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NY: KURSK ROOT ICON BLESSES ROMANIAN MONASTERY'S PATRONAL FEAST



St. Demetrios the New Romanian Orthodox Monastery joyously celebrated its patronal feast day last month, bringing together Romanian and Russian hierarchs and faithful from several states.

The Liturgy and festivities were also blessed with the presence of the wonderworking Kursk Root Icon of the Mother of God, brought by His Grace Bishop Nicholas of Manhattan with the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion, the First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, the monastery reports.

"Although the weather forecast predicted a cloudy, if not a rainy day, as soon as the Icon of the Mother of God arrived, the sun came out, which certainly cannot be considered a mere coincidence," writes Abbot Jeremiah, who was enthroned as abbot a year ago.



Reflecting upon the life of St. Demetrios the New, the patron saint of Bucharest, His Eminence Metropolitan Nicolae of the Americas, who presided at the feast, called upon all to have proper Christian priorities:

Each one of us needs to decide which we value more: our soul or the world. St. Demetrios shows us that a simple, hidden life vouchsafed for him eternity. A life that he dedicated to God vouchsafed for him eternity and veneration by generation after generation of Christians. If we would take note of these words and would strive to find an answer, we will certainly be at peace spiritually and we will find the answers to all the other questions: Where is the world going? What is happening with us and our families? We will not find an answer to these questions if we don't first find an answer to the first one: Do we value more our soul or the world? This is the first and most important question that every Christian should pose to himself or herself.

Bp. Nicholas then spoke about the history and miracles of the Kursk Root Icon. In 1898, some anarchists tried to blow up the Icon. But although the cathedral where the Icon was house was completely destroyed, the Icon survived unscathed. At least one of the perpetrators came to faith after seeing the Icon survive, and when he encountered the Icon again many years later in Germany, he offered tearful

repentance to the Mother of God.



“St. Seraphim of Sarov prayed before the Icon. Today, we too pray before it. 700 years of tears and repentance, tears of joy, of suffering, but the miraculous Icon is today with us in order to help us, to allow us to shed tears before it,” His Grace said.

Vladyka Nicholas continued:

Today, in our countries from which we received many blessings, there are troublesome times. The youth are confused, the Faith is trampled underfoot. But the Mother of God came today here to remind us of the fact that we are not alone; we are Orthodox Christians and the miracles that have occurred in the past can happen even today, in our lives. I mentioned the Icon was split in two, and later the two pieces grew back together on their own. We, too, are far from the Church, we have many temptations, but we can turn around and have this union with Christ, union with the Church. This is what the Holy Icon brings. This Icon guides us to Christ. Our prayers are heard if we say them with sincere hearts and pure minds. Just as the Icon was never destroyed, no one can destroy our spiritual life. Just as the Icon travels throughout the entire world, the Mother of God takes our prayers to her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. What a miracle, what a blessing, what a joy!

Bp. Nicholas also offered an icon of the Russian New Martyrs to the monastic brotherhood, a hand-painted icon of St. Nicholas to Met. Nicolae, and copies of the Kursk Root Icon to all the faithful. In turn, the brotherhood gave both Met. Nicolae

and Bp. Nicholas hand-painted Sweet Kissing Icons of the Mother of God.

After the Liturgy, a memorial service for the departed was served, followed by a communal agape meal donated by faithful Orthodox Christians, during which a youth artistic program was held.

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