

Eulogy of sacrifice at St Anthimos Monastery: Martyrs of Burning Bush movement commemorated on the feast of Holy 40 Martyrs



Two holidays sharing the eulogy of self-sacrifice were marked on Thursday at St Anthimos Monastery in Bucharest: the feast of the Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste and the Anti-communist Political Prisoners' Day.

"How agreeable it was decided that this day, March 9, should be dedicated in our country to the memory of anti-communist political fighters and prisoners from 1944-1989. And they were confessors, many of them martyrs," Protosyncellus Antipa Burghilea said in his sermon.

"This monastery had three martyrs for the faith," Father Antipa said.

"The best known is Father Daniil Sandu Tudor, who died in Aiud prison in 1962."

"The second is Father Haralambie Vasilache, an exarch in the Archdiocese of Bucharest, the brother of abbot Vasile Vasilache, who also died in Gherla prison in 1962," Fr. Antipa added.

"The third is even less known: Father Vichentie Chimituc. He was a Bessarabian, Transnistrian monk, who became a monk here at St Anthimos Monastery. He was a sexton and loved this church. He found an opportunity and returned to his native region in Transnistria, where he became a parish priest in a village. When the Bolsheviks came, he was asked to renounce monastic life, to get married so that he would be given land and wealth. But seeing that he would not be persuaded, he was forced to close the church and hand over the keys. He did not want to do this. So, together with his mother, nun Agafia, he was killed by axe one night, January 17, 1957."

"This monastery had three martyrs for Christ, and there will have been others," he remembered.

The eulogy of the sacrifice continued at the memorial service, where members of the Burning Bush movement who suffered for their faith in communist prisons were

remembered.

“Through their deeds, the strength of character, and the fact that they did not renounce their faith in hard, cruel times of persecution against Romanian Orthodoxy, they became friends of the Good God,” the abbot of St Anthimos Monastery, Protosyncellus Vicentiu Oboroceanu, said.

The abbot then read a list of members of the Burning Bush Movement who suffered in communist prisons, mentioning hierarchs and priests, teachers, intellectuals or simple monks.

“What prompted those who confessed in Armenia’s Lake in Sebaste, the Holy Forty Martyrs, and those who confessed in communist prisons? What determined them? An active faith,” said the abbot.

“All this confession and martyrdom was but the presence of the discrete drops of the grace of the Holy Spirit that came and grafted man leaving the exterior things and withdrawing into the interior things.”

“This is actually the solution before us all: turning our gaze from the troubling and exhausting exterior to the restful and redeeming interior. What greater knowledge can we have than Christ?” Protos. Vicentiu Oboroceanu said.







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