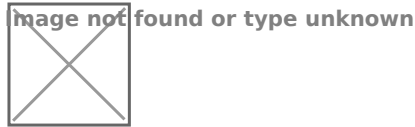


Patriarch Daniel discusses religious freedom, Ukraine and youth challenges with senior US diplomat



His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of the Romanian Orthodox Church received Riley Barnes, US Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom and Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour, at the Patriarchal Residence on Thursday, 17 September 2026.

Darryl Nirenberg, United States Ambassador to Romania, also attended, along with representatives of the US Department of State and the US Embassy in Bucharest.

Patriarch Daniel welcomed Ambassador Barnes and the other members of the American delegation and gave a concise overview of religious freedom in Romania.

His Beatitude noted that Article 29 of the Constitution guarantees religious freedom in Romania, protecting freedom of conscience and belief for all citizens.

He also highlighted Law No. 489/2006, known as the Law on Religious Denominations, which states that “the Romanian state recognises the spiritual, educational, social-charitable and cultural role of religious denominations, as well as their role in social partnership and their status as factors of social peace. The Romanian state recognises the important role of the Romanian Orthodox Church and of the other recognised churches and religious denominations in Romania’s national history and in the life of Romanian society.”

For his part, Ambassador Barnes expressed his appreciation for the welcome he received at the Romanian Patriarchate and his admiration for the faith and traditions of the Romanian people. He also highlighted the complex and tense geopolitical and religious situation in different regions of the world, including the armed conflict in Romania’s neighbourhood.

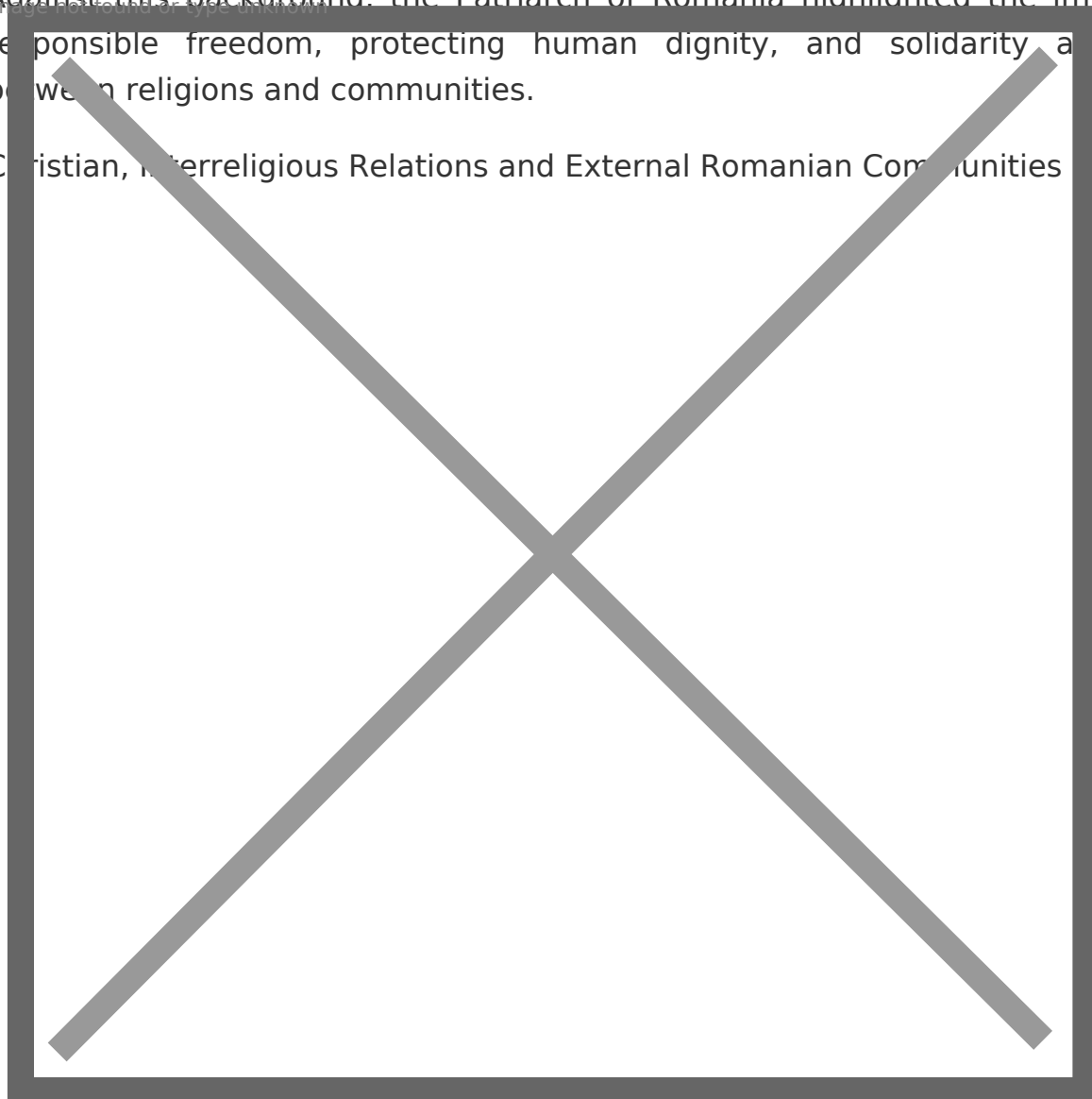
Patriarch Daniel emphasised that the Romanian Orthodox Church continually prays for peace throughout the world and for wise, just and lasting solutions to conflicts, particularly the war in Ukraine. He also noted that Romania has received many

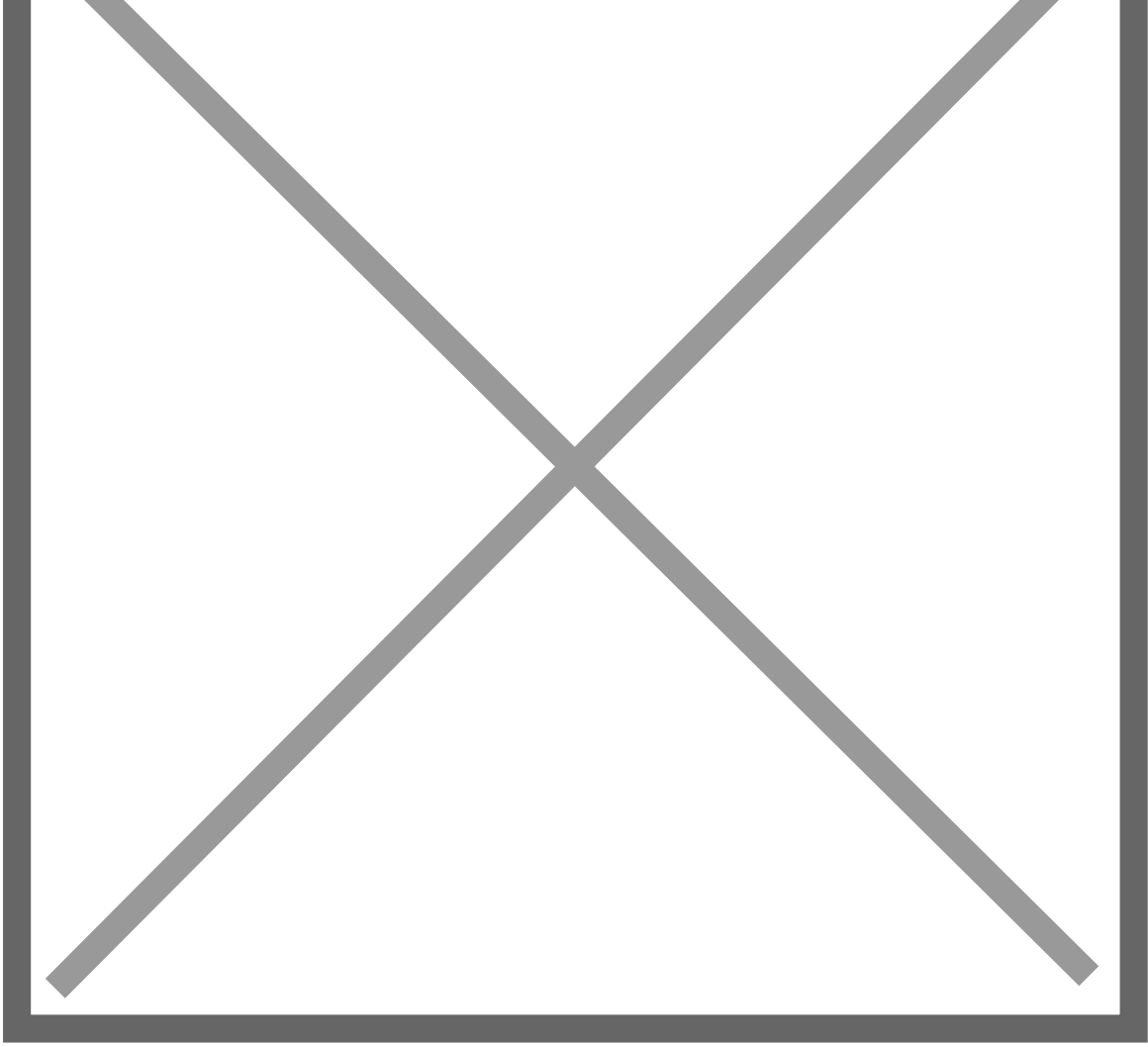
Ukrainian refugees, to whom it has provided material and spiritual assistance.

During the meeting, the two also discussed numerous challenges facing contemporary societies, particularly among young people, including various forms of addiction, individualism and increasing social isolation.

Against this background, the Patriarch of Romania highlighted the importance of responsible freedom, protecting human dignity, and solidarity and dialogue between religions and communities.

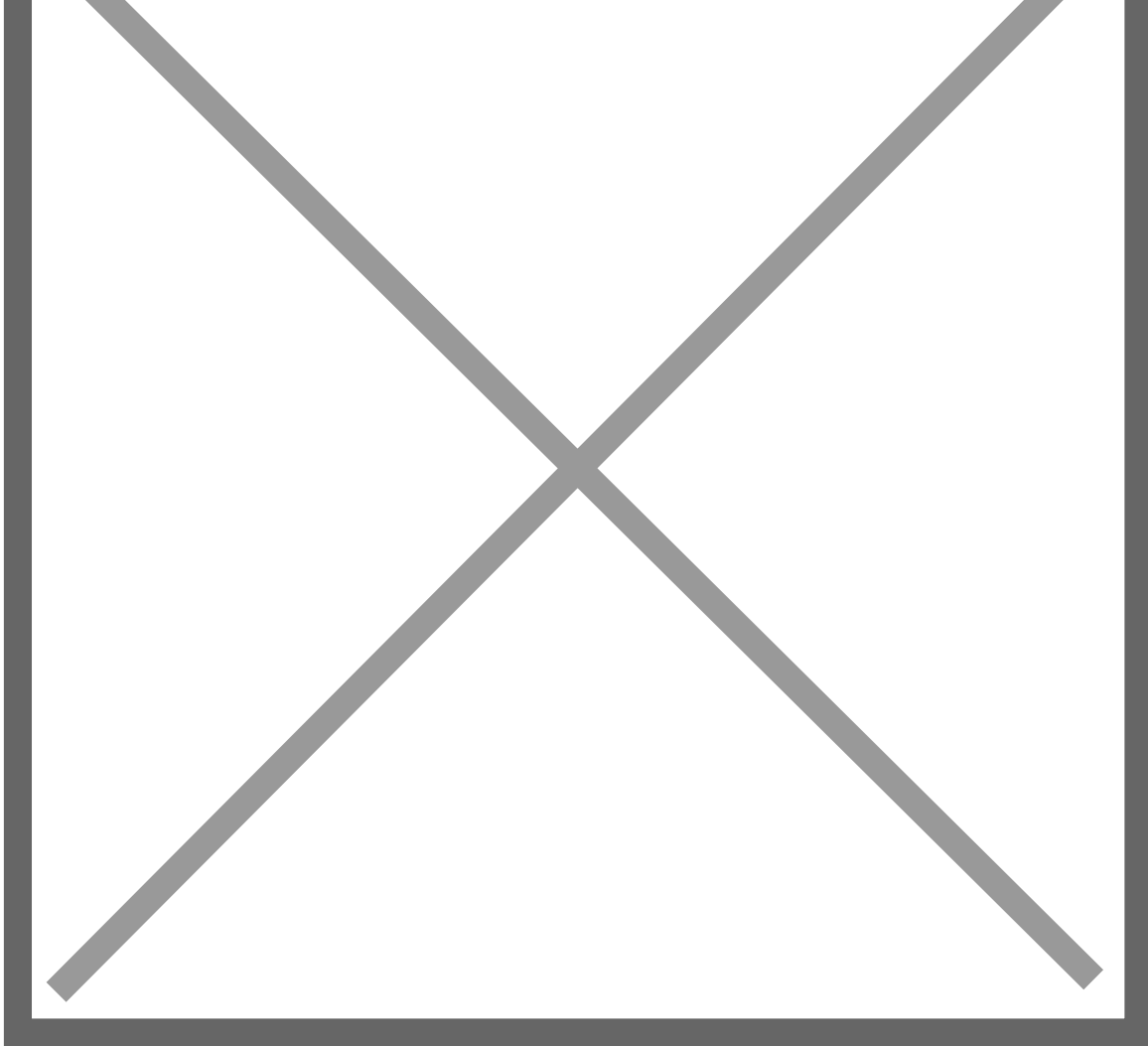
Christian, Interreligious Relations and External Romanian Communities Department











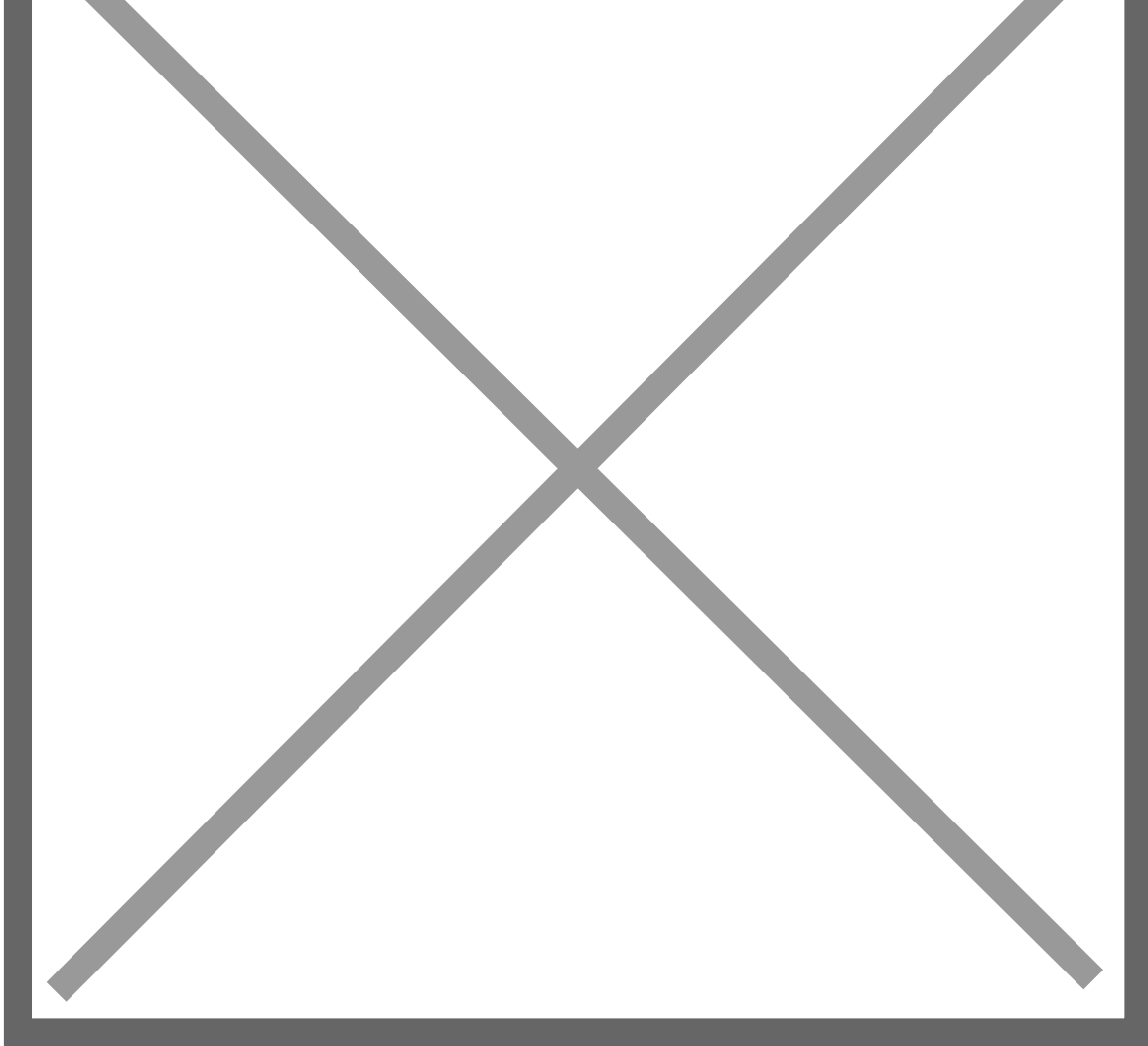
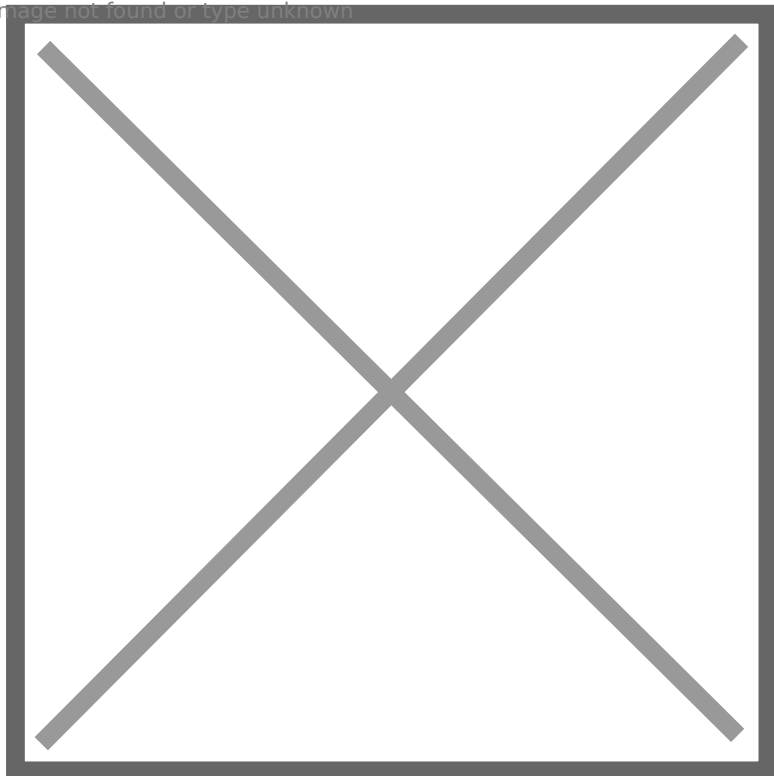


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