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Romanian Parishes in Austria take steps to protect the environment



The General Assembly of the Romanian Orthodox Community in Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland, presided by Metropolitan Serafim, voted on Sunday a project whose goal is to raise awareness on ecological issues and increase the accountability of the faithful regarding God's Creation.

The project was unanimously voted and it provides that each parish implement eco-awareness and environment protection measures, said Father Ioan Moga, Chairman of the Romanian Orthodox Community in Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland.

After the vote, Father Nicolae Dura, Administrative Dean of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of Germany, wrote on the Facebook page of Vienna's Romanian "Holy Resurrection" Parish:

“According to the Holy Scriptures, people are ‘tenders and keepers’ (Genesis 2:15) of nature, serving as priests of the surrounding creation. We must relate to nature (earth, water, air, sky) with great responsibility, in order to pass it as a heritage to our descendants They should receive it as a garden of Paradise, not as a desert. God gave it to us as a precious gift, but it is not ours, it belongs to our descendants and to their descendants!”

The package of measures aims at more sustainable energy consumption in the parishes, ecological education for children and youth and ecological certificates for every parish – obtained by avoiding plastic or by recycling measures.

The Romanian Orthodox parishes of eastern Austria adopted the following measures:

- awareness and observance of Orthodox fasting prescriptions (similar to the vegan diet) – although it is foremost a spiritual and ascetic endeavour, the fasting practice also has ecological implications: giving up or cutting meat consumption contributes to fewer carbon emissions;
- using green energy;
- reducing the use of car rides and plane trips;
- selective recycling;
- avoiding plastic objects: for instance, without single-use dishes for anniversary and commemoration feasts;
- planting flowers and trees;
- providing ecological education to children, youth and adults.

The Romanian Orthodox Community in Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland is made of 10 Romanian diaspora parishes located in eastern Austria, of which three are in Vienna. There are 25 Romanian Orthodox parishes in Austria.

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