

Romanian Patriarchate: Holy Synod General Secretary officially announces solemn and commemorative themes for 2020



The New Year Day marked the beginning of the Solemn Year of Pastoral Ministry of Parents and Children and the Commemorative Year of Romanian Orthodox Philanthropists.

Following the New Year Divine Liturgy presided over by His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel, the general secretary of the Holy Synod, His Grace Bishop Varlaam of Ploiesti, read out the Synodal Act on the proclamation of the Solemn and Commemorative Year 2020 during a ceremony held at the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest.

The solemn and commemorative themes for 2020 were set by the Holy Synod during its autumn session in 2018.

'The proclamation of the year 2020 as a Solemn Year of Pastoral Ministry of Parents

and Children aims to highlight the biblical and patristic landmarks regarding the pastoral care of parents and children and to underscore the role of Christian education in the contemporary society,' Patriarch Daniel explained.

The Patriarch of Romania presented the icon of the Holy and Righteous Joachim and Anna with their daughter the Virgin Mary as representative for this year.

Pointing to the icon of Sts Joachim and Anna, the Patriarch said that 'the family is a blessing and an icon of God's love for humankind.'

In his speech, the Romanian Patriarch warned the believers about the dangers faced by Christian families today.

"In the contemporary society, the Christian family lives in a spiritually confused world, often faced with multiple challenges and crises such as poverty, migration, unemployment, alcoholism, drugs, depression, divorce and uncertainty of tomorrow."

As a solution to this crisis, Patriarch Daniel urged to strongly affirm the sanctity of marriage, solidarity within and between families, the dignity of motherhood, paternity, filiation and brotherhood as gifts of God's love."

Materialistic individualism becomes more present

"The proclamation of the year 2020 as the Commemorative Year of Romanian Orthodox Philanthropists aims to identify and promote the example of those who over time have spiritually and materially supported the social-philanthropic activity of the Romanian Orthodox Church as well as to highlight the role of Christian philanthropy today as a pastoral missionary work of the Church," said Patriarch Daniel January 1.

The basis of Christian philanthropy, emphasized His Beatitude, is evoked by the Holy Gospel and Holy Tradition of the Church, which "emphasize the importance of the connection between the spiritual life and man's social activity, between prayer and action, between piety and generosity, between the Liturgy and Philanthropy."

Philanthropy, Patriarch Daniel stressed, has to replace "materialistic individualism that gives a sense of its presence ever more intense."

"Today, the Romanian Orthodox Church systematically and substantially contributes to alleviating the suffering of people through liturgical, spiritual and

pastoral work, as well as through social and philanthropic activities,” His Beatitude said ending his speech at the proclamation of the solemn and commemorative year 2020.

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