

“Second youth, new choices”: Fashion designer Florin Dobre admitted to Bucharest’s Theology Faculty



Florin Dobre, the only Romanian fashion designer with collections featured in [Vogue](#) and [GQ](#) magazines, [announced](#) he was admitted to “Patriarch Justinian” Faculty of Theology in Bucharest.

It was a sudden thought to become a Theology student. He disclosed it to his spiritual father, who gave him the blessing to go to the admission exam even though he was not quite prepared.

“The most important preparedness for it was my constant participation in the Divine Liturgy on every Sunday and every feast,” Florin Dobre says.

“I am starting a new journey. In five years I can become a priest,” he says.

Now, as he has turned 45, he feels he has stepped into the second part of his life. “Serving God is a wonderful thing. I did not feel like that in the first part of my life, so I rejoice that at least now I can do it.”

An old call

After being admitted, the designer wrote on Facebook: "Second youth, new choices..."

When he was younger and on top of his career, he was not so close to the Church. But one day he led a few French colleagues from the world of fashion to Stavropoleos Monastery.

Trying to enter the church, he felt a huge invisible force holding him back against his will. So he could not step inside.

"It was the only church in Bucharest where I would enter a few times a year," he remembers. "But at that moment I could not do it." He understood that his life was not unfolding according to God's will.

Faith and family

More signs for him followed – also dreams, happenings, spiritual fights. In the meantime, those around him would take the monastic vow or return in the Church. Others became priests.

When he did the same and returned in the Church, he felt a lot of peace. The change brought about the need for a family.

"When I was single, I had enough time for long prayers. But I did not have that feeling of fulfilment that only family can give you. We are not complete without children," he says.

"After Teodor was born, I realized how changed I was. You get peace and calmness, while the child gives you enough energy and patience to be able to care for it," explains Florin Dobre. He adds:

"Along with setting up our own family, we learn to see and appreciate mothers. They show us what it means to be crucified in a world which does not promote the maternal woman, which it replaces with the so-called success woman, who is everything else than a mother: the woman-driver, the woman-mechanic and so on."

When he returned to a life in the Church, those around him separated in supporters

and opponents.

“It took them quite some time to become convinced that I had not become a worse, but a better person. If there is peace in the soul, this becomes visible. Slowly, they started making peace with themselves – and some of them even with me!” recounts the designer.

There are still some who laugh at him, but Florin Dobre thinks this actually helps him on his spiritual journey. “Their attitude is different when we meet face to face and realize how well we get along, even though we hold on opposing values,” he says.

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