

candle and a plastic glass, bowing down in front of every man entering the church to pray.'

'He gave all his fortune to the Church, living in a room in the courtyard of the Sts Cyril and Methodius Church in his home village. At the end of his 103-year-old life, we learned that he was not an ordinary beggar. The money he gathered for God,' Fr Kiril said.

'Throughout his life,' Kiril Sinev recalled, 'he gathered around 80,000 leva, which he gave to some churches and monasteries.'

'For example, in 2005, he gave 10,000 leva for the Church of Sts Cyril and Methodius of Bailovo. In 2007, he offered 25,000 leva for the restoration of the Eleshnitsa Monastery, and 10,000 leva for the church in the village of Gorno Kamartsi. In 2008, Dobre gave money for the church of Kalofer.'

Fr Kiril Sinev stressed that 'the greatest donation ever made by a person' to Sofia's Patriarchal Cathedral was made by 'the Saint of Bailovo.'

Dobre Dobrev donated 35,700 leva to St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral on May 24, 2009, one day before the celebration of the Cyrillic alphabet.

The Bulgarian priest recalled how being asked by a journalist if he would keep the money for himself, Grandpa Dobre Dobrev said, 'I leave nothing for myself. I have a pension, and God gives me bread.'

'What he did was not begging, but giving alms,' Sinev said adding that Elder Dobre 'said he was not afraid of death.'

'Dobre loved children very much: he bowed down in front of them and kissed their hands.'

The 'Beggar of Christ' always stressed 'the importance of patience and humility in the life of believers.'

'Do good without waiting for a reward,' he said.

Dobre was an 'open gospel, as he lived and spoke according to the biblical commandments.'

'What attracted people as a magnet was the kindness of the old man. Even the pigeons in front of the Seven Saints Church in Sofia sat on his hands and head, thus recognizing him as a dweller of heaven,' the Bulgarian priest said.

The life of the saintly beggar was first published by Borislav Radoslavov in a volume titled 'Elder Dobre, the Bailovo Saint.'

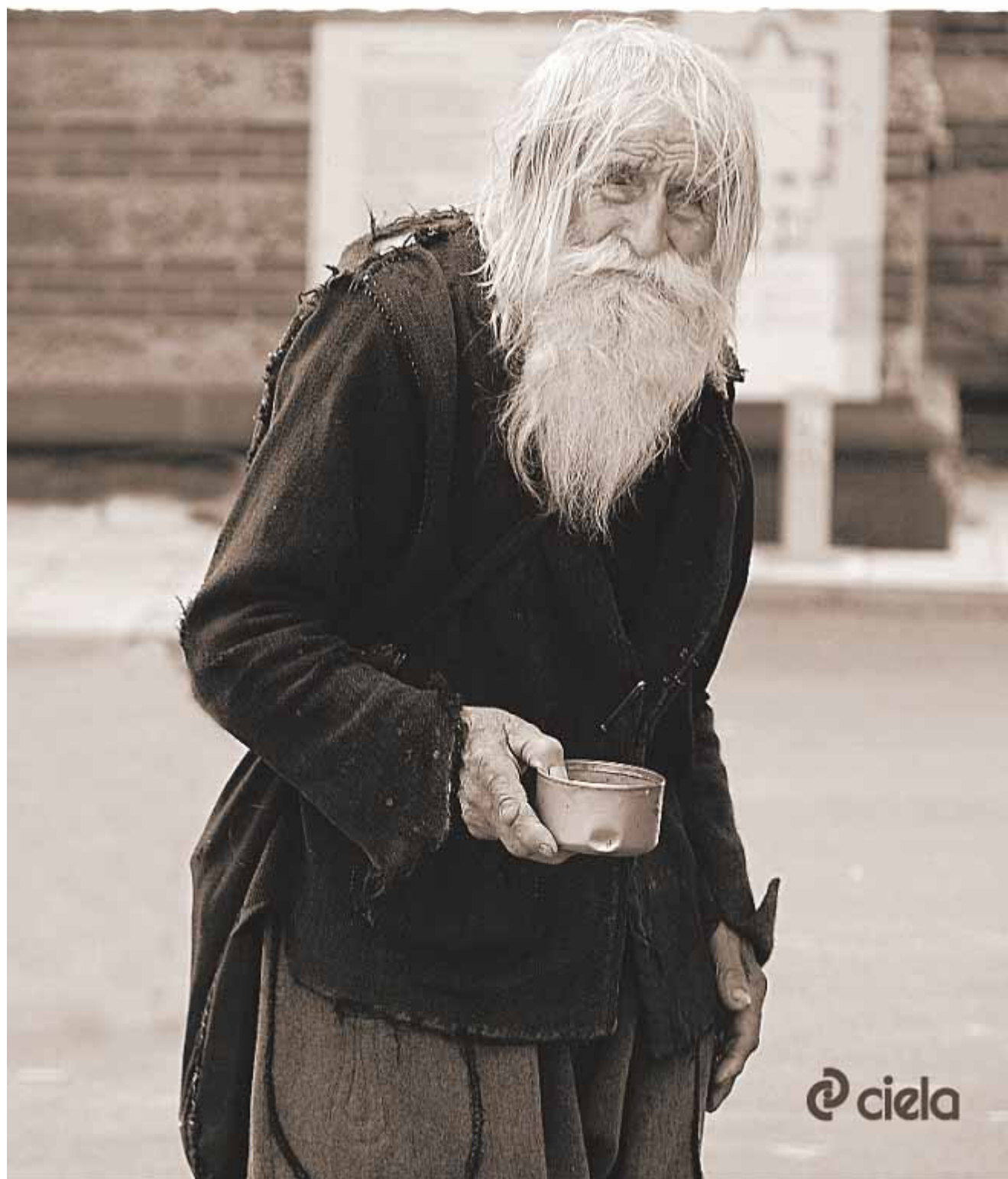
Radoslavov made the first steps to raise a monument in honour of Elder Dobre, 'a first monument of kindness,' which is meant to be built close to the Patriarchal Cathedral in Sofia.

Dobri Dobrev reposed in the Lord on February 13, 2018, and was laid to rest on February 15 in the cemetery of his home village of Bailovo, according to his own will.

Борислав Раdosлавов

ДЯДО ДОБРИ

свещецът от Байлово



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(Source: basilica.ro/Photography courtesy of Kiril Sinev)