

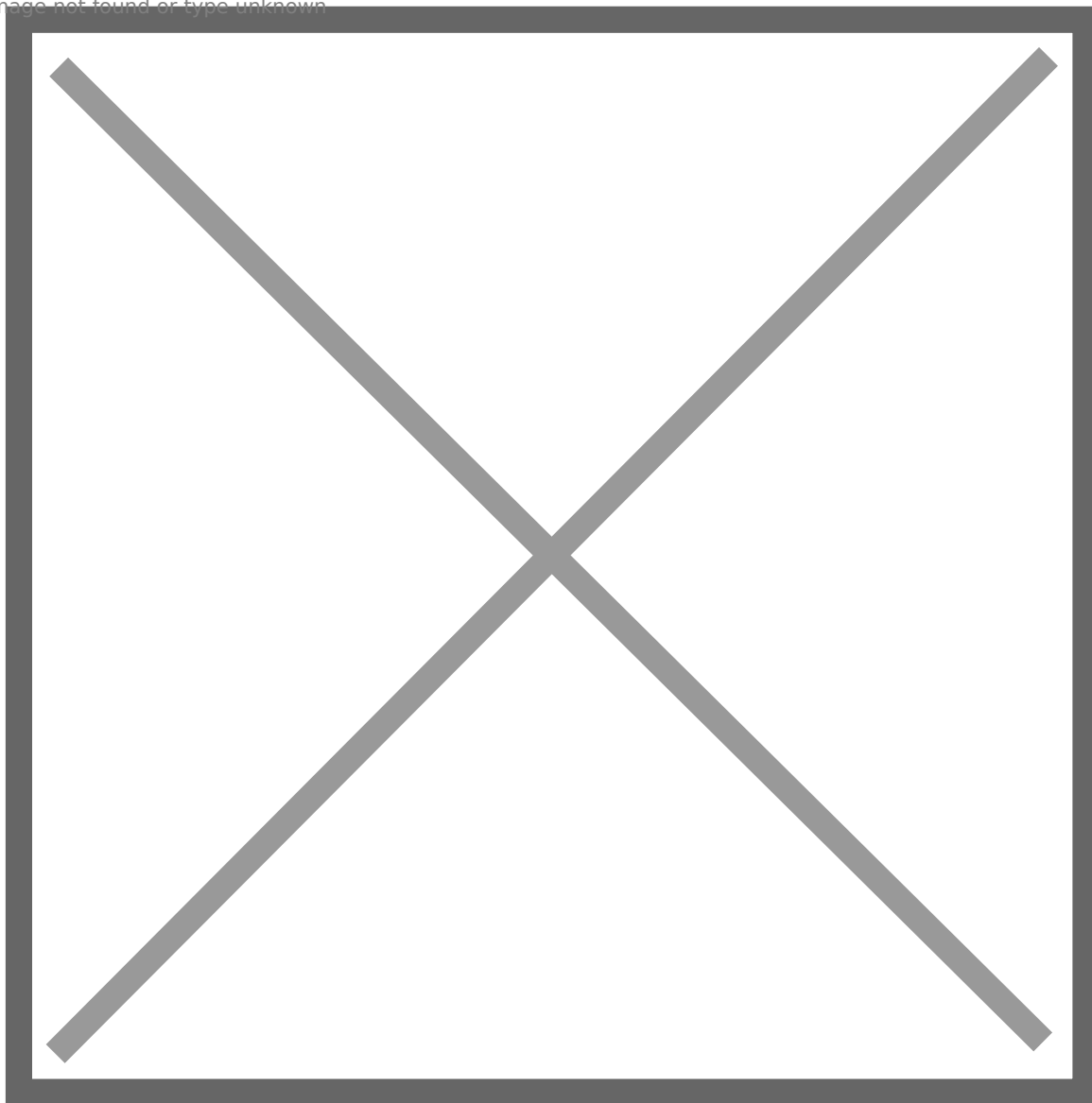
Patriarch Daniel thanks Orthodox youth for 'pilgrimage of joy and peace' through Bucharest



“Dear young people, we thank you for the beautiful Procession of Lights you held this evening from the National Cathedral to the historic Patriarchal Cathedral. It was a pilgrimage of joy and peace,” His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel told young participants in the 2026 International Meeting of Orthodox Youth (ITO 2026) on Wednesday evening, after they completed the procession between the two cathedrals.

Several hierarchs joined the young people for the procession and the moment of prayer at the historic Patriarchal Cathedral: Metropolitan Agathonikos of Arusha and Central Tanzania of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa; Bishop Macarie of Northern Europe; Patriarchal Auxiliary Bishops Varlaam of Ploiești and Paisie of Sinaia; and Assistant Bishop Timotei of Prahova of the Archdiocese of Bucharest.

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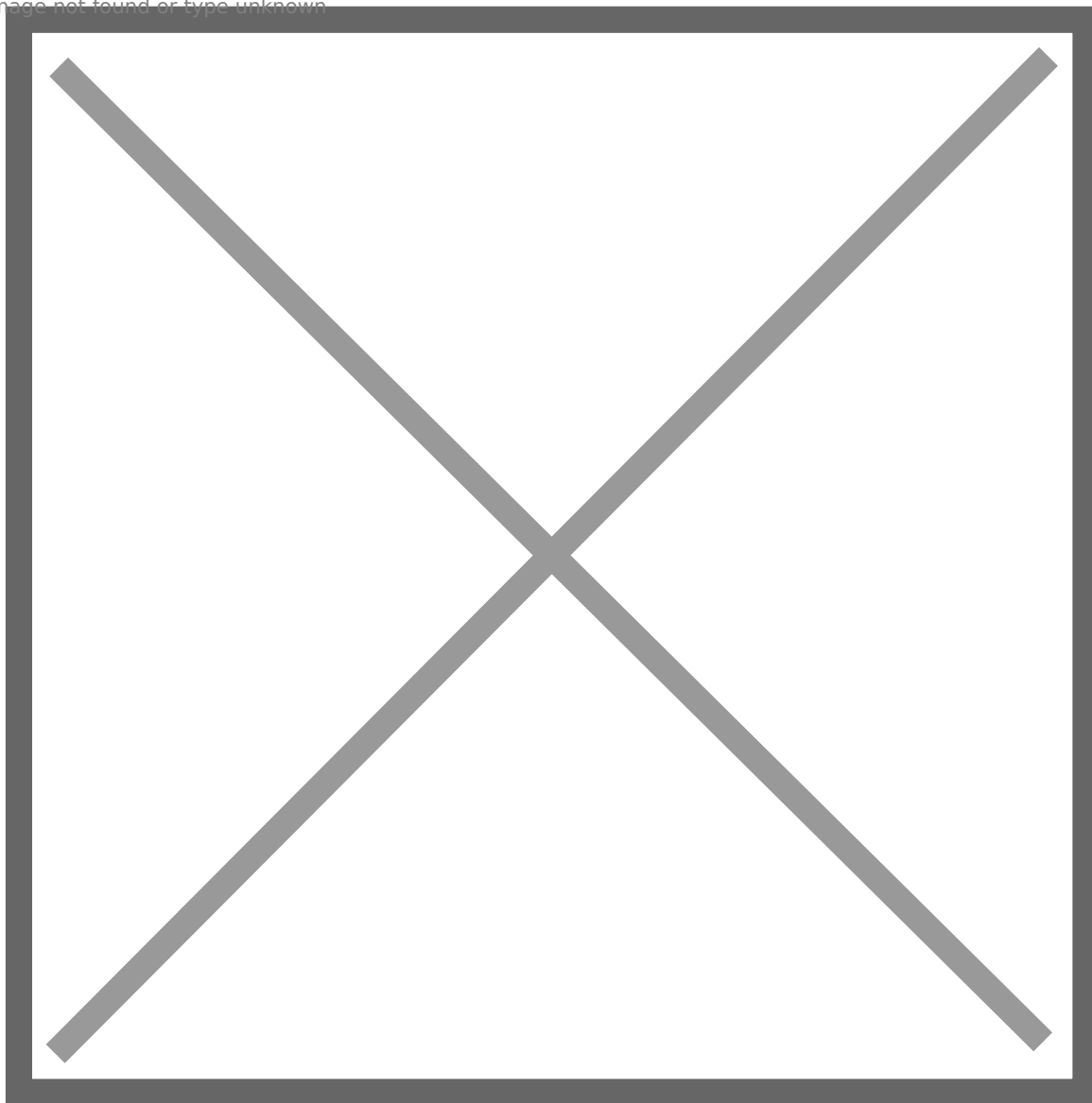


The ITO events on Wednesday, September 2, 2026, concluded with the Procession of Lights, in which 2,400 participants walked the route from the National Cathedral to the historic Patriarchal Cathedral. Photo: BASILICA / Mircea Florescu

Following a spiritual dialogue with Bishop Macarie and a presentation by Patriarchal Adviser Fr Florin Marica of the Romanian Patriarchate's most important national youth project, the 2,400 participants in ITO 2026 set out carrying candles and flags along Izvor Street, Calea 13 Septembrie, Libertății Boulevard, Constitution Square, Unirii Boulevard, the western side of Unirii Square and the Hill of Joy.

Prayer for young people

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At the Patriarchal Cathedral, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel welcomed the participants and recited a prayer composed especially for this moment. Photo: BASILICA / Mircea Florescu

A short prayer composed especially for the event was offered on the esplanade of the historic Patriarchal Cathedral. It concluded with the following petitions read by the Patriarch of Romania:

“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Heavenly Father, who looked with love upon the young man who asked You, ‘What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?’, You who raised from the dead the son of the widow of Nain, the daughter of Jairus and Your friend Lazarus, bless with Your grace and Your love all the participants in this International Meeting of Orthodox Youth, protecting them by Your name and marking them with the sign of Your Cross.

“Guide, O Lord, their youth and illumine with Your holy light the lives of the young

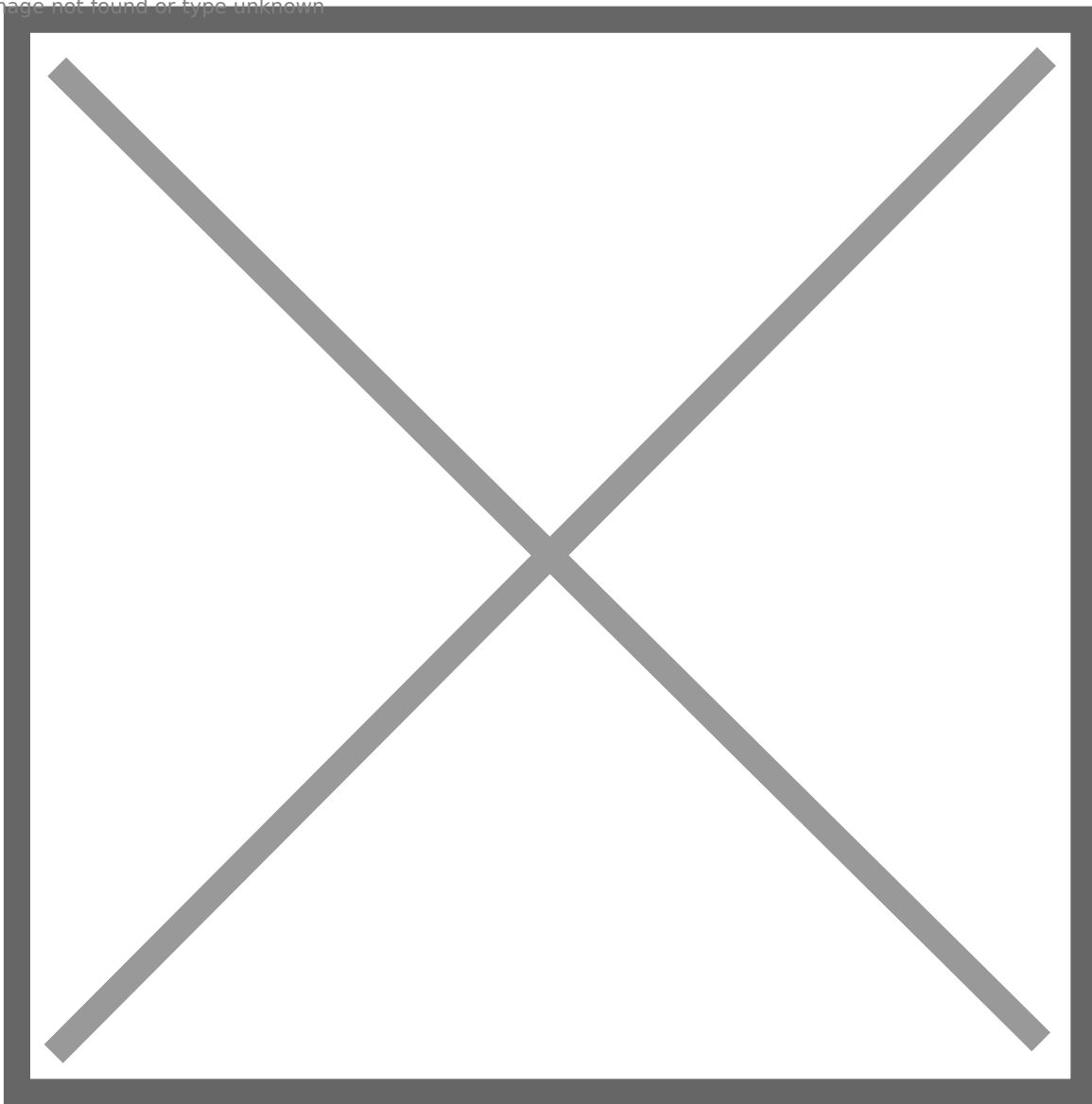
people of Your Holy Church.

“Increase their love for their parents and their parents’ love for them. Increase their zeal for learning, their respect and gratitude towards their teachers. Grant their families, the servants of the Church, teachers, civil authorities and all people of good will greater care for the present and future of young people throughout the world, so that they may feel that they live under Your blessing.

“Bless, O Lord, young people that they may become faithful and wise, diligent and generous, good and honest, merciful and courageous, to the glory of the Most Holy Trinity. Amen.”

Final day of ITO 2026

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Young people lighting their candles ahead of the Procession of Lights. Photo: BASILICA / Mircea Florescu

At the conclusion, His Beatitude wished the participants a blessed evening, peace, and joy, and reminded them they would meet the following day again for the Divine Liturgy at the National Cathedral.

A total of 2,400 Romanian young people from Romania and the diaspora, together with participants from sister Orthodox Churches, are attending ITO 2026 in Bucharest.

The gathering will conclude after Thursday's Divine Liturgy with the symbolic handover to the diocese that will host the next edition of ITO.

Trinitas TV, the Romanian Patriarchate's television station, has broadcast all ITO 2026 events live, as well as on its Facebook and YouTube channels.

Photo: BASILICA / Mircea Florescu

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