

The Good to Know

YEAR III • NO. 2 • MARCH 2019



**HOLY SYNOD TO CONSIDER
WITH PRIORITY THE 127 ROMANIAN
ORTHODOX PARISHES IN UKRAINE**

**'PRO LIFE = PRO-LOVE'
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
WITH SFL PRESIDENT**



On this issue:

- 24 milion euros spent for social-philanthropic activity of the Romanian Orthodox Church
- Bulgarian priest remembers Sofia's saintly beggar
- Patriarch Daniel opens the first Basilica.ro photography exhibition

**THE SOCIAL-PHILANTHROPIC
ACTIVITY OF THE
ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
IN 2018**


24,000,234.99 EUR
spent to support all the
social-philanthropic
activities in the
Romanian Patriarchate

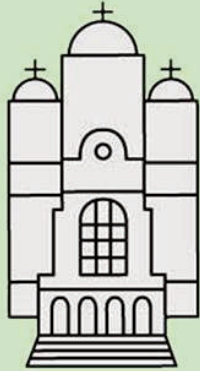
146
social canteens
and bakeries

43
medical institutions
and pharmacies

104
day care centres
for children

61
kindergartens,
afterschools

20
day care centres
for elderly



31
diocesan offices for
social assistance and
community centres

47
residential centres
for the elderly

18
emergency centres

104.957 beneficiaries **11.568** staff **9.573** volunteers **551** projects & programmes

 **BASILICA.RO**

BUCHAREST
National Church
Council

The members of the National Church Council met Tuesday, February 19, 2019, for the annual working session at the Patriarchal Residence in Bucharest, chaired by His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel.

The NCC members reviewed the most important activities carried out last year by the Romanian Orthodox Church and set project proposals for 2019. The Patriarch of Romania read out the synthesis report stressing that in 2018 the Romanian Patriarchate spent 24 million Euros for the entire social and philanthropic work.



© Mircea Florescu/Basilica.ro

many and various forms of merciful love

The Patriarch went on to refer to the activities of the Romanian Church abroad, by strengthening the ties with the other local Orthodox Churches, by promoting respect and cooperation at inter-Christian and inter-religious levels, and by intensifying the ministry of the Romanian Orthodox communities in the diaspora.

'Analyzing the existing data, we note that the Romanian Orthodox Church has faithfully followed its major responsibility for spiritual life, religious education of youth, and social-philanthropic mission,' Patriarch Daniel said during the annual NCC meeting.

His Beatitude spoke about the 'many and various forms' of merciful love noting that 'material mercy may be food for the hungry, clothes for those deprived of them, medicine for the sick, material aid for the poor, and the like.' Referring to philanthropy, the Patriarch said that 'we must always see Christ's hand extended to us in every hand of a man in need.'

At the end, Patriarch Daniel expressed his appreciation for the 'spiritual and material efforts of all those who support the many activities of the Romanian Orthodox Church.'

Reviewing the pastoral-liturgical and administrative activity, the Patriarch recalled the consecration of the Holy Altar of the National Cathedral and the first memorial service held for Romania's national heroes inside the Cathedral.

His Beatitude pointed to the canonization ceremonies held for St Joseph the Merciful, Metropolitan of Moldavia, and St George the Pilgrim, and noted that in 2018 the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church glorified Bishop Dionysius Erhan of Cetatea Alba and Ismail.

HOLY SYNOD to consider with priority the 127 Romanian Orthodox parishes in Ukraine

As regards the ecclesiastical situation in Ukraine, the Holy Synod stressed the following aspects:

For almost thirty years, the issue of the Ukrainian schism was not solved, nor was any appeal made for a pan-Orthodox mediation, as was the case in the past with the schism in Bulgaria. Noticing this deadlock in resolving the situation, the Ecumenical Patriarchate granted the Tomos of autocephaly to the hierarchs, clergy, and believers who were in schism with the Russian Orthodox Church and the entire Orthodoxy, but this Tomos was accepted only by the Ukrainian Orthodox people who were not in communion with the Moscow Patriarchate. Therefore, the problem of Ukrainian ecclesiastical unity is not fully re-



solved at present, also because in Ukraine there is a large Russian population having a direct relation to the Moscow Patriarchate. For a concrete and correct decision of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church, at a forthcoming working session, the Holy Synod will consider with priority that there are 127 Romanian Orthodox parishes in Ukraine, especially in Northern Bukovina, which are under the jurisdiction of the

In the event of an unsuccessful bilateral dialogue, it is necessary to convene a Synaxis of all Primates of Orthodox Churches to solve the existing problem.

solved at present, also because in Ukraine there is a large Russian population having a direct relation to the Moscow Patriarchate. Regarding this tense ecclesiastical situation in Ukraine, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church reiterates its stance expressed during its previous working sessions of 24 May and 25 October 2018. It was then recommended that, through dialogue, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Moscow Patriarchate identify a solution to this ecclesiastical dispute by preserving the unity of faith, by respecting the administrative and pastoral freedom of the clergy and faithful in this country (including the right to autocephaly), and by restoring Eucharistic communion. In the event of an unsuccessful bilateral dialogue, it is necessary to convene a Synaxis of all Primates of Orthodox

Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate. A real consultation is needed with these Romanian Orthodox people, who are concerned with preserving their ethnic and linguistic identity. In this sense, it is necessary to obtain written assurances from Ukrainian ecclesiastical and state authorities that the ethnic and linguistic identity of these Romanians will be respected, and that these Romanian Orthodox will have the possibility to organise themselves within a Romanian Orthodox Vicariate and to be able to cultivate spiritual relations with the Romanian Patriarchate, in order to be supported by sending liturgical and theological books in their mother tongue, that is, in the Romanian language. It was noted that a Ukrainian Orthodox Vicariate has been operating in Romania since 1990. ➔

BANAT METROPOLITAN INVITES POOR MOTHER OF FOUR CHILDREN TO EAT LUNCH TOGETHER

Following the Divine Liturgy celebrated Sunday, February 10, 2019, at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Timisoara, His Eminence Metropolitan Ioan of Banat invited a poor mother of four children to eat lunch at his residence.

The Metropolitan was impressed by the woman's story and offered to help her.



© Trinitas TV

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‘When I entered the church,’ Metr. Ioan said, ‘I met this sister, who did not cry out to me to help her, however her troubled called me. She has four children, and she stayed where she could, and now she wants to go back home.’

After hearing that the disadvantaged woman had not eaten a warm meal for two weeks, Metropolitan Ioan invited her over to eat lunch together at his residence commending her to the care of a nun.

The Metropolitan of Banat addressed all the mothers present in the Cathedral saying that anyone of them could have been ‘in her pain and sorrow,’ urging them to help the woman ‘get home and pass the threshold of winter.’ His Eminence noted that when we pass by someone in trouble we should ‘stop as Christ stopped and comforted the Canaanite woman.’ Metropolitan Ioan of Banat is renowned for his charitable actions.

It has become a tradition for the Metropolitan of Banat to celebrate his name day with homeless people, and he has built several houses for financially disadvantaged families.

‘There is nothing exceptional. This is normality for me and we should do such actions as often as possible,’ Metropolitan Ioan of Banat said.



SATU MARE DEANERY BUYING HOUSE FOR 7-CHILDREN FAMILY THAT LOST HOME IN FIRE

A Romanian family with 7 children that lost its home to a fire in early February will be able to buy a new home thanks to the generosity and Christian love of the clergy and faithful of the Satu Mare Deanery of the Maramureş and Sătmar Diocese in northwest Romania.

Through collections organized in the churches, \$11,265 (9,940 euros) was collected for the family.

The fire broke out on Saturday evening, February 2, due to an electrical short circuit, destroying the family home in the village of Tătăreşti. The local authorities and



community arranged for the family to be immediately moved to a former pharmacy building.

Thanks to the collection organized by local priests, the family with 7 children under the age of 18 will soon be able to purchase a new house. ➔

CONSTRUCTION FOR SÜMELA MONASTERY CABLE CAR PROJECT TO START IN MARCH

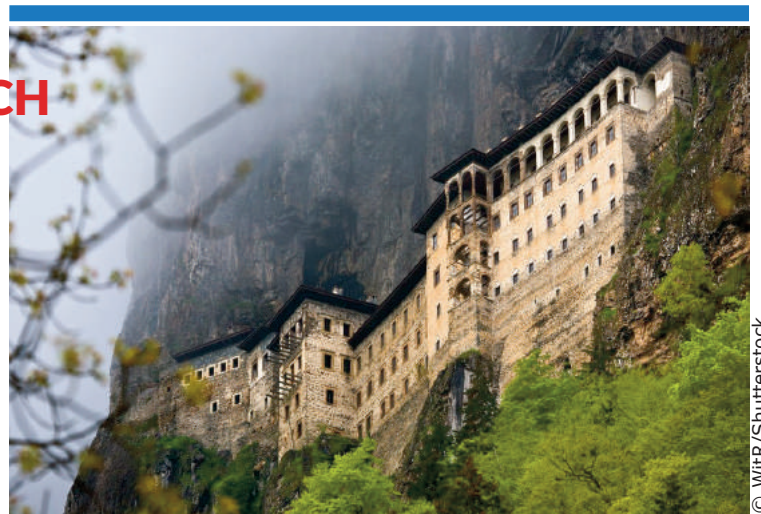
Construction works for a cable car planned to be built in the area where the historic Sümela Monastery in Turkey's Black Sea province of Trabzon's Maçka district is will start in March, authorities have announced.

Companies will tender for the project on Feb. 19, Trabzon Mayor Orhan Fevzi Gümrükçüoğlu has said.

The planned cable car will operate between three stations and will cover a distance of 2.5 kilometers. The project aims to provide an easy access to the historical monastery, which is visited by around 700,000 people every year.

Maçka Mayor Koray Koçan has said the planned cable car project will lead to a further increase in the number of tourists visiting Sümela Monastery, perched on a scenic cliff facing the Altındere Valley.

"I believe that several tourists will come just to get on the cable car. The Sümela



Monastery had lastly seen 700,000 tourists [a year before it was closed for restoration]. I believe that we will double this figure with the cable car. We'll reach a number around 1.5-2 million," Koçan said.

Sümela Monastery was closed to tourists in 2015 for a restoration process that aimed to address the danger caused by the rock masses around Karadağ Mountain where it is located. Restoration works have also been ongoing inside the historical monastery. Once opened to tourists, which is expected sometime this year, the monastery's unknown parts, including chapels, will be opened for visits. ➔

BULGARIAN PRIEST REMEMBERS SOFIA'S SAINTLY BEGGAR

Marking Dobre Dobrev's 1st death anniversary, Fr Kiril Sinev, a Bulgarian priest who serves in Ruse, told the Basilica News Agency how people remember the saintly grandfather who devoted himself to raising money for Bulgaria's Orthodox Church. Father Kiril Sinev said that even the Elder's name Dobre (which derives from the Bulgarian word dobar, good) speaks of his kindness and goodness.

'The citizens of Sofia remember Dobre standing in the porch of the Patriarchal Cathedral of Saint Alexander Nevsky, dressed in peasant clothes, holding a burning candle and a plastic glass, bowing down in front of every man entering the church to pray.'



© Kiril Sinev

'He gave all his fortune to the Church, living in a room in the courtyard of the Sts Cyril and Methodius Church in his home village. At the end of his 103-year-old life, we learned that he was not an ordinary beggar. The money he gathered for God,' Fr Kiril said.

'Throughout his life,' Kiril Sinev recalled, 'he gathered around 80,000 leva, which he gave to some churches and monasteries.'

Fr Kiril Sinev stressed that 'the greatest donation ever made by a person' to Sofia's Patriarchal Cathedral was made by 'the Saint of Bailovo.' The life of the saintly

beggar was first published by Borislav Radoslavov in a volume titled 'Elder Dobre, the Bailovo Saint.' ↻



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**What he did was not
begging, but giving
alms.**

**He was an open
gospel, as he lived
and spoke
according to the
biblical
commandments.**

In Brief:

Extensive restoration works to start at Sofia's St AlexanderNevsky Cathedral



© Doxologia

Patriarch Theodore of Alexandria visited the city of Dolisie in Congo ➔



© Patriarchate of Alexandria

Religion Olympiad for Romanian students in America reaches 10th edition



© epic Pew

Ecumenical Patriarchate establishes Synaxis of All Military Saints ➔



© Vima Orthodoxias

Met. Nektarios: If we say that we are Orthodox, we will have the finger pointed at us



© Parohia Trappes

Metropolitan Iosif of Western & Southern Europe consecrates Orthodox Church in Trappes



© Orthodoxie.com

New Dean appointed for Institute for Orthodox Theology Higher Studies at Chambesy



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'Being pro life means being pro-love'

A few days before the March for Life 2019, the newly-elected president of the Students for Life Association, Eliza Clotea, a senior student at the University of Medicine and Pharmacy Carol Davila, Bucharest, confessed in an exclusive interview for Basilica.ro that the most difficult part of her activity is the 'fight against the obstacle of mentalities'. Eliza said she has a difficult work to do, but 'with a strong will and love a world for love can be built'.



© Raluca Ene/Basilica.ro

Basilica.ro: Eliza, what is the most difficult part of your activity and whom do you count on when all seems the hardest?

E.C. I believe that the most difficult moments are those where we fight against the obstacle of mentalities, meaning that we meet with people that doubt the necessity of a pro-life culture and bring forward the argument of legality: Why should we help a woman keep her child if abortion is legal?

Sometimes it is harder to explain someone that what is legal is not necessarily moral or good, or the fact that in most cases abortion is not a woman's choice, but instead it is something she is pressured to do.

A woman in pregnancy crisis ends up "choosing abortion", because of the pressure she is subjected to from those around her, from her partner, her husband, her family, her relatives. It is necessary to explain these things, because there are

8 many that don't know them, never heard about them, and otherwise, the main aspect of the pro-life mes-

sage will never be understood: Being pro-life means being supportive with those in need.

I am happy and thankful that the founder and former president of the Students for Life Bucharest, Alexandra Nadane, and other older volunteers are close to me when I need them, to ask them for advice when my experience is not enough, to find the best solution for a problem and for the moments when I need encouragement.

Basilica.ro: How does medicine go hand in hand with volunteering? But especially with pro-life volunteering?

E.C. They go together very well. I think that every student, even one who studies medicine, recognizes and discovers that there is time for volunteering, if he is honest with himself and tries to arrange his schedule. Pro-life volunteering is one of great benefit, both personally and for the society.

From my point of view, as a student in medicine, I do not think there is a better place to volunteer. We, medical students and future physicians, are closest to life and we know how precious it is at every

Exclusive interview with Students for Life President Eliza Clotea

moment and place of its existence.

“Before the mom knows that she is pregnant, her baby is doing a lot of stunning things.

Science has gone a long way and it reveals every day new things about the miraculous way in which a child develops in his mother's womb. From the first second of conception, the baby has unique DNA, different from that of his parents. At about 16 days his heart is starting to beat - with the machines that can be found in research laboratories it can be detected, but the usual ultrasounds in hospitals do not have such a performance yet.

At only 8 weeks, baby's organs are almost fully developed, and the little one has exactly the look we each have when looking at ourselves in the mirror. I would say that he's a "tiny human" - actually a real person, a real person from the first second! These things are special because everything is happening so quickly and sometimes, before the mom knows that she is pregnant, her baby can do a lot of stunning things.

Basilica.ro: There are a few days left until the March for Life. How are preparations?

E.C. We are very busy preparing the March for Life! It is the time to put all the details in place. But the emotions are also raising, getting bigger ... bigger, bigger and bigger, so that we say: well, Thank God there is only one month left until March 23!

Talking now about serious things: what is very important when we prepare the March for Life is the message. If people understand the need for support for women in pregnancy crisis and the need for a pro-life, pro-love culture, then they will come to the March for Life. This is why the whole Month of March is called "The Month for Life" and includes a series of pro-life events which increase the visibility of the March and give people the opportunity to discover the beauty of engaging in this movement. We are not only pro-life in March, but

throughout our whole life. We are only doing more exercises in March so that we can be this way throughout the year!

Basilica.ro: Approximately 5,000 people marched for life in 2018 in Bucharest. What are your expectations for this year? Can you offer some insight into the schedule of this year's Month for Life?

E.C. Sure. First of all, we hope that the weather will be nice, sunny and there won't be any snow again. But even if it's cold, like last year, we will not be upset if our nose freezes a little bit...

We want to see as many people as possible so that our message, the pro-life message, is strong: Yes, unborn babies and pregnant women need our support and we are with them.

I have read an extraordinary comment made by an American editor a while ago that said "Here's what separates the March for Life from any other march: nobody in attendance is marching for themselves. Nobody is demanding rights or privileges for themselves. Everyone is marching on behalf of those who cannot march." That is exactly the way it is and this is the reason we need to march.

Related to the Month of Life, it will include pro-life events that seek to cover as many areas and themes as possible: we will have a pro-life training, pro-life and pro-family screenings of artistic movies with great educational power, Babies go to the Parliament, a trip, a Gala for Life, a Pancake Workshop, a photo workshop for young families, we will also offer flowers to mothers who are expecting or gave birth on March 8th.

On Saturday, March 16th, the Run for Life 2019 will be held, where more than 500 runners are expected to take part. The most important moment of the Month for Life will be the 2019 March for Life "Unique from the First Second" on Saturday, March 23rd.

Every event, even a small one, has



its role and we encourage everyone to take part in as many as possible. We will be publishing on March 1 the calendar of events organized by our organisation and these can be found on our webpage, studentipentruviata.ro. We are very happy if other associations organize their own events this month.

Basilica.ro: Going back to volunteering, what was your biggest fulfilment as a member of the Students for Life Association?

E.C. The moments when I work with other volunteers to set up an event, but also when we achieve our mission and look gratefully at the outcome of our work.

“These are the moments when I realize how beautiful things go hand in hand: God’s will and what volunteers do.

There have been many moments like those, which help me when I need encouragement or when I encounter different difficulties.

Basilica.ro: Hundreds of volunteers are preparing the pro-life events in March. What are they motivated about? What is the most important reason to be a volunteer pro-life? Why should anyone attend the March for Life or get involved in organizing the March?

E.C. First of all, I think it's about gratitude. They are grateful that they have received the gift of life, that someone said YES for them. I think this is particularly true among my

generation, of which more than two thirds are missing. I was born in 1995 when, according to official statistics, 68% of children were aborted. The percentage is even greater, unfortunately, because medical abortions and abortions done in private clinics are not included in these statistics.

“It is a tough reality, but many of us are missing.

People who, through the unique purpose that God had given them, would have brightened up our days and would have brought many good things into this world. At the same time, volunteers want to help, to do something useful and good. The greatest good that someone can do for the person next to him is to save his life, to save him from the suffering that destroys and to bring him closer to the truth. This is what volunteers and all those involved in the pro-life movement are trying to do. Through the love we show to women in pregnancy crisis and their children, we prove that we understand what it means to be a human: to show love to those in need of support, of help. This is why we are also participating at the March for Life. We show that we understand what love, compassion, humanity means, and that hundreds of years of scientific and economic development have not driven these fundamental values away from us, but have given us more evidence to do what is natural: to protect every life, at any time and in every place of its existence.

Brief bio:

Eliza Maria Clotea

Born in 1995, from Braşov. 5th year medical student at the University of Medicine and Pharmacy Carol Davila, Bucharest. She has been volunteering at Students for Life since 2015 and since June 2018 she is the president of the organisation.



PRINCE CHARLES ATTENDS ORTHODOX SERVICE AT ROMANIAN PARISH IN LONDON

HRH Prince Charles of Wales attended an Orthodox service hosted by St George Romanian Parish in London in the presence of over 200 Romanians living in Great Britain on Thursday evening, February 14, 2019.

The Parish of Saint George in London is under the canonical jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolis of Western and Southern Europe, Great Britain's Deanery, being the first Romanian Orthodox Parish that appeared on the map of the Romanian emigration in the British Isles.

The Romanian community built around the Parish of "Saint George" in London operated from the early beginnings in the Anglican Church "St. Dunstan's in-the-West", rebuilt in 1831 on the site of an older church.

The service was attended by His Eminence Metropolitan Iosif of Western and Southern Europe, Romanian priests and believers, as well as representatives of the Church of England.

The service chanted in Romanian, English and Greek included hymns to the Pantanassa Icon of the Mother of God, since a replica of Vatopedi's wonderworking icon of Virgin Mary is enshrined in the church.

'Prince Charles has greatly appreciated the value and the old age of the beautiful iconostasis from Antim Monastery, which offers every Sunday the necessary environment for carrying out Orthodox services,' the rector of St George parish, Fr. Constantin Popescu told the Basilica News Agency.



© St George Parish

Prince Charles and Romania

The Prince of Wales is strongly attached to Romania, a country he often visits.

Over the last two decades, His Royal Highness has supported several charities in Romania, and four

years ago he established his own charitable foundation, The Prince of Wales Foundation Romania (Fundatia Prințului de Wales România).

Through his foundation, Prince Charles has invested over 1 million pounds to promote and sustain Romania's natural and cultural heritage, as well as in various programs contributing to the country's rural development.

Prince Charles is a supporter of 'The Ambulance for monuments,' a project helping old Romanian churches to be rehabilitated. ➔



© St George Parish

Patriarch Daniel opens 'The Portrait of the Romanian Village' Photo Exhibition in Bucharest

The opening ceremony of the first photography exhibition organized by the Basilica News Agency took place on Wednesday, February 27, 2019, at the Patriarchate's Palace in Bucharest as part of the Agency's initiative to promote the beauty of villages in Romania.

The 50-photo exhibition, titled 'The Portrait of the Romanian Village', is a project carried out by the Basilica News Agency marking the Solemn Year of the Romanian Village.

Brief opening remarks were offered by the director of the Basilica News Agency, Aurelian Iftimiu, who stressed that this is the first initiative of the organization 'aiming to bring the values and traditions of the Romanian villages up to date.'



© Basilica.ro

Basilica's director expressed his thankfulness to the Patriarch of Romania who blessed and supported this project, also addressing thanks to the photographers and all partners who made the event possible.

His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel noted that the photos are displayed 'not just to impress us emotionally, even unto tears, but to determine us to take action in favour of the village.' Otherwise, 'we describe it beautifully and our praise becomes some kind of a memorial service of the Romanian village. But we need its revival.

The Patriarch of Romania pointed to the problems faced by people in rural areas stressing that when addressing the topic of the Romanian village it is important to avoid two extremes: 'idealizing the village and ignoring its current reality'.

His Beatitude appreciated Basilica's initiative noting that this is 'only the first step' that must be completed with other exhibitions on various concrete themes that will highlight both suffering and joy, as well as the beauty of life in the village. ☞



'The Good to Know' is the online magazine of the Basilica News Agency.

This project initially started in 2017 was named 'The Basilica monthly review,' and was published at the beginning of every month until its rebranding this year.

This periodical will be published online only, being available in PDF format for downloading or reading. Every issue will be published on the Issuu platform for a more engaging and interactive reading experience.

Containing a summary of the religious events in the entire Orthodox world, 'The Good to Know' online magazine can be freely printed out and distributed for more thorough information and spiritual benefit.

The magazine features a selection of articles that invite our readers to peruse the full content of our website, each article being connected to the information on the basilica.ro website through a back-link. 'The Good to Know' online magazine will be published both in Romanian and English.

Don't forget to communicate the Good to Know to others!



**Communicating
The Good to
Know**