

The Good to Know

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SEASON OF LENTEN
FOR THE
40 QUOTES

**PATRIARCH OF ROMANIA:
IF WE CONTINUE WITH ABORTION,
WE WILL PERISH AS A NATION**



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Victims of Romanian communist regime commemorated at Memorial Monastery

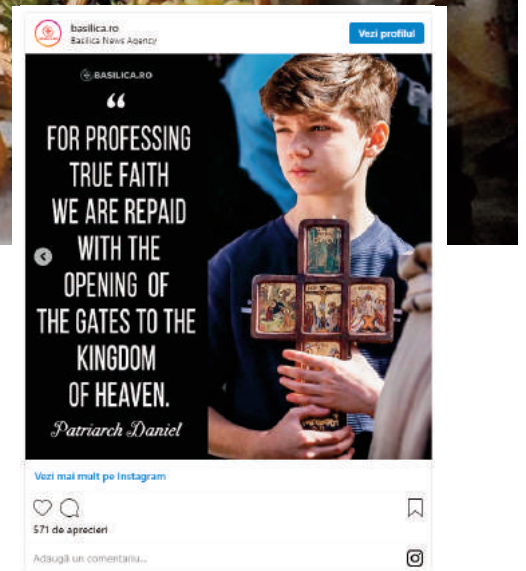
On Saturday, March 9, as the Church celebrated the feast day of the Holy 40 Martyrs at Sebaste, just on the threshold of Lent, the Romanian Orthodox Church also prayed for all those who lost their lives at the hands of the communist regime in the 20th century.

A memorial service was officiated by His Eminence Metropolitan Andrei of Cluj and those serving with him on behalf of all the victims who sacrificed their lives in the name of ancestral freedom and faith following the Liturgy on Saturday at the Gherla Memorial Monastery.



The monastery was also celebrating its patronal feast of the 40 Martyrs of Sebaste. The service was attended by diocesan abbots and abbesses, local and county officials, former political prisoners, and many faithful.

The monastery is located on Caramidariei Hill near an anonymous cemetery with the communal graves of the victims of the communist regime.



Archimandrite Gabriel (Burzo), the spiritual father of the Breaza Monastery who was once a political prisoner at Gherla, gave a speech on the occasion. Among all Romanian gulags, Gherla was among

those that saw the most suffering and the most intense suffering.

Thousands of people filled the cells and cellars of the prison. The Gherla Memorial Association and the Holy 40 Martyrs Monastery were established by Met. Andrei in their honor.

The monastery was founded in 2017, the year that the ROC dedicated to the confessors and defenders of Orthodoxy in the communist camps. ➡

'I POST AS MANY PICTURES AS POSSIBLE, THEREFORE I AM'

Holy Synod warns against idolatry on social media

The Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church cautioned that in the 'era of videocracy' social networks give birth to idolatrous, narcissistic tendencies, they weaken human communion, and the human person is not valued at true value as icon or image of God.

In their pastoral letter for the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the Romanian hierarchs warned that 'the more we are invaded by fleeting, fugitive pictures, the weaker the content of human communication and communion becomes.'

On the first Sunday of Lent, the Church celebrates the restoration of icons for use in services and private devotional life of Christians.

On this occasion, the synodal fathers insisted on the role and effects of visual content: 'everything becomes a picture of the limited and ephemeral material, that is we inform ourselves through sight, without realizing that images can deceive us more than words and that invisible does not exist for a person who sees (and not only).'

"This is where idolatry begins to emerge

'That is why a personal picture, a photograph of myself becomes an idol for me: I post it on all social networks; I look forward to having it widely shared and liked, which coincides with the act of affirming myself among others. I post as many pictures as possible, therefore I am. It is important to be seen by others, not to be personally seen by the eyes of others.'

'This is where idolatry begins to emerge: when I like being adored, appreciated according to the pictures I want to select and distribute to public space, and which may not actually express who I truly am beyond my outer appearance.'

How can visual culture be freed from self-sufficiency, narcissism, and opaque materialism?

'Given this context,' the pastoral letter

continues, 'the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the Sunday of the communion of holy icons, is more than actual, because the holy icon directs to a holy person living in eternity.'

'Only with the help of the holy icon, can the image or the visual culture be freed from self-sufficiency, narcissism, and opaque materialism,' the Holy Synod's letter reads.



'The true purpose of the icon is not to be observed, thus transforming it into an object of aesthetic contemplation, but to help us live in the presence of God and of the Saints. We want to be seen, heard and loved by the eternal God and by His Saints, not just by the passing and changing people.'

The pastoral letter of the Holy Synod referred to the benefits of iconography noting that 'it sanctifies times and places'.

Only with the help of the holy icon, can the image or the visual culture be freed from self-sufficiency, narcissism, and opaque materialism.

'When we understand the person next to us as the icon or image of God, then we cannot allow ourselves to have spiritual immaturity to slander, to despise, to deceive, to discredit, to judge others, but we love them hoping for their spiritual healing, as Christ loved us, in a unique and complete way, on the Cross, and made us partakers of the glory of His Resurrection.' ➔

PATRIARCH OF ROMANIA: THE MOTHER OF GOD IS THE PROTECTRESS OF MOTHERS. IF WE CONTINUE WITH ABORTION, WE WILL PERISH AS A NATION

During his homily on the Feast of the Annunciation, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel stressed that the Mother of God is the Protectress of all mothers and warned that if abortions continue to take place in Romania 'we will perish as a nation'.

'If we, the Romanian people, continue with (performing) abortions, which sum up to millions from 1960 until present, we will perish as a nation. We are in a demographic decline,' His Beatitude said Monday, March 25.

The Patriarch of Romania presided over the Divine Liturgy celebrated on the Annunciation of the Theotokos at the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest.

March for Life

In his homily, the Patriarch referred to the March for Life, which 'has become very popular', being organized at the beginning of March for a few years.

'Last Saturday we were very happy to see the March for Life taking place. The people taking part in this pro-life manifestation that shows support to pregnant women are mostly young people, but also old people.'

'First of all the March for Life has a spiritual aspect, since abortion in Church canon law is called infanticide, but also has a social aspect, since fewer and fewer children are born,' he said March 25.

The Theotokos helps pro-life activists

Patriarch Daniel spoke about the help offered by the Mother of God to all those who give birth to children and bring them up.

'The Mother of God is a Protectress of women who give birth to children, who become mothers, a Protectress of the children's parents, and a Protectress of childless families who adopt and bring up



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children.'

Every child is a potential Saint, the Patriarch noted. Children are 'not only citizens of their earthly homeland, but also of the heavenly homeland.'(...) 'What a great blessing it is to give birth to humans, who through their pure living become Saints who intercede for us, for the entire Church, in the Kingdom of God and unto the glory of the Most Holy Trinity,' His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel added. ➡

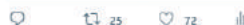


Patriarch of Romania: The Mother of God is the Protectress of mothers. If we continue with abortion, we will perish as a nation. bit.ly/2OtSGM6



9:15 PM - 26 Mar 2019

25 Retweets 72 Likes



MARCH FOR LIFE: THOUSANDS OF PRO-LIFE ADVOCATES GATHER AT YEARLY RALLY IN BUCHAREST

Romania's March for Life gathered thousands of people across the country on Saturday, March 23, 2019, to defend the life of unborn children and of mothers in a pregnancy crisis.

This year's demonstration was organized in over 600 cities throughout Romania and the Republic of Moldova under the title 'Unique from the first

second'. In Bucharest, the march was organized by the local Students for Life Association and started at Unirii Square.

The final stop was Tineretului Park, where several pro-life activists and supporters held speeches.

The event came just two days before the International Day of the Unborn Child on March 25, which coincides with the Feast of the Annunciation, when Christians recall the moment when Virgin Mary was announced that she would become the Mother of God. The first to deliver a speech was the President of Students for Life Association and

medical student Eliza-Maria Clotea, who encouraged women who experience a pregnancy crisis, noting that the March for Life means 'we support you and your child' through 'the thousands of voices grateful for the gift of life.'

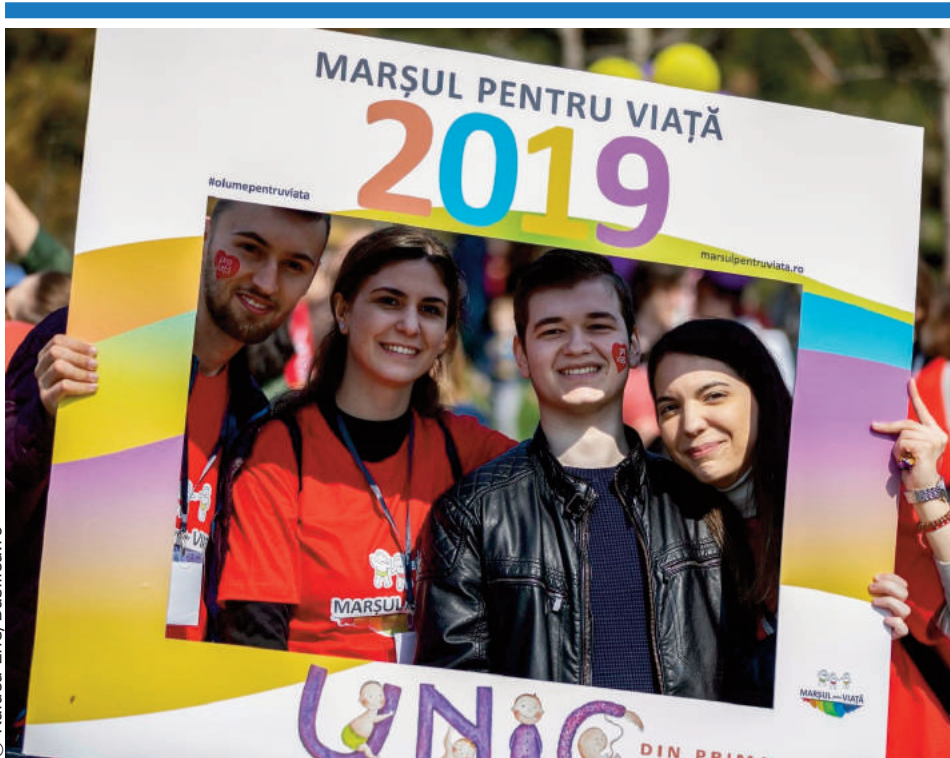
Eliza thanked God and her parents for giving her the right to live, and pointed out that heartbeats appearing just 16 days after conception represent 'the most reassuring signal that there is life'.

Ending her speech, the President of the Student for Life Association called on society to provide support in order to establish new centres for women in a pregnancy crisis.

Alexandra Nadane, President of the Romania for Life Association and Executive Director of St Alexandra the Empress Counseling and Support Centre in Bucharest, stressed that people who rallied show respect for life.

'It is not a child's fault for the pregnancy crisis generated by an adult,' she said.

Monica Radu, a mother of three children, spoke from her wheelchair with much confidence. 'Anything is possible. When you do the things of God, everything else adds up.' 'It is not so difficult to bring up a child,' Monica said encouraging women to have children. ➡



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Thousands of people took the streets on Saturday in Bucharest to support the rights of unborn children under the slogan 'Unique from the first second'.

@BasilicaNews

#March4Life



8:15 PM · 23 Mar 2019

6 Retweets · 11 Likes

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Australia: Faithful farewell Greek Orthodox Archbishop Stylianos Harkianakis



© Greek City Times

Thousands of faithful visited the Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation in Sydney to pay their last respects to Australia's Greek Orthodox Archbishop Stylianos Harkianakis.

The 83-year-old Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church of Australia died Monday, March 25, 2019, at 6 pm., after serving the church for 44 years and founding the Greek Orthodox education system in Australia.



Attendees at the funeral service on Saturday figure in the Greek Orthodox Church of Australia included premier Gladys Berejiklian, acting NSW Labor leader Penny Sharpe, former premier Nick Greiner, immigration minister David Coleman, federal Labor MPs Anthony Albanese and Linda Burney, and Liberal Senator Arthur Sinodinos.

Also present was His Grace Bishop Mihail of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Australia and New Zealand.

Representatives from the Russian, Serbian, Coptic and Armenian Orthodox Churches were also present.

The funeral service was led by Metropolitan Panteleimon of Vryoula, the representative of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople.

Archbishop Stylianos led half a million Greek Orthodox Australians, serving as the most senior



© Bourdo Photography

since 1975 when he arrived in Sydney.

He taught Orthodox theology and spirituality at the University of Sydney, was president of the Estia foundation for young adults with disabilities, and was also a prolific essayist and poet.



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Romanian journalists visit Kerk en Leven newspaper offices in Antwerp

The Romanian journalists who visited Belgium for three days were welcomed on Thursday, March 7, at the headquarters of the most important religious newspaper in the Flemish Region of Belgium, Kerk en Leven (Church & Life).

The group of religion journalists was received by the newspaper's editor-in-chief, Luk Vanmaercke, who presented the history and activities of Kerk en Leven, but also noted the challenges they face. Kerk & Leven is owned by the Roman-Catholic Church and has a circulation of approximately 200,000 copies.

In addition to the problems faced by printed publications in general, the weekly newspaper in Flanders is also affected by the low interest in religion of the Belgian people.

However, one of Kerk & Leven's main goals is to attract young audience. ➡



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Religion in Belgium

The same day, the journalists had a meeting with representatives of the Roman-Catholic Diocese in Antwerp at the city's Gothic Cathedral of Our Lady.

Dean Pieter Wieerts and Ian Kint spoke about the Belgian society's lack of interest in spirituality.

They said that many Catholic parishes are being dissolved and that church buildings are used for other purposes or even risk being demolished.

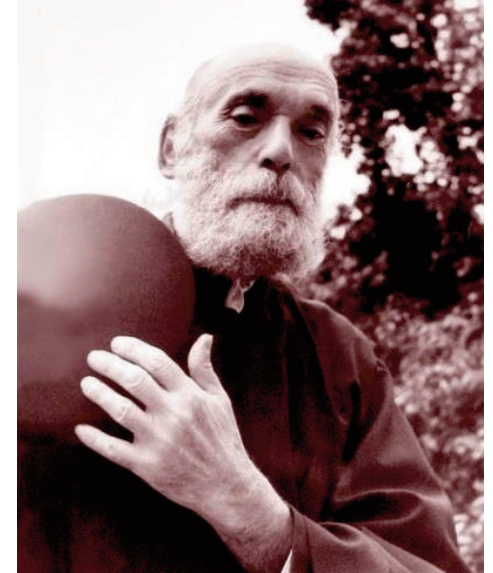
The representatives of the Diocese of Antwerp also expressed their hope that unused churches will be turned into museums or will be used by other Christian confessions.

Romanians in Antwerp

Given the context in the Belgian society, the many thousands of Orthodox Romanians living in Antwerp have the opportunity to gather in a liturgical space for worship at the Nativity of the Mother of God Parish.

The journalists visited the church where the Romanian parish holds its divine ministry and learned from Fr. George Valcu that there are real chances that the church building will soon be purchased by the Romanian community from the Roman-Catholic Diocese of Antwerp. This visit was made possible with the help of the Representation of the Romanian Orthodox Church to the European Institutions and with the support of MEP Traian Ungureanu.

Bishop of Maramures commemorates Fr Nicolae Steinhardt on 30th anniversary of repose: 'He was a crucified one'



Marking the 30th anniversary of the repose of Father Nicolae Steinhardt, Bishop Justin of Maramures and Satmar noted that the monk from Rohia Monastery whom he knew personally was 'a crucified one'.

'Not only did he accept to crucify himself receiving the Christian baptism and then becoming a monk, but he was a crucified one, because he was tortured and tracked his entire life,' His Grace Bishop Justin said after officiating a memorial service at Ft Nicolae's tomb.

'Together with him, Rohia Monastery was also crucified and considered a monastery of reactionary persons, disobedient to the regime,' the Bishop recalled March 30.

Father Nicolae Steinhardt was a Romanian writer, Orthodox hermit and confessor of faith during the communist regime. Being born a Jew, he converted to Christianity while in prison and is renowned for his work Happiness Diary.





Ecumenical Patriarch's Lenten Message focuses on ascetism as common vocation for all faithful

ROBERT GHEMENT (EPA-EFE)

Ascetism takes center stage in Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's Lenten message this year, which represents a common vocation for all faithful without exception.

'Asceticism is Christianity in its entirety,' Patriarch Bartholomew wrote in his catechetical homily at the opening of Holy and Great Lent published March 4, 2019.

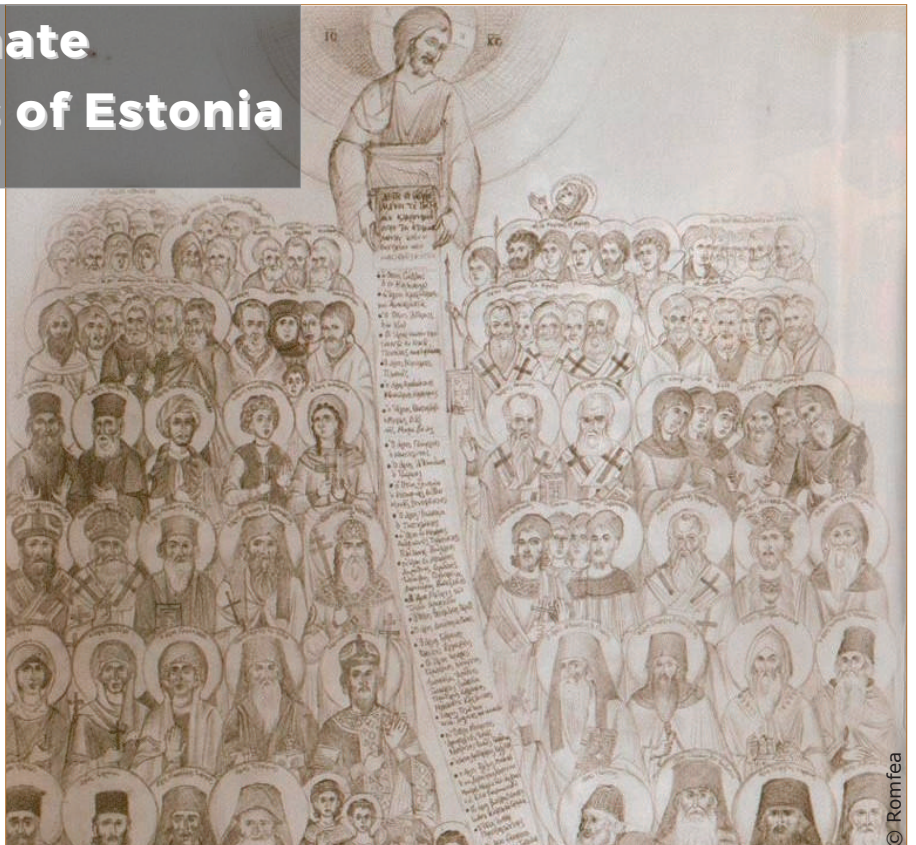
'The purpose of ascetism is the transcendence of one's own will and the "mind of the flesh," the transferal of the centre of life from

individual desire and the "right," toward love that "does not seek its own," in accordance with the scriptural passage: "Let no one seek his own good, but the good of the other";' he said.

The Patriarch's message includes a reflection on 'sensitivity and sacrificial use of freedom' based on an encounter with Amma Sarah, one of the early Desert Mothers who is known to us today solely through the collected Sayings of the Desert Fathers. ➔

Ecumenical Patriarchate glorifies new martyrs of Estonia

- St Peter, Bishop of Tartu and Pechory
- Archimandrite Saint Alypius
- Protopresbyter Saint Vladimir
- Saints Seraphim, John, Leonidas, Andrew and Alexander



Orthodox Church of Albania: Tree Planting in Gjinar



The Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania, in cooperation with OCMC and OCF, hosted a group of 6 university students from the United States and Canada from 2 March to 10 2019.

On Friday, March 8th, the team from the Americas combined forces with the youth groups from the Churches of Tirana and Gjinar as well as Ecovolis to plant 190 saplings in the village of Gjinar. [Full Story](#) ➔

BESSARABIA 'DIACONIA' SOCIAL MISSION: MEAL OF JOY EASTERN CAMPAIGN

The Diaconia Social Mission of the Metropolis of Bessarabia has launched the Eastern Campaign 'Meal of Joy' aiming to provide food for people in need.

This campaign is aimed at raising awareness and mobilizing society to support elderly people, but also other people in need in the Republic of Moldova.

Thanks to this project, over 200 tons of food were collected and distributed to people in need over the past 10 years.

People are expected to donate un-perishable food, which will be collected by 100 stores in 20 cities of the Republic of Moldova.



ST DAVID'S DAY: PORTRAIT CREATED FROM DAFFODILS AND BARK



A portrait of Wales' patron saint made from 1,000 real daffodils and garden bark has been created in Pembrokeshire to mark St David's Day.

Welsh artist and Britain's Got Talent finalist, Nathan Wyburn, created the portrait within the central courtyard of St Davids Bishop's Palace. It comes as part of heritage group Cadw's Rediscover History campaign.

The final piece took more than six hours to create and measures 11m (36ft) by 8m (26ft). Wyburn's previous work includes depicting the Queen in marmite on toast, and NHS founder Aneurin "Nye" Bevan in soil and white stone dust. ➔



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT SEALS BAN ON THROWAWAY PLASTICS BY 2021



The following products will be banned in the EU by 2021:

Single-use plastic cutlery (forks, knives, spoons and chopsticks)

Single-use plastic plates

Plastic straws

Cotton bud sticks made of plastic

Plastic balloon sticks

Oxo-degradable plastics and food containers and expanded polystyrene cups

New recycling target and more responsibility

Member states will have to achieve a 90% collection target for plastic bottles by 2029, and plastic bottles will have to contain at least 25% of recycled content by 2025 and 30% by 2030.

The agreement also strengthens the application of the polluter pays principle, in particular for tobacco, by introducing extended responsibility for producers. This new regime will also apply to fishing gear, to ensure that manufacturers, and not fishermen, bear the costs of collecting nets lost at sea.

The legislation finally stipulates that labelling on the negative environmental impact of throwing cigarettes with plastic filters in the street should

be mandatory, as well as for other products such as plastic cups, wet wipes and sanitary napkins. Lead MEP Frédérique Ries (ALDE, BE) said: "This legislation will reduce the environmental damage bill by €22 billion – the estimated cost of plastic pollution in Europe until 2030.

Europe now has a legislative model to defend and promote at international level, given the global nature of the issue of marine pollution involving plastics. This is essential for the planet."

According to the European Commission, more than 80% of marine litter is plastics. The products covered by this new law constitute 70% of all marine litter items. ↻

'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!



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