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Priest from Constanța building home for abandoned, disadvantaged children and struggling mothers



For years, Fr. Claudiu Banu of the Church of St. Menas in Constanţa in southeastern Romania has visited abandoned children in hospitals and children's homes, offering them gifts with the help of the faithful.

But he wanted to do more.

Now, again, with the help of his faithful flock, Father Claudiu is in the midst of building a social care centre for mothers and children in need in the town of Techirghiol, in Constanţa County. If all goes well, the centre will be inaugurated around the feast of Pascha, reports adevarul.ro.

"We're finishing up. We still have to lay the tiles in the hallways and on the ground

floor, put in sockets, and paint the exterior. The furniture is already in the works. I hope to inaugurate it at Pascha," Fr. Claudiu said.

Fr. Claudiu is himself the father of several children and seeing how much joy he received from his family, his thoughts went to abandoned children, whom he then started visiting in hospitals and in children's homes. He suffered days and nights of turmoil, wondering how he could help them, and he prayed to God to light his path.

At first, he started gathering gifts from his parishioners for the children, to bring them a little joy, but he knew it wasn't enough.

Fr. Claudiu recalls what happened next:

One day I was at Fr. Arsenie (Papacioc)'s grave, asking him what we should do to support the poor. And then a lady whom I have never seen before handed me a portrait of Fr. Arsenie, which is now in the church. Also, in the cassock I had been wearing for two months, I had a piece of paper that I used to play with nervously. The amazing thing was that one day when I went to wash my coat, I discovered with amazement that this paper was actually Fr. Arsenie's picture as well. That's when I got the message, and a few days later the good Lord arranged for a good Christian of our parish to donate land to us in Techirghiol. He doesn't want to be known; he said he did it for his soul.

Construction began on the donated land on October 1, 2015, paid for only by sponsorship and donations. Thus far, $326,550 (300,00 euros) have been spent on the center, and another $45,670 (200,000 lei) are needed to finally open the doors.

The home can accommodate between 30 and 50 people for an indefinite period.

"We have 9 studios and 3 apartments. Each has its own kitchen and we will also arrange a playground for the little ones. We will also have a medical office in the centre," said Fr. Claudiu.

Medical care will be provided on a voluntary basis, and 14 volunteers have already signed up to help.

The home will be guarded and will have 40 surveillance cameras installed for the safety of the mothers and children.

Photography courtesy of Facebook / Banu Claudiu

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