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Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church meets for first time in 2021, urges responsibility during celebration of Holy Mysteries



The Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church held its working session at the Patriarchal Palace under the chairmanship of His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel on Thursday, February 25, 2021.

The Holy Synod elected by secret ballot the Very Reverend Archimandrite Nichifor Horia as Assistant Bishop to the Archdiocese of Iasi. The new hierarch will bear the title of His Grace Bishop Nichifor of Botoșani. The ordination will take place in Iasi on Sunday, March 7, 2021.

The Holy Synod also elected by secret ballot the Very Reverend Archimandrite Nestor Dinculeană as Assistant Bishop to the Diocese of Deva and Hunedoara. The new hierarch will bear the title of His Grace Bishop Nestor of Hunedoara. The ordination will take place in Deva on Sunday, March 7, 2021.

At the same meeting, the Holy Synod made the following decisions:

- To declare the year 2022 as Solemn Year of Prayer in the Church's life and the Christian's life and Commemorative Year of the Hesychast Saints Symeon the New Theologian, Gregory Palamas and Paisius of Neamț.
- To begin the canonization process of several Romanian confessors and great missionary clergymen during communism, for 2025, to mark the Romanian Orthodox Church's 140th anniversary of autocephaly (1885) and 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate (1925).
- The Holy Synod recalled the statutory obligation of the Romanian Orthodox Church to remain in communion and dogmatic (doctrinal), liturgical (sacramental) and canonical (disciplinary) unity with the universal Orthodox Church. Therefore, the Romanian Orthodox Church cannot change its doctrine, its liturgical-sacramental ritual and its canonical discipline, and urges all its servants to be more responsible when celebrating the Holy Mysteries and blessing services.

In this sense, taking note of the discussions, concerns and misunderstandings that appeared in the public space on the topic of the Baptism of children with poor health, the Holy Synod made several clarifications:

1. Before the Holy Mystery of Baptism, the priest must meet with the child's parents and godparents, who, after consulting with a pediatrician, will present to the priest the child's health and their desire to baptize the child;
2. The Romanian Patriarchate's Faculties of Theology will pay special attention to the liturgical practice regarding the act of the three "immersions" during the Baptismal service; this liturgical practice is compulsory for theology students in the final years at the Pastoral Theology sections;
3. Each deanery of the Romanian Patriarchate will organize an annual meeting with the priests regarding the correct celebration of each Holy Mystery. Catechesis with the faithful on the spiritual significance of the Holy Mysteries will also be held.

Other resolutions:

The Holy Synod approved the liturgical texts (service, akathist and supplicatory canon) in honour of the Hieromartyr Zenobius, bishop of Cilicia, and his sister

Zenobia (October 30), as well as the inclusion of these texts in the worship books.

The Holy Synod approved to include “National Flag Day” (June 26) and “Romania’s National Anthem Day” (July 29) in the Christian Orthodox Calendar for 2022, under the heading *Days and important dates*.

Press Office of the Romanian Patriarchate

Translated by Basilica.ro

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