chaplains with an icon of Saint Demetrius the Great-Martyr, a gift from His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel.

“I also have the blessing to offer, on behalf of His Beatitude, this icon representing Saint Demetrius the Great Martyr, who has been received as protector by the military clergy. The Mother of God is the patron of the Navy, Saint Elijah the

Prophet is the protector of the Air Force, and Saint George the Great Martyr is the protector of the Land Forces," Bishop Varlaam added.

The Patriarchal Auxiliary Bishop wished the Romanian Army wisdom and discernment:

"May you take the wisest and most beneficial decisions for yourselves and for the entire Romanian nation."

"I congratulate you on this special occasion — being the first institution to participate in such a significant event at the National Cathedral after its consecration. This shows why the two institutions, the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Romanian Army, enjoy the highest level of trust among the Romanian people," concluded Bishop Varlaam of Ploiești.



The Church and the Army in Communion

On behalf of the Romanian Armed Forces, General Gheorghiță Vlad, Chief of the Defence Staff, stated that the event was "a living symbol of the communion between the Army and the Church, as well as of our national unity."

According to General Gheorghiță, celebrating the Day of the Military Clergy at the National Cathedral is clear evidence that the Church and the Army share a common mission.

“The celebration of the Military Clergy’s Day in this sacred place, in the presence of all the military chaplains from across the country, of the Patriarchate’s representatives, and of the thousands of soldiers gathered here, is living testimony that the Church and the Army have a shared calling,” the Chief of the Defence Staff explained.

General Gheorghiță expressed his hope that “the bond between the Church and the Army, strengthened through the mission of the Military Chaplains, will remain just as strong and fruitful in the service of the homeland.”

The Day of the Military Clergy was established by the Romanian Orthodox Church and is celebrated on October 26, following the Holy Synod’s decision in July 2025.

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