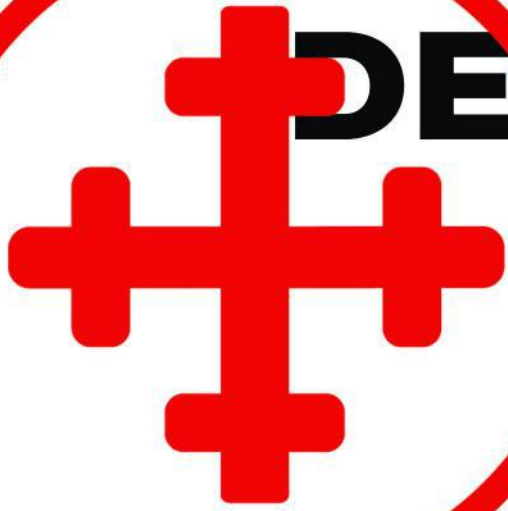




The good to know

DECEMBER



The International Association of Digital Media and Orthodox Pastoral Care was established ▶ [p. 2](#)



Romania National Day celebrated at Alba Iulia ▶ [p. 4](#)

His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visits the DMZ

Basilica's top 8: most popular articles

Bulgarian Orthodox Church supports organ transplants

Iraq officially makes Christmas Day a national holiday

Prince Stefan Baptized by Patriarch Irinej

20th anniversary of repose of Elder Cleopas Ilie prayerfully commemorated at Sihastria Monastery



Romanian Patriarch prayerfully celebrates his Patron Saint

[p. 3](#)



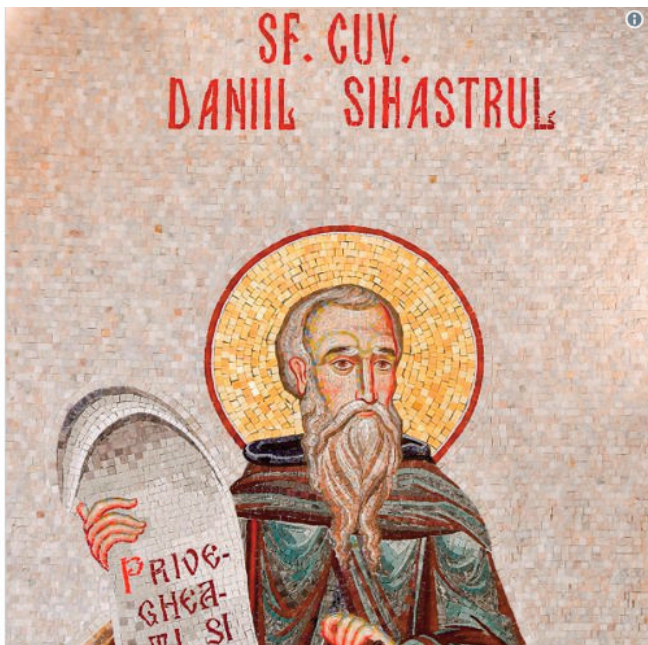
Bulgarian Orthodox Church supports organ transplants - under certain conditions



The Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church has issued its position on organ transplants, a day after Health Minister Kiril Ananiev met faith groups and asked them to declare support for state policy on the matter.

The governing body of the church, to which the majority of Bulgarians declare themselves to be adherents, said that it gave its blessing to the performing of organ transplants, subject to a number of conditions.

These include "strict and regulated observance of fundamental bio-ethical principles", establishment of brain death according to strictly defined clinical criteria, and written informed consent by the donor or his closest relatives. ▶




 Basilica.ro (EN)
@BasilicaNews

5 facts about St Daniel the Hermit

- 🏠 he lived in a cave-cell
- 👑 he was the spiritual father of Prince St. Stephen the Great
- 🏛️ he urged St. Stephen to build churches
- 👤 he was the spiritual son of St. Leontius of Rădăuți
- 😊 he is one of Patriarch's Daniel most beloved saints

📄 20 4:15 PM - Dec 18, 2018

 See Basilica.ro (EN)'s other Tweets ▶

The International Association of Digital Media and Orthodox Pastoral Care was established

The International Association of Digital Media and Orthodox Pastoral Care was recently established following the announcement during the International Conference Digital Media and Orthodox Pastoral Care (DMOPC18) that took place this year in Crete.

The Association is founded on the initiative of the Non-Profit Civil Company 'Saint Maxim the Greek Institute for the Research, Preservation, and Promotion of Spiritual and Cultural Traditions', following the two International Conferences on Digital Media and Orthodox Pastoral Care which were held in Athens on 7-8-9 May 2015 and in Kolymbari, Hania, on 18-19-20 June 2018.

Both conferences were organized under the High Auspices of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.



Some of the Aims of the Association:

To link publishers who are active worldwide in the production of Christian Orthodox content on the Internet (active web pages, tablet or smartphone apps, video documentaries, films etc) as owners or administrators.

To coordinate the efforts of Orthodox digital media towards a more effective articulation of the Gospel word for the glory of God among users of this media, as well as to make a common, coordinated effort to spread the values of the Orthodox Christian tradition towards all people of good will;

To organize conferences and cultural events, exhibitions and other spiritual and artistic occasions;

To formulate studies on the qualitative characteristics of the use of the Internet, its divergence from traditional methods of Church pastoral care, the new view of humankind it provides, and the pastoral opportunities it offers, as well as the negative aspects which arise.

The first Board and Consulting Committee meeting of the DMOPC Association will take place in Greece within February 2019. ▶



Romanian Patriarch prayerfully celebrates his Patron Saint

His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of Romania on Monday, December 7, 2018, attended the Te Deum service officiated at the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest on the feast day of His Beatitude's Patron Saint, the Holy and Glorious Prophet Daniel.

The Te Deum service was officiated by His Grace Timotei of Prahova, assistant bishop to the Bucharest Archdiocese, and was attended by hierarchs, clergy, state officials and believers.

At the end of the service, Bp Timotei addressed those present referring to the link between Prophet Daniel's life and Patriarch Daniel's ministry.

'There are feast days honouring people, and people who honour feast days. One of such is now celebrated at the Patriarchal Cathedral in honour of the Archpastor of our Church who is honouring his protector,' the assistant bishop said Dec. 17.

'31 years ago, at an all-night vigil, a young theology professor was tonsured a monk and received a new name, very similar to the names he bore until then,' Bishop Timotei said noting the similarity between the monastic name of the Romanian Patriarch and his secular names (Dan-Ilie). His Grace noted that the name Daniel is of Hebrew origin and means 'God is my judge.'

Full story ►



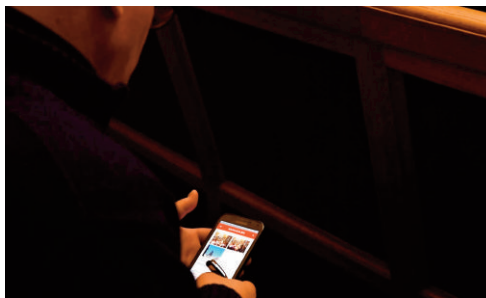
Prince Stefan Baptized by Patriarch Irinej



His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia christened young Prince Stefan, the son of Their Royal Highnesses Prince Philip and Princess Danica, at the Royal Chapel of St. Andrew the First-Called in the Royal Compound in Dedinje, Belgrade, Serbia.

Prince Stefan's godparents are HRH Prince Alexander (twin brother of HRH Prince Philip), Mrs. Petra Lazarevic and Mr. Dusan Antunovic, long standing family friends of the Royal Couple Prince Philip and Princess Danica. ►

Basilica's top 8: most popular articles in 2018



The most popular article was related to the consecration ceremony of Romania's National Cathedral, performed by His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of Romania on November 25, 2018.

1. Consecration ceremony of Romania National Cathedral;
2. Ecumenical Patriarchate issues announcement regarding situation of Ukraine;
3. Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago throws First Pitch at White Sox Game. Full story ►

Iraq makes Christmas Day a national holiday



The Iraqi Cabinet approved a law to mark Christmas Day, December 25, as an official holiday across the country "on the occasion of the birth of Jesus Christ". The Cabinet voted on an amendment to the national holidays law in the country that Christmas Day is a holiday for all Iraqis, and not only for the Christian community. Before the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, there were about 1.4 million Christians in the country. However, their numbers have dwindled to roughly 300,000. ►

'We thank for all benefactions of the Great Union'



Romania National Day celebrated at Alba Iulia

For all the benefactions of the Great Union, we thank today the Most Holy Trinity,' Patriarch Daniel said after the Te Deum service officiated on Saturday, December 1, 2018, on Romania's National Day at the Coronation Cathedral in Alba Iulia.

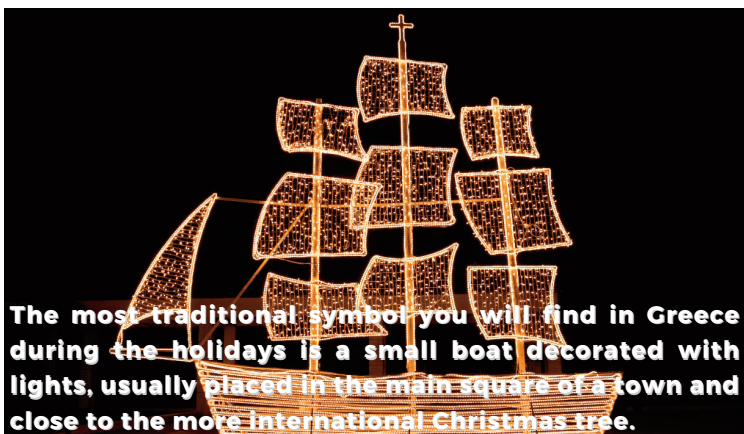
His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem and All Palestine also concelebrated.

'We gratefully remember all Romanian

heroes who sacrificed themselves for the freedom, unity and dignity of the Romanian people,' the Patriarch of Romania noted.

'Today, all Romanian citizens have the duty to keep and cultivate not only the gift of freedom but also the gift of national unity, as a symbol of the dignity of the Romanian people, in dialogue and cooperation with all peoples of the world,' he added. ▶

Why Greeks Traditionally Decorate a Boat Instead of a Christmas Tree



The most traditional symbol you will find in Greece during the holidays is a small boat decorated with lights, usually placed in the main square of a town and close to the more international Christmas tree.

To karavaki, or small boat is rooted in the traditions of a country with a symbiotic relationship with the sea.

In fact on the many Greek islands the Christmas boats remain the most popular ornament of the holiday season. Different legends explain the tradition of the Christmas Greek boat.

One of them is related to Saint Nicholas (Agios Nikolaos), the Patron Saint of Sailors. ▶

 Basilica.ro (EN)
@BasilicaNews



The stone monument has the shape of four crosses joined at the top and two reversed "U" letters, meant to signify the four provinces which united throughout 1918 into a single country. [basilica.ro/en/his-beatitu...](https://www.basilica.ro/en/his-beatitu...)

♥ 15 7:15 PM - Dec 1, 2018



His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel inaugurates 1918 Great Union ...

On Saturday, December 1, 2018, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel inaugurated a memorial dedicated to Romania's 1918 Great Union in [basilica.ro](https://www.basilica.ro)

 See Basilica.ro (EN)'s other Tweets ▶

His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visits the DMZ



On Saturday, December 8, His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visited the DMZ area of Cheorwon-gun, Gangwon-do, South Korea.

He shared in the pain that the division of the peninsula has brought to the Korean people. Together with Koreans he held a memorial service for those fallen during the Korean war and prayed for peace and reunification.

Specifically, he prayed for the reunion of those families that have not been able to meet each other because of the division. HAH then visited the Borderline Peace School. ▶

Society of Orthodox Women established in Bălți Diocese

The Society of Orthodox Women was established on Tuesday, Dec. 18, at the Nativity of the Lord Church in Bălți, Moldova, aiming 'to promote and to foster Christian virtues in family, school and public life and to contribute to the active involvement of the Orthodox Christian woman in the national community for a better life.'

The establishment meeting was chaired by His Grace Bishop Antonie of Balti after celebrating the Divine Liturgy. In his speech, Bishop Antonie stressed the role of woman in the life of the Church, especially in preserving faith. ▶



20th anniversary of repose of Elder Cleopas Ilie prayerfully commemorated at Sihastria Monastery

His Grace Bishop Veniamin of Southern Bessarabia on Saturday, Dec. 8, celebrated the Divine Liturgy at St Theodora Church of Sihastria Monastery commemorating Archimandrite Cleopas Ilie, one of Romania's charismatic elders of the past century, on the 20th anniversary of his blessed repose.

Elder Cleopas was an abbot of Sihastria Monastery and a well-known spiritual figure of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Elder Cleopas was the spiritual godfather of the current Patriarch of Romania, at his monastic tonsure. Father Cleopas of blessed memory reposed in the Lord on December 2, 1998.



[Full Story ▶](#)

Site of Jesus' Baptism Slated for Reopening as Landmines Cleared

After nearly 50 years, the sacred site where Jesus is believed to have been baptized is set to reopen as the last of many landmines are cleared from the area.

In a statement released Sunday December 16, 2018, the Israeli government announced that its work with international anti-landmine experts is almost complete. Marcel Aviv, who heads the Defense Ministry's National Mine Action Authority, said he hopes to have the task completed by December 2019.



"Israel placed all the mines between 1967 to 1971 because there was a war, but now it's empty because it's a border of peace," Aviv said.

The historic site located about 10 kilometers east of Jericho is home to several Christian churches, including a Catholic chapel, Greek and Ethiopian Orthodox monasteries, and Greek, Romanian, Syrian, Coptic and Russian Orthodox churches. While visitors have been able to tour the area along the river, the 250-acre territory that houses these churches remains closed to the public due to safety concerns. ▶