

## **Patriarch Daniel speaks about the Romanian village at Bucharest Conference on rural area**



His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel on Monday, November 12, 2018 opened a conference on the 'Socio-economic rural space. National identity and unity' at the Patriarch Teoctist Aula of the Palace of the Patriarchate in Bucharest.

His Beatitude focused his opening remarks on the Romanian village today, recalling that the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church declared the year 2019 as Solemn Year of Romanian Village (of diligent priests, teachers, and mayors).

'A genuine farmer is hardworking and generous; he joyfully multiplies his gifts and the joy to make the soil fruitful.'

'We offer our fellows what we have received as a gift from God, adding our labour and skill,' the Patriarch said.

In agriculture, the Patriarch noted, the communion of divine and human love is enriched, uniting 'the Creator and the creature, the worship and culture, practical science and profound spirituality.'

Therefore, 'life means something much more than to consume because we also live

spiritually not only biologically.'

'Life especially means a communion of thought and action among contemporary people, but also among past and future generations,' he said.

The Romanian village, Patriarch Daniel stressed, is a 'faithful keeper of church tradition and national culture,' and 'was over the time the space where the spiritual, cultural, and moral values of our nation were developed and fulfilled.'

The Patriarch of Romania also spoke about the crisis Romania's villages are experiencing saying that this crisis 'is amplified by the existing tension between its developing potential and the affirmation inability.'

Romania 'is a country with a rich soil, but with poor peasants,' His Beatitude said.

'In the last years, the Romanian peasant experiences the suffering of his uprooting and estrangement through migration abroad, labouring more for the development of other countries rather than his own motherland.'

Given the contemporary challenges, 'the Romanian Orthodox Church responsibly advocates in favour of rural development, because most of the poor population in the rural area belongs to our Church, and our village priests are facing many social and pastoral issues.'

The Patriarch cautioned that in the villages where there is no church or priest 'there are more cases of alcoholism, more solitude, less solidarity among people, less communion, and less joy.'

His Beatitude stressed the need to value the spiritual, moral and practical values of the past of the Romanian village such as 'faith, honour, diligence, generosity, the sense of property and initiative, solidarity and communion in the rural community and among rural communities.'

'Nature should always be cultivated with responsibility, being a gift of God for us and for future generations,' His Beatitude said.

There is a 'living connection' between the creation and the Creator, between the gift and the Giver, said the Patriarch ending his speech.