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## **ARCHBISHOP ANASTASIOS ACCEPTS NATIONAL MEDAL FOR FOSTERING PEACE ON BEHALF OF INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL**



On Monday, March 22, President Ilir Meta of Albania decorated the Inter-Religious Council of Albania with the “Honor of the Nation” medal for its work towards preserving and promoting interreligious harmony in Albania and “for the important role in raising the Albanian model of inter-religious dialogue in the international arena.”

The award was accepted by His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios of Albania on behalf of the Council, reports the Albanian Church’s Facebook page.

President Meta praised the Council's work towards the peaceful coexistence of religions, saying: "This role is even more important and irreplaceable in these times when the country more than ever needs the contribution and dedication of all, primarily the youth, not to leave, but to seek and find their future in their homeland, in peace and harmony with each other."



"The spiritual, cultural and religious harmony of our people is linked to their best qualities, to faith in God, and to the love of freedom of speech, belief, and thought," the head of state added. Albanians of all faiths united to overthrow the dictatorship in 1990, he noted.

In his address, Abp. Anastasios emphasized that the Inter-Religious Council operates not only in Albania, but also on an international level as part of the organization Religions for Peace.

"This place is at the forefront of this religious coexistence. For the first time we are using the word 'harmony' more than 'tolerance'... With the word 'harmony,' it is much more beautiful. We all retain our features and identity, but we create something very beautiful, a message to the whole world," His Beatitude said.

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# Saint Joseph the Hesychast

