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Archbishop of Roman and Bacau hopes his predecessor Bishop Melchisedec Ștefănescu will soon be canonized



Archbishop Ioachim of Roman and Bacau expressed his hope that the canonization proposal of Bishop Melchisedec Ștefănescu, a former bishop of Roman, will be soon approved by the Holy Synod.

His Eminence Archbishop Ioachim officiated a memorial service at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of Saint Parascheva in Roman on Bishop Melchisedec's 198th birthday anniversary on Monday, February 15.

The Archbishop of Roman and Bacău called the former hierarch "a remarkable man."

"God brought him into existence in very special times, which resemble the times of today, being so troubled, unsteady, so fierce about what the Church is."

“He was involved in all those events and manifestations that marked the identity, spirituality, culture, piety and faith in God of our nation. He called death “a still water,” His Eminence said about Bishop Melchisedec.

Bishop Melchisedec Ștefănescu: profile

Born in the village of Gârcina in Neamț County, on February 15, 1823, in the family of priest Petru Ștefănescu, the future bishop was baptized Mihail (Michael).

After studying in his hometown, he attended the Theological Seminary in Socola, graduating in 1843, as valedictorian. The same year he was tonsured a monk, receiving the name of Melchisedec (Melchizedek).

On August 16, 1844, he was ordained to the diaconate.

In 1848 he was sent to study at the Theological Academy in Kyiv, being the second Romanian to graduate from this theological institution – after his teacher, bishop Filaret Scriban; he obtained the title of “Master of Theology and Letters.”

He was also ordained to the priesthood in Kyiv on October 3, 1851.

Returning to Romania, he held the position of professor and spiritual guide for five years at the Theological Seminary in Socola, being elevated to the rank of archimandrite on January 12, 1856, and appointed rector of the Theological Seminary in Huși.

In 1857 he was elected deputy in the Ad-hoc Divan by the clergy from Huși, supporting within the Divan the desideratum of the union of the two Romanian principalities south and east of the Carpathians and becoming one of the leaders of the fight for the Union.

He was appointed locum tenens of the Diocese of Husi on January 15, 1861. He was ordained to the episcopate in Iasi, receiving the title of “Tripoleos”, on December 30, 1862.

On January 6, 1865, he was officially installed as locum tenens of the newly established Diocese of Lower Danube and a ruling Bishop on May 27.

On February 22, 1879, he was elected bishop of Roman, where he worked with the same zeal, until his repose in the Lord in 1892.

Father of the Autocephaly of the Romanian Orthodox Church

Bishop Melchisedec is considered one of the providential personalities in acquiring

the autocephaly of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

He drafted the reply letter sent by the Holy Synod to the Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim III (1878-1884) on the issue of the sanctification of the Holy and Great Myrrh in Bucharest.

He was also the one who wrote the letter sent to the Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim IV (1884-1886), which again demanded the recognition of autocephaly.

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