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Patriarch Daniel remembers Patriarch Teoctist as “a light during life and over time” on 15th anniversary of repose

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In a message marking the 15th anniversary of the repose of Patriarch Teoctist Arăpașu, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel remembered his predecessor as a “pious and diligent hierarch” who spread light from the light of Christ around him.

Patriarch Teoctist was the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church from 1986 to 2007. He reposed on July 30, 2007, and was buried inside the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest.

The burial service was officiated by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, alongside Romanian Orthodox hierarchs and hierarchs representing other local Orthodox Churches. After the religious service, the Patriarch was given state honours.

“Patriarch Teoctist remains in our memory, through all that he left us as a spiritual legacy of his personality and his ecclesiastical and Romanian activity, as a wise man, a patient shepherd and a pious prayerful man”, Patriarch Daniel stressed in his message on July 30, 2022.

Patriarch Daniel’s message was read out by the patriarchal auxiliary bishop Varlaam of Ploiesti, who officiated a memorial service at the Patriarchal Cathedral on Saturday, July 30, 2022.

Patriarch Daniel praised his predecessor, who “pastored in times of communist oppression, but also of agitated freedom, always in a missionary context that demanded much vigilance and faithfulness, wisdom and spiritual struggle.”

“His prayer experience has been a source of spiritual strength, courage and wisdom, kindness and forgiveness, dialogue and cooperation both in times of trouble and suffering and in times of new hope and many achievements.”

“In the hostile context of the communist regime, Patriarch Teoctist was for the Romanian Orthodox Church a diligent and wise shepherd, who worked for the

preservation of the faith and the Romanian cultural values inspired by it.”

“Patriarch Teoctist has cultivated communion through fraternal relations full of light and warmth, carrying out a rich activity in the field of external church relations, promoting dialogue with the sister Orthodox Churches and other Christian communities and cooperation with European and world Christian organizations, as well as at the level of local inter-church relations.”

Patriarch Daniel also recalled Patriarch Teoctist’s efforts to start building the Romanian People’s Salvation Cathedral: “We kept the location chosen and obtained by His Beatitude for the construction of the Romanian People’s Salvation Cathedral, and we built a cathedral inspired by the style of the Romanian Orthodox cathedrals of the 20th century, a synthesis between the Eastern Byzantine style and the Western neoclassical style, especially since Romanians, in history, have always had the vocation of syntheses, of spiritual arches that unite different centuries and spaces. This was also Patriarch Teoctist’s wish: a cathedral in Romanian architectural style.”

“Through all that he left us as a spiritual legacy of his personality and his ecclesiastical and Romanian activity, Patriarch Teoctist remains in our memory as a wise man, a patient shepherd and a pious, praying man,” Patriarch Daniel wrote.

“Knowing his great diligence and devotion to the Church, the spiritual and cultural legacy left to us today, in a spirit of pious gratitude and esteem, we pay homage of remembrance and honour to his memory as a great Romanian hierarch who shepherded the Romanian Orthodox Church in difficult times.”

In conclusion, Patriarch Daniel offered prayers to the All-Compassionate God to place the soul of Patriarch Teoctist in the tabernacles of the holy servants, in the communion of Saints, in the light, peace and love of the Most Holy Trinity.

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