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Pilot project: Eco-initiatives in the parishes of Romania and the Republic of Moldova



Through “Filantropia” Federation and “Diaconia” Social Mission , the Romanian Orthodox Church is carrying out a pilot project entitled “Eco-initiatives in the parishes of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Romania and the Republic of Moldova.” The project is carried out in partnership with Caritas Ambrosiana, an NGO in Milan, Italy.

The project is the first of its kind and aims to initiate an environmental education and identify solutions to increase environmental responsibility at the level of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Romania and the Republic of Moldova, reads a press release issued by the organizing committee.

As an essential part of the civil society of the two countries (its canonical jurisdiction includes both Romania and the Republic of Moldova), the Romanian Orthodox Church shares the idea of promoting environmental awareness and understanding the role that this idea can play in society to change people’s

attitudes and behaviours.

The solutions to the environmental crisis must be sought not only in technology but also in a change of humanity, as His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople emphasized.

This project aims to:

- raise awareness among priests about ecological issues and bring understanding in the field of ecology as part of the Church's pastoral work;
- provide learning programs and structured materials on environmental protection to help Church priests and volunteers address this topic adequately;
- include ecological projects initiated by young people in parishes.

The project will involve 16 local teams (8 in Romania, selected from the Archdiocese of Bucharest – Bucharest, Ilfov and Prahova – and 8 in the Republic of Moldova), represented by 160 young people, members of the parishes of the Romanian Orthodox Church, who will benefit from environmental information and education and who will initiate and implement local projects.

Concrete goals:

- To elaborate and develop a campaign to promote the ecological message with a theological approach;
- To organise events, initiatives, joint actions such as the celebration of Earth Hour, Earth Day (April 22), the Day of Prayer for the Protection of Creation (September 1), etc.;
- To develop and promote a pastoral guide to vouchsafe a responsible attitude and behaviour toward nature as God's creation and our common home;
- To elaborate and carry out a 7-day course (+ manual) that will include topics related to ecology and responsible behaviour towards nature and the environment;
- To organize two camps for 32 young people, members of the implementation teams;
- Local initiatives will be developed every month in the project's second year by each implementation team.

The project's total value is 200,000 Euros. The period in which it takes place: January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2023.

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