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BULGARIAN BACHKOVO MONASTERY AWARDED AS "MONASTERY OF THE DECADE"

On March 19, the first Friday of Great Lent, the Holy Dormition Bachkovo Monastery of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church was solemnly awarded the title of "Monastery of the Decade."

The honor was given as part of the large-scale "Wonders of Bulgaria" campaign for the preservation and promotion of the national cultural and historical heritage, reports the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

Bachkovo Monastery, located 20 miles from Plovdiv, on the right bank of the Chepelare River, is the second largest and second-most visited monastery in the country. It was founded in 1083 by Prince Gregory Pakourianos and is known for its combination of Byzantine, Georgian, and Bulgarian culture.

It is also home to a wonderworking icon of the Mother of God.

The award was presented by the Bulgarian EU Commissioner Maria Gabriel to the abbot His Grace Bishop Zion of Velichka. "We are very happy with this high award, which is the result of the many works of the monastery's brotherhood, as well as of many decent Christians, helpers of the Bachkovo Monastery," His Grace said.

The event was also attended by the Bulgarian Vice President and several other officials who expressed their joy and heartfelt admiration for the improvements to Bachkovo Monastery, especially the creation of facilities for welcoming and offering spiritual care to the many pilgrims who flock to the monastery from all over the country and the world.

On behalf of the entire brotherhood, Bp. Zion gave thanks for the award, noting that, "This voted distinction and high trust is an even greater incentive for all of us to continue to work hard going forward, developing the ancient monastery with a view to the future and with care for every human soul."

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