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## **Prayer before competition: Romania's national bodybuilding and fitness team receive Archbishop Irineu's blessing**



Tuesday, before departing for the European Championship in Spain, His Eminence Archbishop Irineu blessed the Romanian National Bodybuilding and Fitness Team at Christ Pantocrator Monastery in Alba Iulia.

Gabriel Toncean, the president of the Romanian Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness, headed the team.

“Let’s say a young gymnast wants to compete in the Olympic games. How will she achieve this wish? First of all, she will have to be completely dedicated to this goal. Then she will have to make tremendous sacrifices of her time. She will need to spend many hours daily doing exercises and routine training. She will work under the highly qualified eyes of the trainer, who will highlight the smallest deficiencies and correct all her techniques. At the same time, she will keep a strict diet,” the Archbishop of Alba Iulia told the sporting team.

“It is the same with piety. To become godlier, we must devote ourselves to this goal. It is necessary to undergo strenuous and continuous training. Through prayer and obedience, we submit to the guidance of our Coach, the Holy Spirit. We must discipline ourselves to read, study, listen to the word of God and, attend the Holy Church, receive the divine Mysteries. Limiting yourself to praying for piety will do no good. We need to recognise that work is required, that we must work for our salvation with fear and trembling (Philip. 2: 12),” His Eminence emphasised.

The National Bodybuilding and Fitness Team made it an annual tradition to meet with Archbishop Irineu for his blessing and prayers ahead of important competitions.

The 2023 IFBB European Bodybuilding, Fitness & Fitness Championships is held in Santa Susanna, Barcelona, May 4-8, 2023.

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