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Romanian Patriarch Daniel celebrates Divine Liturgy on New Year’s Day



His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of Romania presided over the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great on New Year’s Day at the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest.

Concelebrants for the Divine Liturgy included the Patriarch’s auxiliary bishop and secretary of the Holy Synod Varlaam of Ploiesti, and the Assistant Bishop to the Bucharest Archdiocese, Timotei of Prahova.

In his homily, the Patriarch referred to the three celebrations marked on January 1: The Circumcision of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the feast of St Basil the Great, and the civil New Year.



Fulfillment of the Law

Patriarch Daniel said that through His Circumcision, our Saviour showed us that He came to fulfill the Law, to put it into practice, and to make it perfect.

His Beatitude recalled that this ritual was the sign of God’s covenant with Abraham, and with all his descendants remembering the moment when the Jews were delivered from Egyptian slavery.

The Patriarch stressed that circumcision was a prefiguration of the Holy Sacrament of Baptism.

‘The Mystery of Baptism is a spiritual circumcision meaning the cutting-off of all our evil thoughts and all our sinful feelings.’

The Name of Jesus
According to Jewish tradition a child’s name was officially given 8 days after his birth when the circumcision took place.

Given this context, the Patriarch noted that Christ's name was given through a divine commandment and it meant 'God saves' or 'God is the Saviour'.

'The full name of our Saviour is Jesus – God the Saviour and Christ – God's Annointed One.'

His Beatitude added that Christians observe the same tradition to give the name of a new-born eight days after birth.



St Basil's legacy to unite prayer and good deeds

About St Basil the Great, Patriarch Daniel said he was 'a wise shepherd, a deep theologian, and a man who helped the poor.'

His Beatitude stressed that it is from St Basil the Great that 'we have the philanthropic tradition, the Church's charity work,' and the legacy to unite prayer and good deed, to combine prayer with work,

The Patriarch noted that St Basil's devotion is spread in Romania and wished all those bearing St Basil's name 'many years with good health, wisdom and much

help from God.’

Civil New Year

Finally, the Patriarch of Romania referred to the beginning of the civil New Year, a holiday deriving from the name of the Roman god Janus, depicted as having two faces, since he looks to the future and to the past.

The Patriarch said that at the beginning of the month of January ‘it is time for us to meditate on what we have done in the past, correcting what was wrong, and look towards future with hope and good thoughts to do more good deeds and to approach God and our neighbours even more.’

A Te deum service was officiated at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

Next the year 2019 was officially declared as Solemn Year of the Romanian Village (of diligent priests, teachers and mayors), and Commemorative Year of Patriarchs Nicodim Munteanu and Iustin Moisescu, and of the translators of church books in the Romanian Patriarchate.

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