

## ROMANIAN HOLY SYNOD CALLS ON PARISHES TO INCREASE ACTIVITIES DEDICATED TO THE FAMILY



The Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church met at the Patriarchal residence in Bucharest yesterday under the chairmanship of His Beatitude Patriarchal Daniel to discuss important issues concerning the pastoral care of the Orthodox family today.

Emphasizing the difficulties that have arisen in connection with the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the Synod calls on all parishes to intensify activities dedicated to families and on all the faithful to cultivate Christian education and a philanthropic spirit through prayer and good deeds, reports the Basilica News Agency.

Pat. Daniel and the Romanian Church place a heavy emphasis on support for families and traditional family values. In 2016, the Holy Synod declared the first Sunday after June 1 the Sunday Parents and Children, “in order to cultivate more intensely the loving and respectful communion between parents and children,” and the Church is active in the pro-life movement and the fight to preserve the Christian understanding of marriage.

OrthoChristian has also reported several times on Romanian dioceses, parishes, monasteries, and Orthodox faithful providing housing for struggling families.

At its session yesterday, the Synod drew attention to and appreciated the fact that the Church was able to adapt its pastoral methods in this difficult year, increasing its evangelistic activities through the media. At the same time, televised Church services and online schools can only be a temporary solution, the hierarchs note, emphasizing that these things are wholly inadequate to replace the communion that the faithful naturally experience through physical participation in the liturgical life of the Church.

The closure of schools has significantly affected the education process, with students and teachers alike insufficiently prepared for online courses. Therefore, the Patriarchate and individual dioceses came to their aid and offered nearly 5,000 tablets and other electronic devices to disadvantaged communities.

Taking these facts into account, the Romanian Synod took note of the situation with family pastoral care and of the Church’s social-philanthropic activities, calling on parishes to increase activities dedicated to families, focusing on cultivating the relationship between the family and the Church.

The hierarchs also urged the Romanian Orthodox faithful to focus on prayer and acts of mercy to cultivate the Christian education of children and to materially support especially disadvantaged families.

The Synod session also included a book launch and a documentary, both dedicated to the family.

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