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HB Patriarch Daniel: Repentance is a change, not a simple regret



‘Repentance is an effort for inner change, not a simple regret,’ His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel said in his Sunday homily at St Gregory the Enlightener Chapel of his Patriarchal Residence.

His Beatitude noted that repentance does not simply imply saying ‘I’m sorry’ and moving on, ‘it is an effort to change the way of thinking, of speaking and of acting.’

In this regard, the Patriarch recalled that many saints ‘were originally thieves and criminals, but through repentance they changed themselves and became wonderworking Saints.’

‘Some of them used to be decadent, as Mother Mary of Egypt who through much repentance became a Saint. When praying she rose from the ground because she was more related to heaven than to earth,’ Patriarch Daniel said Jan. 13.

Repentance is a noiseless, inner change

The Patriarch of Romania went on to say that true repentance is done mystically, silently, not in front of other people to receive their appreciation.

‘Genuine repentance is a change,’ His Beatitude said, ‘but not a change made with trumpets, with advertising.’

‘This change is mystical, noiseless, and with much humility.’

True repentance, the patriarch said, ‘is a work of painful rebirth for man, of kneading the sinful clay to become a vessel of the Holy Spirit. It is a work of crucifixion of human selfishness and a spiritual revival of his love for God and for others.’

Repentance: continuous humility

The Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church also referred to the fact that ‘repentance is a lifelong endeavour’ that helps attain to humility.

‘He who boasts about his repentance, his virtues, his spiritual progress shows that he did not fully understand that there is no Christian life without permanent repentance,’ His Beatitude said.

Therefore, ‘repentance must be a constant of Christian life, a permanent cleansing of the sins committed in thought, word or deed to gain salvation and saintliness as gifts of the Kingdom of God,’ the patriarch added.

The doors of repentance open to the Kingdom of God

Pointing to salvation, the Patriarch of Romania said that ‘repentance is the only thing that opens the doors to the Kingdom of God.’

‘The doors of repentance are the doors of the Kingdom of God,’ the patriarch explained, adding that ‘through repentance, man is emptied of selfish love and is filled with Christ’s humble and merciful love.’

In his homily delivered on the Sunday after Theophany, Patriarch Daniel spoke about the relation between the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ and the light of His Gospel, as well as about the link between the Sacraments of Baptism and Repentance as gates to the Kingdom of God.

‘The Light of Theophany is the light of our life and of the entire universe.’

‘The Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ in Jordan river shows us that man is at the centre of the care and love of the Most Holy Trinity,’ Patriarch Daniel said ending his speech.

(Source: basilica.ro / Photography courtesy of Lumina Newspaper)