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Wealth and poverty are an occasion to draw closer to God and our peers - Patriarch Daniel



Patriarch Daniel on Sunday offered his reflections on wealth and poverty as means through which we can proceed on the path to salvation.

‘Wealth and poverty are not a purpose in themselves. They are an opportunity for us to draw near or away from God and others.’

“Neither wealth nor poverty can bring us salvation, but the way we use wealth and how we transform material poverty into a richness of the soul through faith, prayer and the cultivation of virtues,” said His Beatitude on Nov. 17.

His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel presided over the Divine Liturgy at the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest having as concelebrant his auxiliary bishop Varlaam of Ploiesti.

Reflecting on the Gospel reading from John 12:16-21, the Romanian Patriarch noted that ‘wealth is not a bad thing itself,’ because it comes from God.

“The rich man is not judged harshly by God because he was rich, because his wealth came unexpectedly from God, but he is judged because he did not thank

God for the riches and did not give to the poor any of what he had abundantly.”

The rich fool from the gospel parable became greedy, the Patriarch stressed, and because of covetousness he declined spiritually.

‘The rich man had no merit, because the abundant harvest was an unexpected surprise made by God to observe how he would behave when the harvest becomes so abundant than what he expected.’

‘He buried his soul in the material things and by doing this he fell from his capacity of spiritual, reasoning, God-loving and peer-loving being to the level of a biological being that only eats, drinks and rests.’

The words ‘This very night your life will be demanded from you’ point to the idea of judgement, of an evaluation of human life.

‘The gospel shows us that physical death has a spiritual significance. It separates us from the transient goods of this life.’

‘The man who gathered many material possessions, but did not gather light in his soul, will go with an empty, deserted and darkened soul to the other world,’ the patriarch explained.

While meditating on the last verse of the parable saying, “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God,” the patriarch spoke of how one can be enriched in God.

“By the light of faith, of repentance, of pure thoughts, of good words and deeds of humble and merciful love, and this love becomes the light of the immortal soul which after the body’s death goes to heaven. Therefore, the light from the soul cannot be taken away by death.”

“Death only separates the soul from the body, but the soul when separated from the body becomes clear and has the awareness of all the facts and words of the earthly life.”

“Therefore, souls can depart as darkened or enlightened from this life. The enrichment with spiritual gifts is accomplished through prayer, feasts, fasting, by performing good deeds, through a pure lifestyle.”

Those who do not have material possibilities to support their peers can still perform acts of mercy with the riches of the soul.

“Through prayer for one’s health and salvation. The kind thought and the good word said to a person who needs encouragement.”

“Our presence near a lonely and forgotten relative is a deed of mercy, the visit to a sick person is a deed of mercy that does not cost money, but only spiritual kindness,” said Patriarch Daniel.



Alexandru



















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