

80th anniversary of the Fântâna Albă Massacre



April 1 became by law, adopted in 2011, a National Day honouring the memory of Romanians who were the victims of the massacres at Fântâna Albă and other areas, deportations, famine and other forms of repression organized by the totalitarian Soviet regime in Hertza region, northern Bukovina and the whole of Bessarabia.

After signing the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact in 1939, the USSR occupied Bessarabia, northern Bukovina and Hertza region in 1940. Thus, overnight, approximately 3 million Romanians found themselves in a foreign territory where their origins, tradition, culture and religion were not accepted.

Many Romanians from Bukovina were arrested, killed, deported; churches were closed, properties confiscated, so many families began to cross the new border and come to Romania.

In January 1941, the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) issued rumours that people would be allowed to cross the border.

As a result of this information, on April 1, 1941, on an Easter day, a large group of people from several villages in the Siret Valley headed to the Soviet-Romanian

border carrying a white flag and religious insignia (icons, church flags and crosses).



When they reached three kilometres from the border, in a place called Poiana Varnița, over 3,00 people were caught by Soviet soldiers hiding in the forest. Soon, most of them were cut by bullets and thrown into mass graves, some of which were buried alive. Survivors were pursued, tortured and deported.

Today, Fântâna Albă (now Stary Vovchynets or Bila Krinicya) is located in the territory of Ukraine.

On April 1, 2011, on the 70th anniversary of the tragic event at Fântâna Albă, a memorial cross dedicated to the memory of the massacre's victims was blessed at Putna Monastery.

On July 2, 2018, on the occasion of the events dedicated to the feast of Ruler Prince Saint Stephen the Great, Putna Monastery inaugurated a Memorial entitled The Nation's Golgotha – Fantana Alba.

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Saint Joseph the Hesychast

