

SOLIA

THE HERALD



A magazine of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America

Vol. XC, No. 1-3

Winter 2025



CHAIRMAN:

Most Rev. Archbishop NATHANIEL (Popp)

VICE-CHAIRMAN:

Right Rev. Bishop ANDREI (Hoarște)

SOLIA

SECRETARY/ROMANIAN EDITOR:

Rev. Hierodeacon Benedict Oancea

ENGLISH EDITOR:

Mr. David Oancea

STAFF:

V. Rev. Dr. Remus Grama

Mr. Mark Chestnut

SOLIA-THE HERALD (ISSN 0038-1039) is published quarterly for \$15.00 per year: United States, \$20.00 per year: Canada, and \$25.00 per year in other countries by The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, 2535 Grey Tower Road, Jackson, MI 49201-9120. Periodical postage paid at Jackson, Michigan, and additional offices.

Phone: (517) 522-3656, Fax: (517) 522-5907. E-mail: solia@roea.org.
Website: roea.org.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: SOLIA-THE HERALD, P.O. Box 185, Grass Lake, MI 49240-0185, U.S.A.

Photo submissions: Use high resolution/quality digital camera settings (at least 300 dpi).

Articles and news published in SOLIA do not necessarily reflect the views or the endorsement of The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America.

C	Annual Clergy Conference 3	Year after Year - Dsa. Eliza Zamrii 17
O	Conferința Anuală Preoțească 5	Pastoral Visits and Events... 19
N	Învățăturile Sfinților Părinți 8	The Launch of <i>the Journal of Joy</i> at St Vladimir's Seminary 22
T	Book Review: <i>Living as a Christian in a World that Rejects God...</i> by Mary Brown 9	Lansarea <i>Jurnalului Fericirii</i> la Seminarul Sfântului Vladimir 23
E	16 Noi Sfinți Români... 10	Convocation for the 77 th A.R.F.O.R.A. Congress 25
N	16 Romanian New Saints 12	Financial Report 26
T	<i>Growing in God...</i> by Fr. Roman Braga 13	
S		

Annual Clergy Conference 2025, Phoenix, Arizona

The 2025 R.O.E.A. Annual Clergy Conference held in Phoenix, Arizona, brought together Orthodox clergy and scholars to discuss critical issues of faith, pastoral challenges, and spiritual discernment.

His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America (R.O.E.A.) pointed out the vital role of parishes and their missionary work. He emphasized that Orthodox communities must extend their reach to people of all nationalities living in North America.

“Churches and Orthodox communities must open their doors to the other nationalities living in North America, because if you do not open them, you become suffocated”, stated Archbishop Nathaniel. This powerful message stressed the necessity of inclusivity and outreach, highlighting that engagement with diverse populations is essential for the vitality of Christ’s Church.

The conference featured a compelling lecture by Reverend Father Professor Radu Preda, professor at the Babeş-Bolyai



University of Cluj-Napoca, an Orthodox priest and former executive director of the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile. His presentation, titled *Saints and the Confession of Faith in Prisons*, honored those who suffered for their faith under the communist regime.

Father Preda emphasized that “the saints of the prisons should not only be admired but loved and integrated into our very Christian being”. He also presented the tragic history of political repression in Romania, where the number of victims of the communist regime is officially estimated at 80,000, with a similar number of unrecorded cases.

A significant moment of the conference was Session 6:

Spiritual Discernment, a panel assisted by the attending clergy, discussion moderated by His at Saint John the Baptist Grace Bishop Andrei of Romanian Orthodox Church in Cleveland and auxiliary-bishop Glendale, Arizona.

of the R.O.E.A., featuring Rev. Following the service, Bi-Fr. Prof. Radu Preda and Mr. shop Andrei led a solemn memorial service honoring the Kenan Dionisie Wang, an morial service honoring the historian and a student of former hierarchs of the Orthodox Theology at the R.O.E.A. - Bishop Policarp and Faculty of Bucharest. The Archbishop Valerian - as well discussion centered on the as priests, monastics, and challenge of discerning truth in a complex world, reinforcing that “life in Christ is a life rooted in truth.”

Mr. Wang drew upon patristic sources, showing that spiritual discernment is a gift of the Holy Spirit and an essential part of Christian life. Later in the day, Mr. Wang delivered a lecture titled *Faith*



laypeople who have passed away in the Lord. The 2025 Annual Clergy Conference successfully addressed pressing spiritual and societal issues, reinforcing the importance of inclusivity, remembrance, and truth. By embracing outreach and deepening their faith, the Ro-

and Commonwealth: An Orthodox Approach to Contemporary Challenges, exploring how faith can guide believers in addressing modern societal issues. Romanian Orthodox communities continue to uphold their spiritual mission in North America.

On the second day of the conference, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel and His Grace Bishop Andrei concelebrated the Divine Liturgy,



Conferința Anuală Preoțească 2025, desfășurată în Phoenix, Arizona, a reunit clerici și teologi ortodocși pentru a discuta probleme esențiale legate de credință, probleme pastorale și discernământ duhovnicesc.

Înaltpreasfințitul Părinte Arhiepiscop Nathaniel de Detroit și al Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române din America (R.O.E.A) a subliniat rolul esențial al parohiilor și al activității misionare. El a accentuat necesitatea comunităților parohiilor ortodoxe române să își deschidă porțile și pentru celelalte naționalități care trăiesc în America de Nord și sunt interesate de spiritualitatea ortodoxă.

„Bisericile și comunitățile ortodoxe trebuie să își deschidă porțile către celelalte naționalități care trăiesc în America de Nord, deoarece, dacă nu le deschideți, veți ajunge să vă sufocați”, a declarat Arhiepiscopul Nathaniel. Acest mesaj subliniază importanța deschiderii către aproapele aflat în nevoie și a misiunii creștine pentru a menține vitalitatea comunităților ortodoxe.

Un moment important al conferinței a fost prelegerea susținută de Preacucernicul Părinte Profesor Radu Preda, profesor la Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai din Cluj-Napoca, preot ortodox și fost director executiv al Institutului de Investigare a



Crimelor Comunismului și și de Dl. Kenan Dionisie Wang, Memoria Exilului Românesc. istoric și student al Facultății de

Prelegerea, intitulată *Sfinții* Teologie Ortodoxă din Bucu- și *mărturisirea credinței din* rești,

închisori, a evidențiat suferințele îndurate de cei care și-au păstrat credința în timpul regimului comunist. Părintele Preda a afirmat că „sfinții închisorilor nu trebuie doar admirați, ci iubiți și integrați în însăși ființa noastră creștină”. El a menționat că, în România, numărul oficial al victimelor regimului comunist este estimat la 80.000, la care se adaugă un număr similar de cazuri ne-

înregistrate. Discuția a abordat provocarea discernământului într-o lume complexă ca cea de astăzi, subliniind că „viața în Hristos este o viață trăită în adevăr”. În a doua zi a conferinței, Arhiepiscopul Nathaniel împreună cu Episcopul Andrei, au oficiat Sfânta Liturghie, asistați de clerul prezent, la Biserica Ortodoxă Română Sfântul Ioan Botezătorul din Glendale, Arizona.

Conferința Anuală a Clerului 2025 a abordat teme fundamentale pentru Biserica Ortodoxă, reafirmându-se importanța deschiderii față de aproapele aflat în nevoie, aflat în căutarea Adevărului. Un alt moment semnificativ al conferinței a fost Sesiunea 6: *Discernământul spiritual*, moderată de Preasfințitul Părinte Episcop Andrei de Cleveland, și episcop-vicar al R.O.E.A., au prezentat Pr. Prof. Radu Preda





Învățăturile Sfinților Părinți



nceputul întregii vieți în Dumnezeu, fratele meu, e să ai o credință tare pe drumul viețuirii tale, ca să poți extrage toată dulceața pe care a așezat-o Duhul în cărțile sfinte. Nu vorbesc de credința cu care- L mărturisești pe Dumnezeu, fiindcă e de prisos să aduc aminte acest lucru celor ce au lăsat lumea și au ieșit din ea să urmeze lui Dumnezeu. Aș vrea să te întăresc printr-o credință neîndoielnică doar în nădejdea lucrurilor bune așezate pe această cale, lucruri care ne-au fost predate de cărțile sfinte și pe care nevoitorii (asceții) le-au atins și le ating și astăzi.

Orice viețuire nestatornică și de scurtă durată va fi lipsită de roade. Ia drept pildă un pom care tocmai a fost sădit: dacă acela care l-a sădit e neiscusit și-l lipsește de obișnuita udare atunci când se ivesc primele frunze și primii muguri, pomul se ofilește și se usucă. Și va fi nevoie de mult timp până să-și tragă în el din pământ puterea apei și să revină la viață. Sau poate că acela îl mută adeseori dintr-un pământ în altul și, pentru ca să facă aceasta, îi mișcă rădăcinile și-l lovește neîncetat. După care se miră că pomul nu aduce

roade! Așa stau lucrurile și cu omul lipsit de iscusință: nu judecă lucrurile sale plecând de la viețuirea lui, ci cere de la Dumnezeu ceea ce crede el că-i este potrivit, pentru că socotește că n-are nimic din ce i-ar trebui.

Postul, rugăciunea și celelalte nevoițe sunt cunoscute de toți, deși nu voi uita să arăt la locul său ajutorul care vine din aceste lucruri care sunt la îndemâna tuturor, chiar și din cele care multora le par a fi neînsemnate.

(Sfântul Isaac Sirul, *Cuvinte către singuratici despre viața duhului, taine dumnezeiești, pronie și judecată*, partea a II-a, Deisis, Sibiu, 2003, pp. 87-92)



Living as a Christian in a World that Rejects God
Conversations with Fr. Roman Braga
 by Mary Brown

The Dormition of the Mother of God Orthodox Monastery in Rives Junction, Michigan, has published a new book about Father Roman Braga. Titled *Living as a Christian in a World that Rejects God*, the book is authored by Mary Brown and is based on a series of conversations she had with Father Roman Braga over two years (2000-2001), covering a range of theological and spiritual topics.

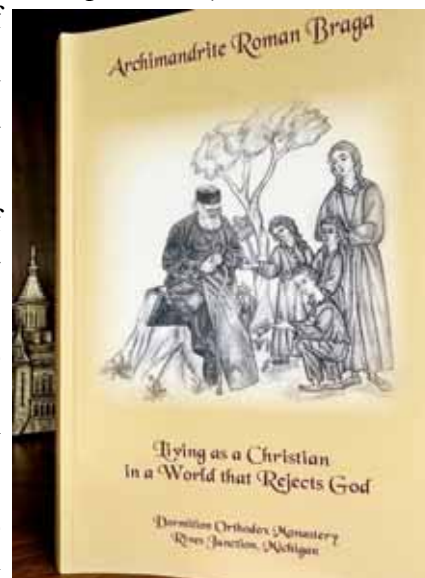
The book is divided into three sections. The first part provides a foundational understanding of Orthodox Christianity. The second section emphasizes the importance of personal spiritual growth in the image of God, as articulated by Father Roman. Finally, the third part focuses on the role of the family in Christian life, highlighting the significance of family dynamics in fostering a Christ-centered existence.

Living as a Christian in a World that Rejects God provides profound spiritual guidance from Father Roman Braga, drawing on his personal experiences and deep theological insight. The book explores the essence of Orthodox

Christianity, beginning with the individual's journey of conversion and salvation, and extending to the broader community - the Body of Christ, the Church.

Readers should explore *Living as a Christian in a World that Rejects God* for its profound spiritual wisdom, offering deep insights from Father Roman Braga on personal faith, salvation, and the role of the Church in navigating the challenges of a secular world.

The book is available for purchase at the Dormition Orthodox Monastery Bookstore. (dormitionmonasterygiftshop.squarespace.com)



16 Noi Sfinți Români în Calendarul Bisericii Ortodoxe



Un eveniment cu o semnificație deosebită pentru Biserica Ortodoxă a avut loc în data de 4 februarie 2025, la Catedrala Patriarhală din București: proclamarea oficială a celor 16 noi sfinți canonizați anul trecut. Momentul a fost marcat de prezența Preafericitului Părinte Patriarh Daniel și a membrilor Sfântului Sinod al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, într-un cadru solemn, la finalul Sfintei Liturghii. Această zi marchează oficial recunoașterea unor mari sfinți care, de-a lungul timpului, au fost venerați de credincioși, dar nu aveau încă un cult recunoscut oficial de Biserică. Unul dintre aspectele remarcabile ale acestui proces de canonizare este discernământul cu care Sfântul Sinod a evaluat dovezile sfințeniei acestor persoane. Un exemplu notabil este cazul Sfântului Constantin Sârbu, ale cărui minuni și semne divine s-au confirmat recent, odată cu deshumarea sa. Această decizie demonstrează nu doar maturitatea Bisericii, ci și o validare benefică a experienței spirituale a credincioșilor.

Această canonizare colectivă va aduce o mare bucurie în rândul credincioșilor, deoarece acești noi sfinți devin rugători puternici pentru neamul românesc. Harul primit prin această decizie se reflectă în curajul Bisericii de a recunoaște oficial oameni care au fost faruri spiri-

tuale în cele mai dificile vremuri ale istoriei noastre recente.

Este deosebit de important faptul că, printre acești sfinți, se numără și primii teologi români canonizați pentru contribuția lor doctrinară: Sfântul Dumitru Stăniloae și Sfântul Ilarion Felea. Ortodoxia românească avea nevoie de astfel de figuri care să fie exemple și călăuzitori pentru generațiile viitoare, așa cum s-a întâmplat în alte tradiții ortodoxe.

Mulți dintre acești sfinți au fost prizoniți în timpul regimului comunist, iar canonizarea lor transmite un mesaj clar: nu au fost doar deținuți politici, ci în primul rând oameni ai lui Dumnezeu, martiri ai credinței. Această decizie vine ca o reafirmare a valorilor spirituale care au ghidat și vor ghida neamul românesc spre lumină, dincolo de frică și de confuzia timpurilor moderne.

Lista celor 16 sfinți canonizați:

1. Sfântul Cuvios Mărturisitor *Sofian de la Antim* (16 septembrie)
2. Sfântul Preot Mucenic *Ilarion Felea* (18 septembrie)
3. Sfântul Preot Mărturisitor *Dumitru Stăniloae* (4 octombrie)
4. Sfântul Preot Mucenic *Constantin Sârbu* (23 octombrie)
5. Sfântul Cuvios Mucenic *Visarion de la Lainici* (10 noiembrie)
6. Sfântul Cuvios Mărturisitor

Arsenie de la Prislop (28 noiembrie)

7. Sfântul Cuvios *Paisie de la Sihăstria* (2 decembrie)

8. Sfântul Cuvios *Cleopa de la Sihăstria* (2 decembrie)

9. Sfântul Cuvios *Serafim cel Răbdător de la Sâmbăta de Sus* (20 decembrie)

10. Sfântul Cuvios Mucenic *Gherasim de la Tismana* (26 decembrie)

11. Sfântul Preot Mucenic *Liviu Galaction de la Cluj* (8 martie)

12. Sfântul Cuvios *Calistrat de la Timișeni și Vasiova* (10 mai)

13. Sfântul Cuvios *Dometie cel Milostiv de la Râmeț* (6 iulie)

14. Sfântul Preot Mărturisitor *Ilie Lăcătușu* (22 iulie)

15. Sfântul Cuvios *Iraclie din Basarabia* (3 august)

16. Sfântul Preot Mucenic *Alexandru din Basarabia* (8 august)

Basilica.ro – chilieathonita.ro



16 Romanian New Saints

 In 2024, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church approved the canonization of sixteen 20th-century confessors and spiritual fathers. Their canonization will be publicly proclaimed as part of the program for the Centennial Year of the Romanian Patriarchate 2025.

This year, the Romanian Orthodox Church celebrates 140 years since obtaining autocephaly and 100 years since being elevated to the rank of Patriarchate. Therefore, 2025 has been declared the Solemn Year of the Centennial of the Romanian Patriarchate and the Commemorative Year of the 20th-century Romanian Orthodox confessors and spiritual fathers.

The following have been canonized:

1. Ven. Confessor Sophian of St. Antim Monastery (September 16)
2. Hieromartyr Hilarion Felea (September 18)
3. Holy Confessor Dumitru Stăniloae (October 4)
4. Holy Martyr Constantin Sârbu (October 23)
5. Ven. Martyr Vissarion of

Lainici Monastery (November 10)

6. Ven. Confessor Arsenie of Prislop (November 28)

7. Ven. Paisios of Sihastria Monastery (December 2)

8. Ven. Cleopas of Sihastria Monastery (December 2)

9. Ven. Seraphim of Sambata de Sus (December 20)

10. Ven. Martyr Gerasimus of Tismana Monastery (December 26)

11. Hieromartyr Liviu-Galaction of Cluj (March 8)

12. Saint Calistrat of Timiseni and Vasiova (May 10)

13. Ven. Dometius of Ramet (July 6)

14. Holy Confessor Elias Lacatusu (July 22)

15. Ven. Confessor Heraclius of Basarabia (August 3)

16. Hieromartyr Alexander of Basarabia (August 8)



Growing in God: Purification, Illumination, and Perfection

By Father Roman Braga

Part I

Mary Brown: *Father, this harmony of human and divine life, this becoming like our prototype and living as the image of God - perhaps this is possible for monastics in a lifetime - but it seems that for most of us this process must continue beyond our earthly lives.*

Fr. Roman: Monastics and even the saints died with this desire for sanctification which they felt they did not realize. Saint Dionysius the Areopagite said that even the angels grow in God.

M.B. So, in our earthly life we get started on the journey and then our spiritual growth continues?

Fr. R. Yes. Since God is infinite, our growing in God will never stop. "Staticism" is a disaster. We are dynamic realities. We grow, and our happiness is commensurate with our growth in God. Even in what we call "paradise" when we will be close to God, we will continue growing in God. Because

God is infinite, He will always be making us like Him. We are always participating in God. His energy makes us warm and transfigures us so that we approach more and more closely to Him. Growing in God is a vast dynamic process.

There are three steps in becoming like God. The first is *purification*, which means to get rid of our passions; that is, to be strong enough to take yourself in hand and not be enslaved by your instincts and drives. This first step – *purification* – takes place by means of all the fasting periods we have in the Church calendar and by abstinence of all kinds.

Purification is not an event that we achieve once and then the process is finished. We are constantly in a dynamic process of moving towards Him Who is the center of our lives. Of course, by essence, we are different from God. He is the Creator, and we are the creatures. He has divine nature, and we

have human nature. Our goal is divinization, that is, to be *like* Him, but not of the same essence. We are created in God's image, and this image within us, as we said before, is looking for the prototype, but it is never finished. If we stop, we will become like Lot's wife.

M.B. *When she looked back and turned into a pillar of salt.*

Fr. R. If we stop, if there is no growth, no dynamism in the spiritual life, then we become like animals. The human condition is that God created us to be always in movement in our spiritual lives—always becoming like Him and growing in His likeness. He is unreachable and He is infinite, therefore our human condition is a constant process of growing in God. Nobody can say, "I am extremely purified now." I think it is the love of God that puts in us a feeling that we are not perfect in order to keep us humble. This feeling that we are not perfect pushes us towards perfection. Otherwise, we would be static, like rocks.

It is impossible to imagine a person who is not searching,

who says, "I don't need anything more. I am perfect." That is impossible. Purification is not only being rid of some material or fleshly desires, but it also involves being purified of spiritual sins like lack of humility and lack of charity. We seek to get rid of these spiritual sins or passions through acts of purification and this is an infinite process.

Sure, some people in their work of purification must get rid of what is heavy and what enslaves them—I speak about bodily passions or perverted instincts. Our instincts are good, but if we use them in the wrong ways, then we must change and use them in good ways. However, purification does not refer only to bodily sins or only to sins related to the flesh, but also to spiritual purification from spiritually wrong inclinations. For example, we all must purify ourselves from pride, selfishness, lack of love, and lack of compassion. Through humanity's fall, the entire human nature is perverted and distorted. So, the first step in our evolution towards God is this purification. The second step is *illumina-*

tion. Illumination does not mean that purification is no longer at work.

M.B. *Do purification and illumination happen together?*

Fr. R. Yes, they do. Scholastically we speak about three steps, but in fact they happen at the same time. Illumination means reaching a place in our lives where we truly understand the historical events and the material universe around us. We understand the universe in a double way: not only that it exists but that it exists for us. The truth, according to Scripture, is that God created this universe for man and placed man in it.

Not only Scripture shows us that God created this universe for man. We look today at scientists and their work in this universe. Many feel an obligation to do something to protect the environment and to search and explore the universe. For example, they are curious to see "What is in that cell?" This is because God created man and placed him as the master of this universe. Yet man is more than that. As we said before, man is a microcosmos, a synthesis of the whole world.

Therefore, illumination is understanding that everything we see with our eyes, touch with our hands, hear with our ears – everything around us – does not merely exist, but exists for a reason, and we find that reason in this second step of our journey.

M.B. *Father, one thing you have talked about often, and I think of it now when you talk about the stage of illumination, is about the years you spent in prison. Later you understood the purpose for that time in your life, for in prison you discovered that God was truly with you there.*

Fr. R. Indeed, nothing "just happens" in this world. The world was created by God, and we have been created by God, therefore everything that happens in our lives has meaning.

M.B. *I think for many of us this is a new way of thinking. We do not always have this spiritual perspective.*

Fr. R. True. Also, we are responsible for all our acts. Scripture says that we will give an account for every word that comes from our mouths. Besides our words or gestures,

when we do anything, we should have a reason, for we are the image of God. that God has a purpose for all creation obligates us also to do everything with a purpose.

All events have a reason for occurring. When God creates or permits certain events to take place in history, they do not just happen. They have a reason, and we must accept the reasoning of God. Saint Maximus the Confessor explains about discerning the reasons of God in every event and in everything we see in the world. Knowing Even when we play, there is a reason: we need recreation or relaxation.

(A chapter from the book: *Living as a Christian in a World that Rejects God: Conversations with Mary Brown*. Dormition Orthodox Monastery, Rives Junction, Michigan, 2024, pp. 57-61. Purchase at: dormitionmonasterygiftshop.squarespace.com)



Year after Year



Year after year, carolers come to our window on Christmas Eve, despite the bitter frost and the journey's hardships, for it is an age-old custom.

Paraphrasing the lyrics of a well-known Romanian carol, year after year, the youth caroling group of Saint George Romanian Orthodox Church in Toronto, led by Deacon Cristian Alexandru Zamrii, arrives at the parishioners' doors. There, they bring the good tidings of the Birth of Our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, being welcomed, in turn, by their hosts with the famous Romanian hospitality.

Starting in 2023, in the universal spirit of Christian evangelism, our group of carolers has crossed community and ethnic boundaries to share the beauty of traditional carols with other parishes and communities. This year (2024), on the eve of Christmas Eve (December 23), our steps took us to the Scott Mission (founded in 1941, offering material and spiritual support to those in need), where, besides the concert we provided in the reception hall, we also brought food and clothing donations collected by the participating students. We then traveled to Saint Silouan, the Athonite Mission, where Father Paul Tadros and his parishioners warmly welcomed us in the beautiful, icon-decorated mission hall. At the end of the day, we visited the English-speaking Holy Myrrhbearers Orthodox Mission of Toronto (parish priest, Father Geoffrey Ready) at Trinity College Chapel at the University of Toronto.

Certainly, both hosts and carolers appreciated the cultural and spiritual exchange. This aspect was reflected by the warm applause that resounded in the halls of the missions visited, as well as by the fact that those present often joined their voices with our choir in a moving unity of brotherly love and faith. As for us, the carolers, we felt incredibly close to those we were caroling to, whether they were already known to us or we were meeting them for the first time, which charged us with the energy and the momentum we needed to conclude a long day, at the end of which, instead of feeling the fatigue of almost twelve hours of caroling, we were filled with deep soulful contentment and the joy of a Christian work well done.

As in past years, the youth caroling group brought their talent and enthusiasm to the parish church, where, through the kindness of the Parish Priest Ioan Bunea, they were invited to give a carol concert on the second day of Christmas after the Divine Liturgy. According to ancient tradition, they were rewarded with braided *kolachs* and, of course, with many warm congratulations from the parishioners.



Dsa. Eliza Zamrii

Pastoral Visits and Events

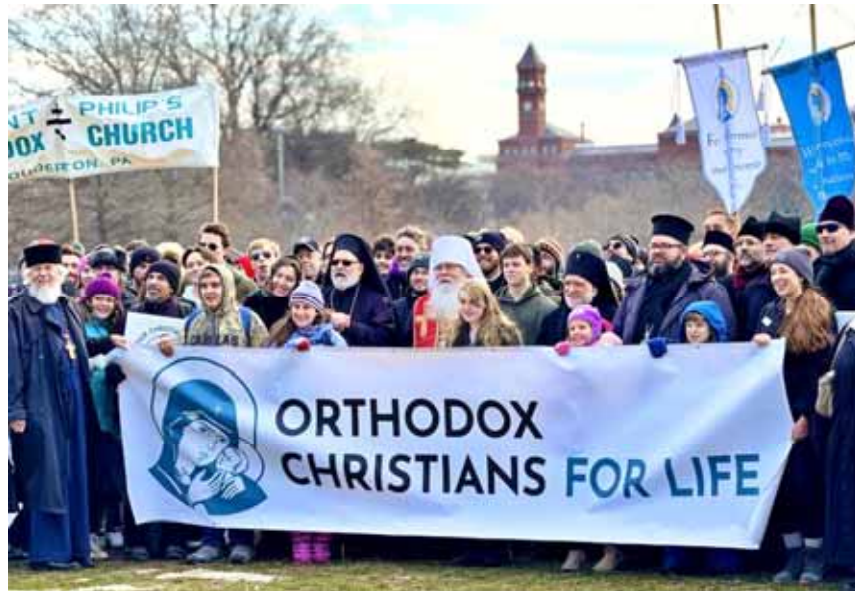
Strengthening Faith and Community



His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel and His Grace Bishop Andrei participated in the 13th annual meeting of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America, 28-30 September 2024, in Atlanta, Georgia.



On 10 November 2024, with the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel, His Grace Bishop Andrei visited Saint Elijah Church in Schomberg (Toronto), Ontario, Canada, where he celebrated the Divine Liturgy assisted by parish priest Rev. Fr. Marius Bujor and visiting clergy.



On 23-24 January 2025, with the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel, His Grace Bishop Andrei traveled to Washington DC where he participated in the annual “March for Life” in defense of the unborn. His Grace joined His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon of All America and Canada (OCA) and other hierarchs of the Assembly of Bishops of the USA.



On 1 February 2025, clergy and faithful braved the winter weather to join His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel and His Grace Bishop Andrei at Sts. Peter & Paul Church in Dearborn Heights, Michigan for the Divine Liturgy and a Festive Banquet in celebration of the 5th Anniversary of Bishop Andrei's Ordination into the Holy Episcopacy.



On 25-26 January 2025, with the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel, His Grace Bishop Andrei traveled to Atlanta, Georgia where he participated in the installation of His Eminence Metropolitan Sevastianos as the newly-elected Metropolitan of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta. The installation took place on Saturday morning at Annunciation Cathedral lead by His Eminence Elpidophoros, Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The following morning, Bishop Andrei was invited to serve together with Metropolitan Sevastianos and the other hierarchs at His Eminence's first liturgy as Metropolitan.



The Launch of *The Journal of Joy* at St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York



On Thursday, February 20, St. Vladimir's Seminary (SVS) hosted the official launch of *The Journal of Joy*, the iconic book by Fr. Nicolae Steinhardt, who lived as a monk at Rohia Monastery in Maramureș, Romania.

With the blessing of His Eminence Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America (R.O.E.A.), His Grace Bishop Andrei of Cleveland, auxiliary bishop of the Episcopate, attended the event, representing the R.O.E.A.

The event opened with a welcome address by the interim president, Dr. Ionuț Alexandru Tudorie. He was followed by Fr. Dr. Bogdan Bucur, associate professor at SVS, who expressed gratitude to everyone involved in this remarkable project. He highlighted the significance of this publication as the first official and complete translation of Steinhardt's monumental work, *The Journal of Joy*. Special appreciation was extended to the R.O.E.A. and its hierarch, Archbishop Nathaniel, whose generous financial support made this project possible.

Dr. Răzvan Porumb, the author of the foreword to *The Journal of Joy*, delivered a lecture titled *An Orthodox Spirituality for Today: Reading Steinhardt's Journal of Joy in Context*. Following Dr. Porumb's talk, Fr. Ștefan Iloaie, professor of Orthodox Spirituality and Bioethics at Babeș-Bolyai University (Cluj-Napoca, Romania), spoke about the remarkable personality of Fr. Nicolae Steinhardt.

With the blessing of His Grace Justin, Bishop of Maramureș and Sătmar (Romania),

the event was also attended by Florea and Protosinghel Dean Archimandrite Macarie, abbot of Rohia Monastery, along with Rev. Dr. Radu Preda, professor of Theology at Babeş-Bolyai University, and Mr. Kenan Dionisie Wang, a Ph.D. student in History at the University of Bucharest and publishing director of *Ortodoxia Maramureşeană*.

The event concluded with a light reception, allowing attendees to engage in further discussions and reflections on the significance of Fr. Nicolae Steinhardt's Orthodox spirituality.

The General Consul of Romania in New York, Simina

Chesarie Berteza of St Mary Parish, along with several faithful of the area, also attended the event.

The event concluded with a light reception, allowing attendees to engage in further discussions and reflections on the significance of Fr. Nicolae Steinhardt's Orthodox spirituality.



Lansarea *Jurnalului Fericirii* la Seminarul Sf. Vladimir din New York

Joi, 20 februarie, la Seminarul Sf. Vladimir (SVS) a fost găzduită lansarea cărții *Jurnalul Fericirii*, a Părintelui Nicolae Steinhardt, care a trăit ca monah la Mănăstirea Rohia din Maramureş, România.

Cu binecuvântarea Înalt-preasfințitului Părinte Nathaniel de Detroit și al Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române din America (R.O.E.A), Preasfințitul Părinte Andrei de Cleveland, episcop vicar al Episcopiei, a participat la eveniment, ca reprezentant al (R.O.E.A.)

Evenimentul a fost deschis printr-un discurs de bun venit susținut de Președintele Interimar și decan Academic, Dr. Ionuț Alexandru Tudorie, urmat de Părintele Dr. Bogdan Bucur, profesor asociat la SVS, care și-a exprimat recunoștința față de toți cei implicați în acest proiect remarcabil. El a subliniat importanța acestei publicații, fiind prima traducere oficială și completă a operei monumentale a părintelui Nicolae Steinhardt. Alese mulțumiri au fost adresate R.O.E.A. și ierarhului său, Arhiepiscopul Nathaniel, a cărui susținere financiară ge-

neroasă a făcut posibil acest proiect.

Dr. Răzvan Porumb, autorul prefaței *Jurnalului Fericirii*, a susținut o prelegere intitulată *O spiritualitate ortodoxă pentru astăzi: citind Jurnalul Fericirii în context*. După prelegerea dnlui. Dr. Porumb, Părintele Ștefan Iloaie, profesor de Spiritualitate Ortodoxă și Bioetică la Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai (Cluj - Napoca, România), a vorbit despre personalitatea remarcabilă a Părintelui Nicolae Steinhardt.

Cu binecuvântarea Preasfințitului Justin, Episcopul Maramureșului și Sătmarului (România), la eveniment au fost prezent și Arhimandritul Macarie, starețul Mănăstirii Rohia,

alături de Pr. Dr. Radu Preda, profesor de Teologie la Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, și domnul Kenan Dionisie Wang, doctorand în Istorie la Universitatea din București și director editorial al Revistei *Ortodoxia Maramureșeană*.

La eveniment au fost prezenți și Consulul General al României la New York, Simona Florea, PCuv Protopop Chesarie Berteza de la Parohia Sfânta Maria, și credincioși din zonă.

Evenimentul s-a încheiat cu o recepție restrânsă, oferind participanților ocazia de a discuta și reflecta asupra importanței moștenirii spirituale ortodoxe lăsate de Părintele Nicolae Steinhardt.





Convocation

77th A.R.F.O.R.A. Congress

May 30-June 1, 2025

Hosted by: **St. Mary Romanian
Orthodox Church**

854 Woodbridge St., Saint Paul, MN 55117

Chairperson: Prascovia Bortnova, (612) 298-9066

Co-chair: Psa. Eugenia Cerghizan

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr. Mircea Vasii, (734) 497-4544

A.R.F.O.R.A.

In conformity with Article II, Section 2 of the By-Laws,
We hereby convoke the 77th National A.R.F.O.R.A. Congress to be
held on May 30 – June 1, 2025

**St. Mary Romanian Orthodox Church, 854 Woodbridge St. Saint
Paul, MN 55117; 651-488-5669**

Diocesan Hierarchy: The Most Reverend **Archbishop NATHANIEL (POPP)**

ARFORA National President: **Lucy Pop**; ARFORA National Secretary: **Adela
Price**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, May 30	5:00 pm Great Vespers & Parastas
4:00 pm-7:00 pm Early Registration & Reception at the Church	6:00 pm Dinner Event & Speaker
5:00 pm Executive Board Meeting	Sunday, June 1, 2025
Saturday, May 31	9:00 am Matins
8:30 am Delegate Registration and Breakfast	9:45 am Vesting of Hierarchy
9:30 am Congress Session I	10:00 am Hierarchical Liturgy
12:00 pm Lunch	12:30 pm Congress Banquet & Farewell
1:30 pm Congress Session II	
4:30 pm Congress Photograph	

Hotel Accommodations

**Drury Plaza Hotel, Saint Paul Downtown, 175 10th E, Saint
Paul, MN 55101 / Phone: (651) 222-3337; Website: [https://bit.ly/
ARFORA2025](https://bit.ly/ARFORA2025)**

**Make your hotel reservation by May 14, 2025 (Mention: ARFORA
Congress)**

Financial Report

Episcopate Supporter

M/M Gregory Thetford, Ellwood City, PA.....	\$1,000.00
Cornel & Sharon Ivascu, Franklin, MI.....	\$500.00
Constance Trollan, Laguna Woods, CA.....	\$100.00
Louise Gibb, Youngstown, OH.....	\$100.00
Connie Paranuik, Fredericton, NB	\$100.00

2025 Episcopate Assessment

St Mary, Chicago, IL.....	\$34,000.00
St Mary Cathedral. Cleveland, OH	\$33,300.00
Sts Peter & Paul, Dearborn Heights, MI	\$29,500.00
Holy Cross, Hollywood, FL	\$24,500.00
St John the Baptist, Kitchener, ON	\$22,500.00
St Andrew, Potomac, MD	\$20,700.00
Descent of the Holy Spirit, Warren, MI	\$19,500.00
St Nicholas, Troy, MI.....	\$17,500.00
Sts Constantine & Helen, Lilburn, GA	\$17,100.00
Three Hierarchs, Mountlake Terrace, WA.....	\$16,800.00
St George Cathedral, Southfield, MI.....	\$11,600.00
St Dumitru, New York, NY	\$11,500.00
Sts Constantine & Helen, Indianapolis, IN	\$10,500.00
Presentation of Our Lord, Fairlawn, OH.....	\$10,355.00
Holy Cross, Alexandria, VA	\$9,700.00
St Athanasius, Aurora, IL.....	\$9,700.00
St Mary, St Paul, MN.....	\$9,400.00
St Mary, Colleyville, TX.....	\$9,000.00
Descent of the Holy Spirit, Elkins Park, PA	\$8,300.00
St Mary, Elmhurst, NY	\$8,300.00
St Dimitrie, Frederick, CO	\$7,800.00
St John the Baptist, Glendale, AZ	\$7,565.00
St Parascheva, Lachute, QC	\$7,400.00
St Mary, Calgary, AB.....	\$7,000.00
St John of Wallachia, Ridgewood, NJ.....	\$6,600.00
St Anne, Jacksonville, FL	\$6,500.00
St Mary of Magdala, Houston, TX.....	\$5,900.00
Holy Cross, Hermitage, PA.....	\$5,800.00
St Mary, Portland, OR.....	\$5,780.00
Sts Michael & Gabriel, Sacramento, CA	\$5,700.00
St John Chrysostom, Old Hickory, TN	\$5,600.00
St George Cathedral, Regina, SK.....	\$5,580.00
St Michael & Gabriel, Middle Village, NY	\$5,400.00

WINTER 2025

Solia The Herald

Descent of the Holy Spirit, Ridgewood, NY	\$5,100.00
Descent of the Holy Spirit, Merrillville, IN.....	\$4,900.00
Sts Michael & Gabriel, Apopka, FL.....	\$4,600.00
Holy Transfiguration, Manchester, CT.....	\$4,300.00
Holy Trinity, Youngstown, OH.....	\$4,200.00
Holy Cross, Alexandria, VA.....	\$4,000.00
Sts Michael & Gabriel, Palm Springs, CA	\$4,000.00
St Nicholas, Alliance, OH	\$3,800.00
St Andrew, Laval, QC	\$3,400.00
St Thomas, Saint Louis, MO	\$3,100.00
Holy Cross, Phoenix, AZ.....	\$3,000.00
St Andrew, McKees Rocks, PA.....	\$3,000.00
Holy Cross, San Diego, CA.....	\$2,900.00
St Mary, Chelsea, MA	\$2,500.00
Holy Resurrection, Warren, OH	\$2,400.00
St Basil the Great, Durham, NC	\$2,200.00
St Joseph of Maramures, Hazleton, PA	\$2,100.00
St Anne, Pomona, CA.....	\$2,000.00
St George, Canton, OH.....	\$1,200.00

General Donations

Sts Michael & Gabriel, Palm Springs, CA	\$2,500.00
(Hierarch Travel Expense)	
St Dimitrie, Easton, CT	\$1,500.00
(Hierarch Travel Expense)	
M/M Liviu G Constantinescu, Simi Valley, CA	\$1,000.00
St Luke, Markham, ON	\$1,000.00
(Leahu Family Appeal)	
St Elias, Schomberg, ON.....	\$671.60
(Hierarch Travel Expense)	
St Mary, Calgary, AB.....	\$671.60
(Hierarch Travel Expense)	
St Dimitrie Ladies Auxiliary, Easton, CT.....	\$500.00
(Hierarch Travel Expense)	
Michael & Eugenia Babu, Fairfield, CT.....	\$200.00
(Hierarch Travel Expense)	
Nicolae & Simona Herascu, Carmel, IN.....	\$200.00
(Christmas)	
Dumitru Bodi, West Bloomfield, MI.....	\$100.00
(Christmas)	
M/M Ovidiu Grama, Berea, OH.....	\$100.00
(Christmas)	
Madelena & Joseph Ilcus, Palm Beach Gardens, FL.....	\$100.00
(Christmas)	
Nicholas & June Vasu, Southfield, MI.....	\$20.00

RUGAȚI-VĂ ȘI LUCRAȚI PENTRU UNITATE ORTODOXĂ ÎN AMERICA DE NORD 27

Madeline Vasu, Farmington Hills, MI	\$10.00
Isidro Boland, Fanwood, NJ	\$9.31

Memoriam

Maria & Daniel Plantus, Clarkston, MI	\$500.00
(IMO of Veturia Nicula)	
Anonymous	\$100.00
(IMO John Serban)	
George Regep, Bloomfield Hills, MI.....	\$100.00
(IMO Florence Regep)	
Dr Gary Scavnicky, Novi, MI.....	\$100.00
(IMO Eli & Ruby Roman & Wife Judy Scavnicky)	
Vivian Radu, Philadelphia, PA	\$50.00
(IMO George Radu)	
Vivian Radu, Philadelphia, PA	\$50.00
(IMO Archpriest Leonte Copacia Jr)	

Vatra Generations

Holy Dormition Monastery, Rives Junction, MI	\$3,500.00
National A.R.F.O.R.A.....	\$2,680.00
Michael Lawrence, Layton, UT	\$1,120.00
Simion & Carmen Coca, Pittsburgh, PA.....	\$1,000.00
Robert & Diana Nicola, Trumbull, CT	\$1,000.00
Ion Alin Toader, Quebec, QC	\$639.81
Holy Trinity, Youngstown, OH	\$500.00
Sts Constantine & Elena, Indianapolis, IN	\$275.00
Rev Dn/Mrs Kenneth Liu, Vienna, VA	\$250.00
M/M Marius Balog, Elmhurst, IL	\$200.00
Riad & Dianne Farah, Shelton, WA	\$200.00
Louise Gibb, Youngstown, OH	\$100.00
Constantine Nan, Carrollton, TX	\$100.00
George Regep, Bloomfield, MI.....	\$100.00
George Sasu, Villa Park, IL	\$100.00
Anonymous.....	\$50.00
Florin Pitu	\$50.00
Rev Fr & Psa Mircea Vasiu, St Paul, MN	\$50.00
Peter Lee, Huntingdon, PA	\$48.32
Victor Tulbure, El Dorado Hills, CA.....	\$30.00

Vatra Generations

(Bishop Andrei 5th Anniversary of Ordination)

Three Hierarchs, Mountlake Terrace, WA.....	\$5,000.00
St Mary, Chicago, IL	\$2,000.00
St Athanasius, Aurora, IL	\$600.00
Rev Fr & Psa Cezar Cisloiu, Mars, PA.....	\$500.00
Decent of the Holy Spirit, Merrillville, IN.....	\$500.00

WINTER 2025

Solia The Herald

Holy Cross, Hollywood, FL	\$500.00
Holy Dormition Monastery, Rives Junction, MI.....	\$500.00
National ARFORA	\$500.00
St Andrew, Laval, QC	\$500.00
St John Chrysostom, Old Hickory, TN	\$500.00
St Mary Cathedral, Cleveland, OH.....	\$500.00
Sts Constantine & Helen, Lilburn, GA.....	\$500.00
Simona & Stefan Russu, Kitchener, ON	\$500.00
Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Ellwood City, PA.....	\$400.00
St Mary Ladies Auxiliary, Chicago, IL	\$300.00
St Nicholas, Alliance, OH	\$250.00
Sts Michael & Gabriel, Palm Springs, CA	\$250.00
V Rev Fr & Psa Remus Grama, Cleveland, OH.....	\$250.00
Zenaida E Bench, Ellwood City, PA	\$200.00
George Cantor, Cleveland, OH	\$200.00
Mark Chestnut, Grass Lake Twp, MI.....	\$200.00
Ionel Ionescu, Warren, MI	\$200.00
M/M Jonel Maiogan, Elmhurst, IL.....	\$200.00
Rev Fr & Psa Daniel Pop, Aurora, IL	\$200.00
M/M John Pop, Northbrook, IL.....	\$200.00
John & Maria Radu, Grosse Ile, MI	\$200.00
V Rev Fr & Psa George Ursache, Niles, IL	\$200.00
St Mary, Chelsea, MA	\$200.00
Iulian & Christine Ionita, Kitchener, ON	\$150.00
V Rev Fr & Psa Romey Rosco, Westland, MI.....	\$150.00
Silvia Costea, Northville, MI.....	\$100.00
Gary & Anna Devine, Plymouth, MI	\$100.00
Eduard Dutescu, Hersey, MI	\$100.00
M/M Cristian Gheordunescu, Livonia, MI.....	\$100.00
M/M Ioan Irimie, Canton, MI.....	\$100.00
Alina Klein, Hudson, MI.....	\$100.00
Gheorghe & Elena Mihaescu, Dearborn Hts, MI	\$100.00
Ioan & Paraschiva Pampu, Macomb, MI	\$100.00
Rev Fr & Psa Daniel Radu, Merrillville, IN.....	\$100.00
Gus Secue, Westlake, OH	\$100.00
Mary K Stanesa, Dearborn, MI	\$100.00
Chirion & Maria Stanulet, Dearborn Hts, MI.....	\$100.00
Totan Family, Canton, MI.....	\$100.00
Radu & Anca Stingu, Dearborn Hts, MI	\$80.00
Adrian Andrei.....	\$65.00
Filonel Apetroaei, Monroe, MI	\$65.00
Elena Capatana, Dearborn Hts, MI.....	\$60.00
Mircea & Adriana Munte, Livonia, MI	\$60.00
George & Carmen Placinta, Plymouth, MI	\$60.00
Anonymous	\$50.00

Silviu & Mariana Calbajos, Westland, MI.....	\$50.00
Eugenia Dicoiu, Garden City, MI	\$50.00
Jennifer Florea, Plymouth, MI	\$50.00
Mariana Mitrea, Westland, MI.....	\$50.00
Silvia Roman, Westland, MI.....	\$50.00
Rev Fr Radu Russu, Grand Rapids, MI	\$50.00
Rev Fr & Psa Tiberiu Opris, Saint Louis, MO.....	\$50.00
Ionel E Simplicean, Dearborn Hts, MI	\$50.00
Vasile Craciun, Westland, MI.....	\$40.00
Pearl Jonascu, Westland, MI.....	\$40.00
Maria Pampu, Sterling Hts, MI.....	\$40.00
Aurelia Popescu, Dearborn Hts, MI.....	\$40.00
Silvia Popovici	\$40.00
Ion Petcu, Detroit, MI	\$32.00
Aurora Case, Redford, MI	\$30.00
Izabella Craciun	\$30.00
Maria Fetelea, Dearborn Hts, MI.....	\$30.00
Gary & Mary Hotycki, Canton, MI.....	\$30.00
M/M Nick Placinta, Livonia, MI	\$30.00
Maria Popa, Livonia, MI.....	\$25.00
C Balderston, Belleville, MI	\$20.00
Elisaveta Carp	\$20.00
Ioan Fizesan	\$20.00
Ana Floare, Dearborn, MI.....	\$20.00
Cristina Mititelu, Westland, MI	\$20.00
Doina Morariu.....	\$20.00
Andrew Tutuc, Royal Oak, MI	\$20.00
Mihai Spataru, Sterling Hts, MI.....	\$1.00

A.R.O.Y. Fundraiser

Anonymous	\$97.50
Luca Irimie, Canton MI	\$97.50
Bianca Mitranca	\$97.50
Adriana & Christian Munte, Livonia, MI	\$97.50
Vlad Irimie, Canton, MI.....	\$73.05
Mariana Filimon, Manchester, CT	\$50.00
Anonymous	\$48.60
Anonymous	\$48.60
Cristina Irimie, Canton, MI.....	\$48.60
Alina Kleinhenz, Santee, CA	\$48.60
M/M Robert Merchant, Griffith, IN.....	\$48.60

Seminarian Fund

Sts Constantine & Helen, Indianapolis, IN	\$2,290.00
M/M Gregory Thetford, Ellwood City, PA.....	\$1,000.00

WINTER 2025

Solia The Herald

National A.R.F.O.R.A.....	\$200.00
Randy Dickerman, Dexter, MI.....	\$100.00
Lenny & Cathy Jones, Philadelphia, PA.....	\$100.00



SCAN

Here



AND STAY
CONNECTED
WITH US

FOR MORE NEWS AND UPDATES

RUGAȚI-VĂ ȘI LUCRAȚI PENTRU UNITATE ORTODOXĂ ÎN AMERICA DE NORD 31

VATRA GENERATIONS APPEAL

THE VATRA
GENERATIONS
PROJECT
CONTINUES!



Together, let's protect the legacy that defines us. Your support can keep our heritage alive for generations to come. Donate today and make a lasting difference!

Împreună, protejăm moștenirea care ne definește. Sprijinul tău poate păstra vie tradiția noastră pentru generațiile viitoare. Donează acum și fă o diferență pentru veacuri!



\$669,741.24 collected
as February 24, 2025



Find more information at
ROEA.ORG/VATRAGENERATIONSPROJECT



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!