

## **Patriarch Daniel on Sunday of All Saints: This is the most beautiful holiday regarding Church communion**



During his sermon on Sunday, June 14, 2020, the Patriarch of Romania stressed the beauty of the diversity and unity in the Church. These are illustrated by the example of the Saints of all times, including those in the future, from all places, of all ages and different social ranks, the known and unknown.

‘This celebration of all the Saints is the most beautiful holiday regarding Church communion,’ His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel said.

Offering his homily at the chapel of the patriarchal residence in Bucharest, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel noted that ‘the diversity of the Saints gathered in communion in the love of the Most Holy Trinity shows us the beauty of the Church.’

This mystery of the beauty of the saintly communion was prophesized by the Psalmist through the words: 'God is wonderful in His Saints' (Psalm 67:36 DRA).

'God is wonderful in the richness of holiness, which is shown in different nations and different times as the glory of God, who shares His holiness with those who believe in Him. The Only Holy God wishes that all humans may partake of His holiness through faith and righteous lifestyle,' Patriarch Daniel noted.

### **Diversity and unity of the Church**

The Patriarch described the *proskomedia* (the preparation for the Divine Liturgy) to better highlight the beauty of the communion of Saints.

Although for every day we have one or several Saints inscribed in the calendar, at every Orthodox Divine Liturgy we remember all the saints, the Romanian Patriarch explained.

His Beatitude said that during the *proskomedia* (office of oblation), the Holy Lamb is placed on the diskos together with other particles of the *prosphora* representing the Theotokos on its right side and the nine ranks of Saints on its left side.

The Patriarch listed the nine orders of the Saints, 'which are representative and have a symbolic value'.

'The first rank is that of the archangels and of the bodiless powers; the second is that of the Holy Prophets; the third of the Holy Apostles; the fourth of the Holy Hierarchs; the fifth of the Holy Martyrs; the sixth of the Venerable Fathers and Mothers; the seventh of the Unmercenary Saints; the eighth of the Righteous Ancestors Joachim and Anna, and the ninth refers to the Saint whose Divine Liturgy will be celebrated.'

'This image of the Church representing Christ amidst the Saints indicates the diversity and the unity of the Church.'

'It shows us the multitude of orders of Saints, but also their communion and unity,' His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel added.

During his sermon, the Romanian Patriarch referred to the history of the Sunday of All Saints, listing three reasons why this feast day was established:

To show that the purpose of the descent of the Holy Spirit into the world is to sanctify humans.

To show that all Saints have professed only one God and are in communion with Him.

To show that besides the Saints who are known to us and are inscribed in the church calendar there are many other unknown saints.

### **Saints unknown to people**

Insisting on the third reason, the Patriarch said that the unknown saints are secretly known by God. 'He will show them gradually in history or will not reveal some at all in this world, but only at Christ's second coming.'

Patriarch Daniel stressed that this feast day does not refer only to the known and unknown saints from the past and present, but also to the future saints. 'Thus, this feast also has a prophetic dimension.'

"We have not known them as such in history. They did not show up, being humble persons," the Patriarch also said about the unknown saints.

"The saint only knows that he is a sinner. He who considers himself holy is an imaginary saint, not a real one. Only the One Holy God knows whether His holiness exists in people or not."

The saints are teachers and intercessors

At the end of his sermon, the Patriarch of Romania emphasized that the saints are examples and teachers, but also intercessors for us.

The patriarch explained how the saints who fled the world, discovering "the treasure of God's presence in man's life," were sought by many and became great teachers and intercessors for the world.

In this sense, Patriarch Daniel ended his speech with the first Prayer at the conclusion of the Akathist of All Saints.

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