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Putna Monastery Hieromonk appointed abbot of St Demetrios the New Monastery in Middletown, NY

Metropolitan Nicolae of the two Americas installed Protosyncellus Ieremia Berbec as the abbot of the Middletown Monastery, in the state of New York.

The ceremony was held on October 24, when the patronal feast of the monastery was celebrated. The celebration was held in advance of the saint's feast (October 27) to allow participation of the faithful coming from all over the region.

After the Divine Liturgy, His Eminence Nicolae offered to the new abbot the official Gramata of appointment, a blessing cross and the abbot's staff.

The hierarch said the protosyncellus' mission on American land is noble and challenging, a heavy but fulfilling cross for which he needs lots of prayers.

The new abbot expressed his wish to live in an authentic monastery. This involves obeisance and doing everything under blessing. "This is what I wish: to obey and work under blessing," he said.

Abbot Ieremia Berbec has a PhD in Mathematics from the University of California, Berkley (UCB), where he studied during 2002-2007. UCB ranks among Top 10 universities in the world for Mathematics.

The protosyncellus was a member of the monastic community of Putna Monastery, where he spent 13 years. This year he has left it after careful consideration.

The move was blessed by Archimandrite Melchisedec, Abbot of Putna Monastery, by His Eminence Pimen and His Eminence Calinic – the former and, respectively, the current Archbishop of Suceava and Rădăuți.

Middletown is the only monastery in the Romanian diaspora protected by St Demetrios the New.

The first leader of the Middletown Monastery was Archimandrite Clement Haralam, the current Grand Ecclesiarch (Head Sacristan) of the Patriarchal Cathedral, where the relics of St Demetrios the New are held.

The Middletown Monastery has recently received a fragment of St John Maximovich (1896-1966), Archishop of Shanghai and San Francisco.

Photo courtesy of the Metropolis of the two Americas

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