23/01/2026

Feast of St. Anastasius the Persian and Commemoration of Late Archbishop Anastasios in Tirana



On Thursday, 22 January 2026, the Church of the Annunciation in Tirana solemnly celebrated the feast of Saint Anastasius the Persian, one of the illustrious martyrs of the Orthodox Church and an unwavering witness to the Christian faith in the 7th century.

This sacred day held particular spiritual and historical significance for the Orthodox faithful of Albania, as it also coincided with the name day and commemoration of the late Archbishop of Tirana, Durrës and All Albania, Anastasios (1929–2025).

The divine services were presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Astios of Berat, who led both the festive Divine Liturgy and the memorial service in remembrance of the late Archbishop Anastasios. Also present at the sacred services was His Beatitude Archbishop Ioannis of Tirana, Durrës and All Albania, who joined the clergy and faithful in prayer.

The homily was delivered by Archpriest Harallamb Gjoka, Grand Oikonomos of the Church, who reflected on the life and martyrdom of Saint Anastasius the Persian. He presented the saint as a powerful example of radical conversion to Christ, profound repentance, and complete self-sacrifice, placing his martyrdom within the historical context of the clash between Christian faith and the ideological powers of his time.

In a particularly moving moment, Fr. Harallamb drew a spiritual parallel between Saint Anastasius the Persian and the blessed Archbishop Anastasios. He emphasised that, although expressed through different historical forms, both bore the same martyrial ethos: one through the shedding of blood, the other through daily, arduous, and silent self-offering for the restoration of the Church in a post-persecution reality.

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