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“In the family, the child understands the mystery of God’s love”: Patriarch Daniel’s message for the Sunday of Parents and Children



His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel has published a message occasioned by the Sunday of Parents and Children, marked this year on June 5, 2022. An initiative of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the day “is an opportunity to reaffirm the main role of the family in the spiritual growth of children and their formation for life,” the Patriarch of Romania stressed.

“In the family, the child begins to understand the mystery of God’s paternal love for all people. Therefore, a child’s education means not only knowledge and preparation for material life, but also spiritual growth or the cultivation of the goodness of the soul, as beauty in its relationship with God and with others,” Patriarch Daniel noted.

Sunday for Parents and Children – Common Prayer and Cooperation for Communion and Salvation: full text
Approved by resolution no. 629 / March 12, 2009, of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Sunday of Parents and Children, the first Sunday after June 1 – International Children’s Day, is an opportunity to reaffirm the primary

role of the family in the spiritual growth of children and their formation for life.

In the family, the child begins to understand the mystery of God's paternal love for all people. Therefore, a child's education means not only knowledge and preparation for material life but also spiritual growth or the cultivation of the goodness of the soul, as beauty in relationship with God and fellow human beings.

In this regard, parents are called to cultivate the practice of common prayer as a source of joy and steadfast love in the family.

Prayer is the foundation of human life and spiritual growth, which helps us face the hardships of life and foretaste from this world the light and joy of the resurrection and eternal life.

Prayer is not only the work of man addressing God but also the secret work of God's grace in the soul of the one in communion with Him.

Nothing can replace prayer, and no activity is more precious than prayer, for prayer gives us the inspiration and strength to speak the kind word and do good.

This year, the Sunday of Parents and Children coincides with the 7th Sunday of Pascha, when we read the Gospel passage about the High Priestly Prayer of our Saviour Jesus Christ, spoken shortly before His Passion (John 17: 1-3).

This prayer reveals God as the Father of an eternal Son, Who came into the world to give life eternal to humans.

The great mystery or ultimate goal of the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ is the unity of the Church. He prayed that all who believe in Him "may be one," that is, live in communion, as the Father and the Son are one, i.e. live in communion, in mutual devotion of love and holiness: "Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one" (John 17:11).

The High Priestly Prayer also shows us that the joy of Christ is complete when His disciples keep the true faith and unity of the Church (John 17:13).

In an increasingly divided and secularized society, to meet the deep spiritual needs of generations of children and young people, the Church calls on parents, educators, teachers, and professors to work together in a spirit of fraternal communion and practical solidarity so that the education of children may become a significant common preoccupation.

Given the many challenges to the Christian family in recent decades, the Church

has intensified its activities to educate children and youth.

The year 2022 is especially dedicated to highlighting the importance and role of prayer in the life of the Church and of the Christian.

In this context, between November 15, 2021, and May 21, 2022, the Romanian Patriarchate organized the National Catechetical Contest, “Prayer in My Life,” which aimed to cultivate man’s relationship of communion with God and with his neighbour through prayer.

The competition was attended by parish catechetical groups, including children and young people from the country and the diaspora. On May 21, 2022, the winners were awarded on the Patriarchal Cathedral’s historical patronal feast of the Holy Great Emperor and Equal to the Apostles Constantine and his mother, Helen.

We convey a fatherly message of appreciation to the Romanian parents and children, as well as a call to keep and live the true faith, practice family prayer, and cultivate paternal, filial and fraternal love for the glory of the Most Holy Trinity and the joy of all children and parents!

With high esteem and blessing,

† Daniel
Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church

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