

Metropolitan Nicolae: Romanians in America want to keep their identity through the Church



The generation of Romanians who emigrated overseas after 1990 “is the generation of Romanians who want to keep their Romanian identity through the Church,” said the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan of the Two Americas in an interview with Lumina Newspaper.

Therefore, “it is essential to continue to pray in Romanian, to keep our spirituality and traditions,” he said.

His Eminence Metropolitan Nicolae of the Two Americas explained how Romanian communities are formed overseas. “A parish in America is a community of Orthodox Christians who meet first at the Divine Liturgy and other services but continue to meet through various activities.”

“The time spent together by adults, what we may call the ‘liturgy after Liturgy,’ and by children in Sunday school and other activities, is absolutely necessary for the spiritual health of a parish.”

“What we can see in recent years is the slowdown and even the complete cessation in some areas of Romanian immigration to America. This means that the

missionary-pastoral effort of our Metropolis must now be directed (...) towards the consolidation and preservation of the old Romanian Orthodox communities, but also of the newest ones, founded after 1990.”

“It is essential to continue to pray in Romanian to keep Romanian people’s spirituality and traditions. The generation of immigrants after 1990 is the generation of Romanians who want to keep their Romanian identity through the Church,” Metropolitan Nicolae added. To this end, education plays a key role.

The challenge of young people: identity

The education of children and young people presents many challenges in the current context, said the Romanian Metropolitan. The solution used by the Orthodox in America is to carry out activities and establish organisations for young people.

ROYA, the Metropolis’ youth organisation, organises “multiple activities during the year, trying to cultivate the feeling of a Christian Orthodox generation and responsibility of young people for the parishes’ future,” Metropolitan Nicolae noted.

ROYA organises an annual camp in Romania to discover the traditions and spirituality of the Romanian people. Young Romanian Orthodox in America make pilgrimages to monasteries, visit church sites and volunteer at the Valea Plopului orphanage.

“One of the challenges for young people in America, especially the Orthodox, is identity. Our young people often wonder who they are, either born or raised and educated in America, from Orthodox parents who emigrated from Romania some time ago,” the Metropolitan highlighted.

“It is a difficult but vital question, which can outline the spiritual profile of a young Romanian-American and his or her future. The annual camps in Romania help them find the answer to this complicated question,” His Eminence added.

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Saint Joseph the Hesychast

