

## **Holy Chrism is the foundation and the source of the sanctification of Church life, Patriarch Daniel says**



After leading the sanctification of the Holy Chrism on Maundy Thursday, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel spoke about its meaning and use in the Orthodox Church, noting that the Holy Chrism is 'the foundation and the source of the sanctification of Church life'.

On Thursday, April 25, 2019, the Patriarch of Romania together with other hierarchs of the Holy Synod officiated the sanctification of the Holy Chrism for the 22nd time since the Romanian Orthodox Church received its autocephaly 134 years ago.

The Patriarch explained that this ceremony takes place on Great and Holy Thursday 'because both the ointment and the Last Supper refer to the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection'.

‘The ointment points to His entombment, while the Eucharist refers to Christ’s death and resurrection celebrated in anticipation on Great and Holy Thursday.’

The Patriarch also listed several practical reasons why the Church Fathers established that the sanctification of Holy Chrism be performed on Maundy Thursday.

His Beatitude recalled the moments when Holy Chrism is used in the Orthodox Church, including anointing the newly-baptized, because Baptism is ‘a participation in Christ’s death and resurrection’.

Holy Chrism is used at the consecration of churches especially because the Altar’s Holy Table symbolizes Christ’s tomb.

In addition, bishops sanctify the antimins with Holy Chrism.

The antimins is a rectangular piece of cloth of either linen or silk, typically decorated with representations of the Descent of Christ from the Cross, the Four Evangelists, and inscriptions related to the Passion.

‘These icons on fabric on which the entombment of Christ or more recently the Last Supper is depicted to make a connection between His sacrifice on the Cross and the Holy Eucharist, which was instituted at the Last Supper,’ Patriarch Daniel explained.

His Beatitude noted that the remains of Saints are also anointed with Holy Chrism.

‘When a righteous person was declared a Saint, their relics are cleansed with holy water and wine, and then anointed with Holy Chrism showing that Christ dwells in that holy person through the grace of the Holy Spirit.’

At the conclusion of his speech, the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church thanked all those involved in the preparation of the Holy Chrism, and to the concelebrating hierarchs.





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