

## **Patriarch Daniel urges not to forget those who suffered under communist regime**



**His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel sent a message to the Symposium organized by the Institute for Political Sciences and International Relations of the Romanian Academy to commemorate the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Romanian Revolution of 1989 urging the participants not to forget those who suffered under communist regime.**

The message was read out by Fr Florin Serbanescu, the delegate of His Beatitude at the Nov. 7 symposium.

---

### **Don't forget those who suffered under communist regime: Full text**

The 20<sup>th</sup> century was a difficult time for entire Europe. After the traumatic experience of the Two World Wars, Eastern Europe was forced to go through the nightmare of the communist era.

Orthodox Churches in this part of the world have been subjected to cruel harassment by the totalitarian atheist system.

During the communist regime, the Romanian Orthodox Church was gradually removed from the life of society. In 1948, religious education was abolished from schools, divine services were banned in public institutions, church periodicals of dioceses were banned, many theological schools were closed, youth catechesis was restricted, over 1,000 Orthodox clergymen (to whom Roman-Catholic, Greek-Catholic priests and protestants are added) were arrested, thrown into prisons, sent to forced labour or deported.

Dozens of Orthodox monasteries and sketes were abolished, hundreds of monks and nuns were brutally removed from them, thousands of church properties were confiscated and dozens of worship places were demolished or translated in Bucharest. The Romanian Orthodox Church, as a whole, was permanently examined and controlled.

The end of the communist dictatorship in December 1989 and the beginning of a period of freedom in Romanian society represented for the Romanian Orthodox Church the possibility of organizing and manifesting itself according to its vocation, establishing relations of dialogue and cooperation with the State and with different institutions for the fulfilment of its pastoral, spiritual, cultural, educational and social-philanthropic mission.

The symposium entitled "The Fall of the Berlin Wall and the Romanian Revolution of 1989", organized by the Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations "Ion I. C. Brătianu" of the Romanian Academy, to mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of communism, is a good opportunity to thank God for the gift of freedom of the Romanian people and to honour the memory of those who suffered during the communist regime and those who sacrificed themselves in December 1989.

The entire year 2017 was dedicated by the Romanian Orthodox Church to commemorate the defenders of Orthodoxy during communism, thus highlighting the example of endurance and suffering of the victims of communism in the communist prisons, together with their strong faith and the courage to profess Christ.

All had to endure physical and mental violence, persecution, torture and even death. The vast majority of them belong to the Romanian Orthodox Church, for which we owe to keep alive the memory of their sacrifice.

The multitude of witnesses and martyrs of faith in our country during communism always urges us not to forget how great the power of sacrifice is and how necessary is the work of healing and renewing humanity, wounded by hatred and violence, intolerance and indifference, of many forms of physical and spiritual death.

The light of the testimony of the victims and witnesses during the communist period must be remembered with gratitude and veneration, being a source of spiritual renewal in the life of today's society.

†Daniel

Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church

— Photography courtesy of Basilica.ro / Mircea Florescu – Source: [basilica.ro](https://www.basilica.ro)