



# SOLIA

THE HERALD

**A magazine of The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America**

**Vol. XCI No. 4-6**

**Spring 2026**



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**SOLIA-THE HERALD (ISSN 0038-1039)** is published quarterly for \$20.00 per year: United States, \$25.00 per year: Canada, and \$30.00 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](mailto:solia@roea.org). Website: [roea.org](http://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.*

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## THE 250<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN



**I**n the year of our Lord, 1776, Thirteen Colonies won Independence from Great Britain. Most of the citizens of the new United States were of Protestant confessions and a few of the Roman Catholic. Eighteen years later, Orthodox Christianity came to North America in the lands of Alaska. Imperial Russia had assumed these northern lands, which it sold in 1867 to the United States for 7.2 Million Dollars, a modest price, and with it the presence of the apostolic Orthodox Christian faith. Today, that modest Orthodox presence has expanded to comprise a presence of over two million faithful believers.

Thus, we consider Alaska as the “Mother Diocese” of North

American Orthodoxy, and we deeply respect the tenacity of native Alaskans to the faith passed to them from their ancestors, who themselves had willingly embraced Orthodox Christianity from Saint Herman and his companion missionaries.

In time, various people immigrated to North America, to Canada and the United States, bringing their talents and their particular Orthodox experience. Such were the first Romanian settlers in Saskatchewan and Ohio, where the first parishes sprang up. We honor their tenacity and patriotism to their new lands of opportunity of over one hundred plus, and we give thanks to God for the totality of parishes in twenty-seven

States and six Provinces.

Our pioneer Romanian faithful embraced new opportunities in various fields of activity, and they participated in the military services as well. Our hearty thanks and blessings to those who served here and abroad. The Romanian presence in various branches of the Armed Forces speaks of love and dedication, appreciation and respect for the laws of the Nation and for the blessings of the parents on their military offspring.

America embraced our pioneers, lay and clergy, and in time our founding Bishop Policarp Morusca, the first hierarch of the Romanians in North America. He was succeeded by Bishop Valerian Trifa, who was elevated to the rank of Archbishop and served during the decades of Soviet communism in Romania, saving the community from infiltration and division.

We thank the clergy and laity, our ancestral founders of the Auxiliaries and projects, civil and religious, and those who assisted the Episcopate as legal advisors and guides through the complicated legal needs of our Church.

Our community has embraced opportunities in work and relaxation, in growth and sharing with all peoples, and in particu-

lar with our Orthodox Christian co-religionists. In the religious services, we pray for the President and the military and civil authorities, for peace and stability, so that we, in this calmness, may lead our lives as Orthodox Christians, giving thanks for the blessings of Divine gifts and for the peace and stability of this land.

The clergy and faithful, the monastics and benefactors of the Episcopate do give thanks to Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit for this land and the two-hundred and fifty years of blessings on her citizens, both in the beginning, now, and we pray “to the ages of ages.” Blessed Two-hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary, United States of America!

†NATHANIEL

**Archbishop of Detroit  
and of the  
The Romanian Orthodox  
Episcopate of America**



## CEL DE-AL 78-LEA CONGRES NAȚIONAL ARFORA



**I**n perioada 05–07 iunie 2026, la Biserica Ortodoxă Română „Sfânta Cruce” din Hollywood, Florida, s-a desfășurat al 78-lea Congres Anual ARFORA, în prezența și cu binecuvântarea Înaltpreasfințitului Părinte Arhiepiscop Nathaniel.

Delegatele din Statele Unite, alături de Părintele Spiritual, PC. Pr. Sabin Pop, s-au reunit pentru a continua misiunea ARFORA de întărire a credinței ortodoxe, susținere a vieții parohiale și promovare a comuniunii creștine între femeile din Episcopia Ortodoxă Română din America.

Programul a inclus ședințele Consiliului Executiv și ale Congresului General, precum și o Slujbă de Pomenire (Parastas) în memoria fostelor președinte și a membrilor trecute la Domnul.

RUGAȚI-VĂ ȘI LUCRAȚI PENTRU UNITATEA ORTODOXĂ ÎN AMERICA DE NORD 5

Un moment important al evenimentului a fost discursul susținut de Preoteasa Diana Acsente, de la Biserica Ortodoxă Română „Sfinții Împărați Constantin și Elena” din Atlanta, Georgia.

Preoteasa Diana Acsente este Doctor în Managementul Ingineriei și fondatoarea companiei Entrepreneurial Shift Inc., unde ajută lideri din mediul guvernamental, companii publice, private și nonprofit să transforme haosul în claritate, construind încredere și echipe performante. Prin munca ei, Preoteasa Diana îi ajută pe lideri să descopere că adevărata schimbare începe din interior, din claritate, prezență și conexiune autentică.

Preoteasa Diana a prezentat o reflecție asupra relațiilor umane create prin conversațiile directe. Ea a explorat tema „Credința în Acțiune: De la Reacție la Cone-

xiune în conversațiile noastre”, inspirându-se din învățăturile și înțelepciunea Părinților Spirituali Ortodocși. Abordarea ei îmbină leadership-ul, știința și credința, ghidând oamenii spre o transformare autentică din interior.

ARFORA a fost fondată oficial în anul 1938, sub îndrumarea Preasfințitului Părinte Policarp Morușcă, fiind cea mai veche organizație auxiliară din cadrul Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române din America. Totuși, rădăcinile sale se întorc până în 1902, când femeile românce din primele parohii ortodoxe din America de Nord s-au organizat pentru a susține viața liturgică și administrativă a bisericilor.

De-a lungul veacurilor, ARFORA și-a extins misiunea, susținând educația religioasă a tinerilor, organizând întâlniri spirituale anuale pentru femei, începând cu anul 1967, și implicându-se activ în acțiuni caritabile pe întreg cuprinsul Americii de Nord. Constituția organizației a fost revizuită în mod semnificativ în anii 1955, 1971 și 1988,



pentru a răspunde mai bine nevoilor comunităților ortodoxe contemporane.

În anul precedent, Comitetul Executiv al organizației Naționale ARFORA a avut rezultate foarte bune în toate departamentele: ARFORA a oferit trei burse de studii în valoare de 1.000 de dolari fiecare, a strâns fonduri pentru noile misiuni ale Episcopiei, a trimis mici daruri monetare de trei ori pe an preoțeselor văduve, a continuat să susțină financiar cele două mănăstiri, Tabăra de copii de la Vatra, Revista Solia și Fondul „Generațiile Vatrei”, și a organizat două întâlniri duhovnicești pe Zoom, una cu Maica Stareță Gabriela de la Mănăstirea Adormirea Maicii Domnului din Rives Junction, Michigan și celaltă cu dna Dr. Corina Gheorghiu, LMFT, DDS, terapeut specializat în domeniul Căsătoriei și Familiei în statul California. De asemenea, ARFORA a trimis scrisori aniversare parohiilor din Episcopie.

Congresul s-a încheiat duminică, 7 iunie, Duminica Tuturor

Sfinților, prin oficierea Sfintei și Dumnezeieștii Liturghii, săvârșită de Înaltpreasfințitul Părinte Arhiepiscop Nathaniel, înconjurat de un sobor de preoți și diaconi.



Evenimentul s-a realizat cu sprijinul PC. Pr. Silviu Sfera, paroh al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române „Sfânta Cruce” din Hollywood, Florida, și al Asociației

Auxiliare de Doamne a acestei parohii, conduse de doamnele Miorica Beker, Maria Stan și Lidia Sekosan, alături de toți membrii Consiliului Parohial și de voluntarii acestei parohii.

În numele meu personal și al asociației ARFORA, vă mulțumim mult pentru toate eforturile depuse la organizarea acestui minunat și reușit Congres ARFORA și pentru susținerea neîncetată a organizației ARFORA! Dumnezeu să vă binecuvânteze!

Cu credință, speranță și dragoste,

**Ioana Mihăilescu**  
**Președinta ARFORA**



## ÎNVĂȚĂTURILE SFINȚILOR PĂRINȚI

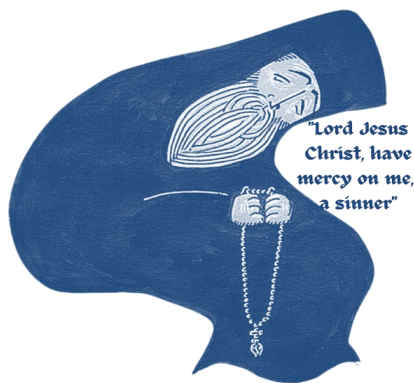
Într-un alt loc vorbește despre sine astfel: „Uitând cele ce sunt în urma mea și tinzând către cele dinainte, alerg la țintă, la răsplata chemării de sus, a lui Dumnezeu, întru Hristos Iisus” (Filipeni 3, 13-14). Iar altora le spune: „Alergați așa ca să o luați” (I Corinteni 9, 24).

Aceasta înseamnă că, în viața creștină, râvna arzătoare are drept roade o anumită însuflețire și vioiciune duhovnicească, prin care oamenii săvârșesc faptele bine-plăcute lui Dumnezeu, călcând peste ei înșiși și aducând de bunăvoie, ca jertfă lui Dumnezeu, tot felul de nevoințe, fără a se cruța pe sine.

Întemeiat cu tărie pe o astfel de învățatură, oricine poate cu ușurință înțelege că împlinirea fără tragere de inimă a rânduielilor Bisericii, asemenea rutinei lucrului de zi cu zi, cunoscut dinainte de mintea care îl diriguiește, sau asemenea purtării de societate corecte și distinse, plină de mișcări politicoase, nu este deloc un semn hotărâtor că viața creștină autentică ar fi prezentă în noi.

Toate acestea sunt bune, dar atâta vreme cât nu poartă în ele duhul vieții în Hristos Iisus, nu au niciun preț înaintea lui Dumnezeu. Astfel de lucruri se aseamănă, așadar, statuilor fără de viață. Și ceasurile bune merg în mod corect; dar cine va fi de părere că au viață în ele? Este același lucru. Adesea „ai nume să trăiești, dar ești mort” în realitate (Apocalipsa 3, 1).

Mai mult decât orice altceva poate amăgi tocmai această bună rânduială din afară. Adevărata ei însemnătate ține de starea lăuntrică a omului, în care se prea poate să fie serioase abateri de la adevărata cuviosie, chi-



ar și în faptele unui cuvios. Astfel, înfrânându-se în afară de la păcat, omul poate simți o atracție pentru el sau chiar o plăcere a lui în inima sa. La fel, făcând fapte bune doar în afară, se poate ca inima omului să nu fie în ele.

Numai adevărata râvnă dorește atât să facă binele în toată curăția și desăvârșirea lui, cât și să izgonească păcatul chiar și în cele mai mici chipuri ale lui. Caută binele ca pâinea cea de toate zilele, iar cu păcatul se luptă ca și cu un vrăjmaș de moarte.

Când îți urăști dușmanul, urăști nu numai persoana lui, ci și pe rudele și prietenii săi, și chiar și lucrurile lui, culoarea sa preferată, în general tot ceea ce ți-ar putea aminti de el. Tot așa, adevărata râvnă de a plăcea lui Dumnezeu prigonește păcatul până în cele mai mici urme și semne ale lui, căci este doritoare de desăvârșită curăție.

Dacă nu este adevărată râvnă, câtă necurăție se poate ascunde în inimă!

(**Sfântul Teofan Zăvorâtul**, *Calea spre mântuire*, Cum începe în noi viața creștină? Part II)

**2026 PREOTEASA RETREAT***by P'sa. Janene Wey*

**F**riday, May 1, clergy wives from Alberta, Canada (P'sa. Lillian Lupu), California (P'sa. Nicole Mitescu), Arizona (P'sa. Laurel Frisby, P'sa. Maria Ciciarelli, and D'sa. Andrea Cain), and Indiana (P'sa. Janene Wey and D'sa. Julie McCulloh) gathered once again for the ROEA's annual Clergy Wives Retreat, hosted at the Vatra by His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel. Due to the wonderful last minute and much appreciated hospitality of Mother Gabriella and the nuns, several of the ladies were housed overnight at Holy Dormition Monastery, while the rest stayed in the Vatra nurses station, due to the inclement early Michigan Spring chill in the Vatra dorms.

Friday afternoon, after a tour of the Chancery and Museum, several of us were treated to a "guided" road tour by Archbishop Nathaniel, of the Mike Levin Lakeland Trails State Park on List Road and Waterloo Recreation Area near Jackson, where the burgeoning spring flora was on full display, and was



enjoyed, especially, by our "desert" Arizonans.

Friday evening after supper, we spent altogether at the "Hearth," sitting around, simply enjoying getting reacquainted.

On Saturday morning, after praying the beautiful Akathist to St. Olga of Alaska in St. Mary's Chapel, we were joined by the Michigan cohort – P'sa. Mihaela Balanean, P'sa. Mary Ellen Rosco, P'sa. Viorica Vlad, and P'sa. Elena Cautiș (and two month old Justina – a future preoteasa?!). All eleven of us gathered together with Archbishop Nathaniel in the sitting room of the nurses station and shared stories of family and parish life, as well as Episcopate resources and opportunities available to us as clergy wives for education and recreation, given the hectic, unpredictable, and strenuous lifestyles which are the lot of the parish priest and his family. In the Heritage Center, we viewed the sobering documentary "They Gather Here No More," regarding a once flourishing parish in Terre Haute, Indiana, which closed in the mid 1980's, due to a decline in membership; it was a challenge to us to pursue godliness in our every day lives and BE the church, reaching out to those around us who are searching. After lunch in the Chancery, we were joined in the Heritage Center once again, by Dr. Daniel Hinshaw, whose presentation

entitled “Healing at the End of Life as Orthodox Christians,” discussed the history of the Palliative and Hospice Care movement, which found its beginnings after World War II, as a result of the efforts of Dame Cicily Saunders, an Anglican British nurse. Dr. Hinshaw’s insightful presentation went on to elucidate issues and barriers we face today in caring for those among us who are sick, in particular regarding the misguided desire of our contemporary culture to eradicate suffering altogether – as evidenced by the modern day euthanasia and assisted suicide movements in Canada and parts of western Europe – and which hinder us from being able to care for and minister effectively to “whole persons” around us who inevitably face suffering and their own mortality.



After evening prayers in St. Mary’s Church, we were once again treated to a wonderful dinner in the Chancery, hosted by His Eminence, where we continued our convivium, celebrating the upcoming birthday of one of our own, P’sa. Lillian, who has done so much, along with His Eminence, to see that these much needed and appreciated retreats continue.

The following morning, we attended Liturgy and received Holy Communion at Holy Dormition Monastery, followed by lunch with

the Archbishop in the refectory.

For those of us in attendance, it was an opportunity to connect with other women who share that “hectic, unpredictable, and strenuous” life which we embraced when our husbands were ordained to the Priesthood. Our profound thanks go out to His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, who has once again provided this wonderful opportunity of fellowship and mutual encouragement.

We entreat those of you Preotese who have attended in the past, or have yet to attend, to mark it on your calendar, as a small “oasis” in

the ongoing hustle and bustle which is parish life. As fellow pilgrims on this journey, we are, in many ways, each other’s lifelines that help us to stay invigorated on this journey, together with our husbands, families, and parishioners.

The date for next year’s retreat is tentatively scheduled for September 25-27, 2027 (watch the SOLIA for confirmation!); and “... let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:24-25)

**BOOK REVIEW: *TRIANGLE OF FORGIVENESS****by Protopresbyter Dr. Remus Grama*

**F**or over four decades, Father Cornel Todeasa has been one of the most well-known priests of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America (OCA). Having shepherded our parishes in Alexandria, VA; Saint Paul, MN; and Bridgeport/Easton, CT, our readers may remember his fluid and articulate writing. Over the years, *Solia-The Herald* and some Romanian theological periodicals have published his pastoral writings. Additionally, he has written four other books, most notably *Seek First the Kingdom*.

Recently, Father Cornel surprised us with his first novel, printed in an excellent edition on fine paper by Saint Innocent Press in Milford, Ohio. Its illustrative title, *Triangle of Forgiveness*, together with the artistic impression generated by the delicate illustrations of Dmitry Schidlovsky, instantly stirred my curiosity to find out what the story was all about.

The endorsement of Father Paul Truebenbach also piqued my interest: “Beyond being an engaging read (which it is!), this novel is true medicine for the soul. This work will be sure to be a blessing to whoever reads it!”

Having known the author since we were students at St. Andrei Șaguna Theological Seminary in Sibiu, I have put aside any subjective biases and endorse the novel as a great read. Readers should know that this is historical fiction which may shock in some ways but inspire in others. The plot is a thriller, full of faith and drama which could easily be seen as a screenplay for an action movie.

Without revealing the plot, the story is a social fresco and an x-ray of a demonized society, involving the struggle of a group of friends to sort out and give meaning to their spiritual and existential challenges. It is set in the geography of Southern Transylvania (Romania) during the harsh years of full communism, when anyone could evade reality by running away (at the risk of losing their life), by engaging in metaphysical adventures, or by studying theology.

It is evident that the author, in the persona of John, the village schoolteacher, draws on memory and personal experience. The entire plot hinges on the guidance and inspiration of Saint John of Prislop Monastery (the place of rest of the Confessor Saint Arsenie Boca). The char-

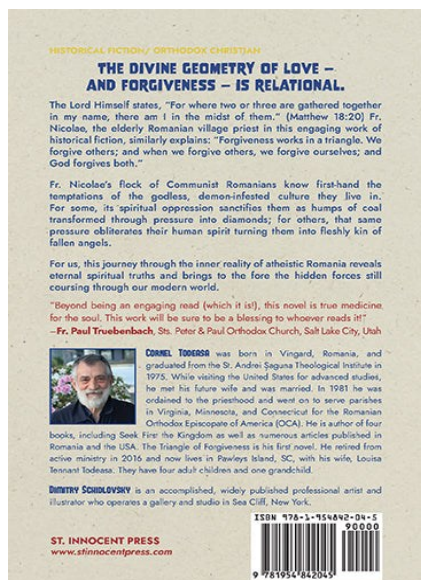
acter of Father Nicolae also stands as a pillar of fire, giving spiritual direction and meaning to the protagonists and the readers as well.

This is the first novel of this genre in Romanian literature that has fallen into my hands lately. Western readers need to hear more from those who lived in the land of “Zebulon and Naphtali” during the dark years of the communist experiment, while Eastern Europeans need more disclosure and reflection to sort out the evil they have endured.

The book is dedicated to “the known and unknown Saints of Romania during the communist era, who endured untold persecution for their steadfast love of our Lord.” The Romanian Orthodox Church has recently canonized sixteen saints, most of whom endured torture in the Romanian gulags. Some are martyrs, some are theologians, but all are luminaries.

Todeasa's book deserves to be read and discussed in church groups that seek spiritual direction. The story reminds us that godly forgiveness begins with ourselves. I sense that this is not the last book of the recluse priest from Pawley’s Island, and I do indeed look forward to more. You may order your own copy in paperback or e-book

format from *St. Innocent Press*, [www.stinnocentpress.com](http://www.stinnocentpress.com).



# CONGRESUL EPISCOPIEI EPISCOPATE CONGRESS 2026



## CONVOCATION

*In conformity with Article III, Section 7, of the By-Laws of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, we hereby call into session*

### **THE 94th ANNUAL EPISCOPATE CONGRESS**

All Priests presently assigned to a parish and all Lay Delegates legally elected by their Parish Assembly in 2025, and whose credentials have been verified by the Chancery, are called into Session.

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*The Congress will be in session on*  
**Friday, September 11 at 9:00 am Eastern Time**  
**at Holy Cross Church, 6232 Fillmore St**  
**Hollywood, Florida**

**All clergy and lay delegates are requested to participate until the completion of the Congress.**

**Details regarding the procedure for joining the Congress meeting will be emailed to all parish clergy and delegates, along with the Report to the Congress and other pertinent materials.**

*The Agenda, as printed in the Annual Report to the Episcopate Congress 2026, will include: Reading/Approval of the 93rd Episcopate Congress Minutes; Official Reports to the Congress; Reports from the Episcopate Auxiliaries; New Business as submitted by the Episcopate Council.*

As per Article III, Section 1, the Episcopate Congress shall be composed of: The Bishop, The Auxiliary Bishop(s), The Vicar,

The Parish Priest and Assistant Priest(s), Two Lay Delegates elected by each Parish Assembly for Congresses 2025-2026, Two delegates from each Auxiliary organization of the Episcopate, Priests under the jurisdiction of the Episcopate not having parishes; deacons, abbots, abbesses, if accredited by the Episcopate Council, Members of the Episcopate Council in office, including Auxiliary Presidents ex-officio.

Should the duly-elected lay delegates be unable to attend, their alternates will represent the parish. No addition, substitution or *ad hoc* delegation will be recognized by the credentials committee.

† NATHANIEL  
Archbishop of Detroit and the  
Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**Thursday, September 10, 2026**  
**Holy Trinity Church, Miramar,**  
**FL (Clergy only)**

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy
- 12:00 pm Lunch for Clergy
- 1:00 pm Clergy Conference
- 5:00 pm Akathist to St Herman
- 6:00 pm Supper for Clergy

**Friday, September 11, 2026**  
**Holy Cross Church, Hollywood,**  
**FL**

- 8:00 am Delegate Registration
- 9:00 am Invocation/94th Episcopate Congress Convenes – Session I
- 12:00 pm Lunch/Photo/ Parastas
- 2:00 pm Congress Session II
- 5:00 pm Vespers

7:00 pm Congress Banquet & Program

**Saturday, September 12, 2026**  
**Holy Trinity Church, Miramar,**  
**FL**

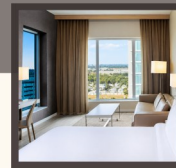
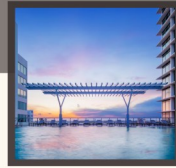
- 9:00 am Matins
- 10:00 am Hierarchal Divine Liturgy
- 12:30 pm Picnic
- Free afternoon*





154 N Compass Way, Dania Beach FL 33004

\$139/ night+tax



**Reservations:**

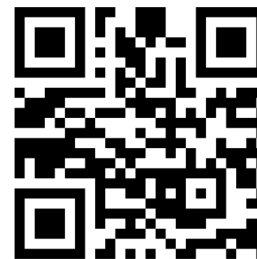
(954) 802-7636

- Mention: "ROEA Congress" for group
- Last Day to Book : Sunday, July 26, 2026



- Miami International (MIA)
- **free AIRPORT SHUTTLE** from Ft. Lauderdale/ Hollywood International (FLL) **ONLY**

**SCAN HERE TO MAKE  
YOUR RESERVATION!**



**PASTORAL VISITS AND EVENTS**  
**STRENGTHENING FAITH AND COMMUNITY**



On Saturday, March 7, 2026, His Grace Bishop Andrei, celebrated the Divine and Holy Liturgy at the Romanian Orthodox Parish St. John the Baptizer in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. During the Divine Liturgy, the ordination of a new deacon took place, as the young theologian Ferenc Joseph Fehérvári, a graduate of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, was ordained to the holy diaconate.



On Sunday, March 8, 2026, the 2nd Sunday of Great Lent, dedicated to St. Gregory Palamas, His Grace Bishop Andrei celebrated the Divine and Holy Liturgy at the Romanian Orthodox Parish Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste in Aurora, Ontario, Canada, on the occasion of the parish's patronal feast. During the Divine Liturgy, the ordination to the holy priesthood of Rev. Dn. Ferenc Joseph Fehérvári took place .



With the blessing of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan of All America and Canada, and at the invitation of the Dean of St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Dr. Ionuț-Alexandru Tudorie, on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 2026, His Grace Bishop Andrei served the Holy and Divine Liturgy at the Three Hierarchs Chapel of St. Vladimir's Seminary. Assisting His Grace at the Holy Liturgy were members of the seminary faculty and invited clergy. During the Divine Liturgy, His Grace ordained the seminarian Benjamin Franks to the Holy Diaconate, and Deacon Daniel Werner to the Holy Priesthood.



On the Great Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, April 12, 2026, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel served at St. George Cathedral in Southfield (Detroit), Michigan, where he officiated the Holy and Divine Liturgy.



On the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, April 12, 2026, His Grace Bishop Andrei visited the parish of The Holy Trinity in Miramar (Miami), Florida, where he officiated the Holy and Divine Liturgy.



On Saint Thomas Sunday, April 19, 2026, with the blessing and at the invitation of His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel, His Grace Bishop Theophan of Philomelion and of the Albanian Orthodox Diocese of the Americas (Ecumenical Patriarchate), together with His Grace Bishop Andrei, officiated the Holy and Divine Liturgy at Saint Thomas Orthodox Parish in St. Louis, Missouri, on the occasion of the parish's patronal feast day.



Between April 24–26, 2026, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel was among the faithful of Sts. Constantine and Elena Romanian Orthodox Parish in Indianapolis, Indiana, on the occasion of the blessing of the newly completed renovation and redesign work carried out at the parish church. The newly redesigned interior was created by architect Andrew Gould, who transformed the nave into a three-aisle basilica, adding columns, arches, paneling, custom chandeliers, and woodwork inspired by Romanian village-church architecture. The project, completed after several years of design, fundraising, and construction, has brought a renewed Orthodox character and beauty to the parish church, originally built in 1948.



His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel and His Grace Bishop Andrei participated in the regular Spring 2026 Session of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, held April 28–30, 2026, in Springfield, Virginia, under the presidency of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon.



On May 9–10, 2026, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel was among the faithful of St. John the Baptist Romanian Orthodox Parish in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, near the Massachusetts border, on the occasion of the celebration of 50 years of marriage of Protopresbyter Onisie Morar and Preoteasa Anca Morar, as well as the 50th anniversary of Father Onisie’s ordination to the holy priesthood.



With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel, from May 11–13, 2026, His Grace Bishop Andrei of Cleveland participated in the Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders gathering, organized through the National Initiative of Lilly Endowment Inc. and hosted by the Center for Congregations.



On Sunday, May 17, 2026, the Sixth Sunday after Pascha, commemorating the Healing of the Man Born Blind, His Grace Bishop Andrei of Cleveland, Auxiliary Bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, visited St. John of Wallachia Romanian Orthodox Parish in Ridgewood, New Jersey, where he officiated the Holy and Divine Liturgy on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the parish's founding.



On the Seventh Sunday after Pascha, May 24, 2026, dedicated to the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel officiated the Holy and Divine Liturgy at Nativity of the Birthgiver of God (St. Mary) Hierarchal Chapel at Vatra Românească in Grass Lake, Michigan, on the occasion of Memorial Day Weekend.



On Sunday, May 31, 2026, the Eighth Sunday after Pascha and the Great Feast of Pentecost, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel celebrated the Holy and Divine Liturgy at the Romanian Orthodox Parish “Descent of the Holy Spirit” in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia, on the occasion of the parish patronal feast.



On Sunday, May 31, 2026, the Eighth Sunday after Pascha and the Great Feast of Pentecost, His Grace Bishop Andrei, celebrated the Holy and Divine Liturgy at the Romanian Orthodox Parish “Holy Trinity” in Miramar, Florida, on the occasion of the parish patronal feast.



On June 6, 2026, with the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel, St. George Romanian Orthodox Cathedral in Toronto hosted **“Youth Day at the Cathedral,”** a special gathering for young people between the ages of 16 and 30. The event began, as is fitting, with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, followed by a festive meal in the Cathedral’s “Dacia” Cultural Hall. The participants then had the opportunity to meet one another and build fellowship through specially prepared icebreaker activities. The day continued with an open dialogue led by His Grace Bishop Andrei of Cleveland, who spoke with the young people and answered their questions, encouraging them in their faith and involvement in the life of the Church.



On the First Sunday after Pentecost, the Sunday of All Saints, June 7, 2026, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel officiated the Holy and Divine Liturgy at Holy Cross Romanian Orthodox Parish in Hollywood, Florida. The celebration also marked the conclusion of the 78th Annual Congress of the Association of Romanian Orthodox Ladies Auxiliaries in America (ARFORA), held June 5–7, 2026.



On the First Sunday after Pentecost, the Sunday of All Saints, June 7, 2026, His Grace Bishop Andrei of Cleveland officiated the Holy and Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity Romanian Orthodox Parish in New Westminster, British Columbia, on the occasion of the parish's 40th anniversary.



On June 11, 2026, at the invitation of Mrs. Elena Gabriela Eremia, Consul General of Romania in Miami, His Grace Bishop Andrei of Cleveland participated in the events organized in Hollywood (Miami), Florida, on the occasion of the historic return of the Romanian Navy training ship *Mircea* to the United States. His Grace attended the events as the representative of His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel, Archbishop of Detroit and the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America.



On Wednesday, June 17, 2026, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel participated in the annual meeting of the Canadian Conference of Orthodox Bishops (CCOB), held at the headquarters of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada in Toronto, Ontario.



On the Third Sunday after Pentecost, the Sunday of All Athonite Saints, June 21, 2026, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, officiated the Holy and Divine Liturgy at St. John Chrysostom Romanian Orthodox Church in Old Hickory (Nashville), Tennessee. The visit took place on the occasion of the parish's 26th anniversary and the blessing of its new parish center, a beautiful and much-needed addition to the life of the community.

## 2026 ARFORA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

### **Martha Gavrila Graduate Scholarship for Women**

**Roxana Nistor** is a very dedicated member of **Sts Peter and Paul Romanian Orthodox Church, Dearborn Hights, MI**, and a member of the AROY Chapter. She serves as both an auditor and social media chair for her church's youth organization, roles that require organizational skills, trustworthiness, and a servant's heart. She was recently admitted to **Indiana University School of Optometry** pursuing a career in professional optometry. Roxana graduated from **University of Detroit Mercy** with a Bachelor of Science in Biology, a minor in Leadership, and a Magna Cum Laude distinction. She has consistently demonstrated her capacity for high-level academic work. Her consistent placement on the Dean's List speaks to her dedication and sustained excellence. In her high school years and continuing into her adult life, she has demonstrated an uncommon combination of ambition, humility, and genuine care for others.

### **ARFORA Helen Muntean Education Scholarship**

**Rodica Babuț** is an active member and the Treasurer of the Ladies Auxiliary at **Saint George Romanian Orthodox Cathedral, Southfield, MI**. She is constantly involved in church activities, and she dedicates her time to help with church events. She is pursuing a degree in **Special Education at Eastern Michigan University**. Rodica works as an educator for Livonia Public Schools, helping students with cognitive disabilities. What sets Rodica apart is the unique blend of professional skill and personal empathy she brings to the classroom. Her desire to specialize in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is deeply rooted in her life as a mother. Having supported her own son through

his journey into young adulthood, she offers a perspective that cannot be taught in a textbook. Rodica is not just seeking a degree but answering a calling. Her passion for helping students learn and grow, combined with her lived experience as a parent of a young adult with autism, makes her the kind of educator we need entering the field.

### **Dr Eleanor Bujea Undergraduate Scholarship**

**Teodora Pelin** is a dedicated and faithful young member of **Saint Mary Romanian Orthodox Cathedral, Cleveland, OH**. She has been deeply involved in the Sunday School program, participated actively in various social and philanthropic initiatives of the parish, offering meaningful support in planning and organization. She is also a devoted member of AROY and will serve this summer as a counselor at Vatra Senior Camp. Teodora is currently a third-year student in the **Psychology program at Cleveland State University**. During her studies, she has distinguished herself as a dedicated, thoughtful, and conscientious student. She approaches her academic work with seriousness and intellectual curiosity. Besides her academic abilities, Teodora possesses strong moral character and deep sense of responsibility toward the community and faith.

**Each selected applicant will receive a scholarship award of \$1,000.00.**

ARFORA recognizes the need to help fund the education of our young people, and we are grateful to support this important mission. The scholarships are offered under the auspices of The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America through the generosity of the families and organizations whose names they bear.



## PASTORAL CHANGES ORDINATIONS

**FEHERVARI, Ferenc**, was ordained by His Grace, Bishop ANDREI, into the Holy Diaconate on March 7, 2026, at St. John the Baptist Parish, Kitchener, ON.

**FEHERVARI, Rev. Deacon Ferenc**, was ordained by His Grace, Bishop ANDREI, into the Holy Priesthood on March 8, 2026, at Holy Forty Martyrs Parish, Aurora, ON, and is attached to Holy Cross Parish, London, ON.

**LEAHU, Rev. Deacon Alexei**, was ordained by His Grace, Bishop ANDREI, into the Holy Priesthood on June 14, 2025, at St. Nicholas Parish, Gloucester, ON, and attached to St. Elias Parish, Anjou, QC.

**MARINESCU, Protodeacon Nicolae**, was ordained by His Grace, Bishop ANDREI, into the Holy Priesthood on March 29, 2026, at St. Parascheva Parish, Lachute, QC, and attached there.

### ASSIGNED / RECEIVED / RELEASED / TRANSFERRED

**CRETU, Rev. Fr. Andrei Vladut**, who was attached to St. Nicholas Parish, Montreal, QC, was assigned Parish Priest of St. Nicholas Parish, Montreal, QC, effective August 15, 2025.

**DUJMOVIC, Rev. Deacon Nicholas**, was released from his duties as Deacon of Protection of the Mother of God Parish, Falls Church, VA, and transferred to the Diocese of the South (OCA), effective February 15, 2026.

**FLOREAN, Rev. Fr. Daniel**, was released from his duties as Parish Priest of St. Basil the Great Parish, Durham, NC, effective June 7, 2025, and assigned Parish Priest of St. John the Baptist Parish, Woonsocket, RI, effective December 1, 2025.

**IFTODE, Rev. Fr. Florin**, was released from his duties as Parish Priest

of St. Anne Parish, Pomona, CA, and assigned Parish Priest of Holy Archangels Michael & Gabriel Parish, Palm Springs, CA, effective December 1, 2025.

**MARINESCU, Rev. Fr. Nicolae**, who was attached to St. Parascheva Parish, Lachute, QC, was assigned Parish Priest of St. Sofian of Antim Mission, effective May 8, 2026.

**MORAR, Protopresbyter Onisie**, was released from his duties as Parish Priest of St. John the Baptist Parish, Woonsocket, RI, and assigned as Assistant Parish Priest, effective December 1, 2025.

**PALANCEANU, Very Rev. Fr. Danut**, who was unassigned, was assigned Parish Priest of Saints Cleopa & Paisie Mission, Salt Lake City, UT, effective November 1, 2025.

**PELIN PhD, Rev. Dr. Cezar**, was released from his duties as Parish Priest of St. Varlaam of Moldova Parish, Riverview, NB, effective June 28, 2025, and assigned Parish Priest of St. Mary Cathedral, Cleveland, OH, effective July 1, 2025.

**PREDA, Rev. Fr. Cristian Mihail**, was released from his duties as Parish Priest of St. Joseph of Maramures Parish, Hazleton, PA, effective August 31, 2025, and assigned Parish Priest of St John the Baptist Parish, Kannapolis, NC, effective September 1, 2025.

**SARCA, Rev. Fr. Petru Teofil**, who was attached to St. Mary Parish, Elmhurst, NY, was assigned Parish Priest of St. Joseph of Maramures Parish, Hazleton, PA, effective September 1, 2025.

**SIPOS, Rev. Fr. Florin Stefan**, who was attached to St. Basil the Great Parish, Durham, NC, was assigned Parish Priest of the Parish, effective June 8, 2025.

**STOLERU, Rev. Fr. Paul Catalin**, who was attached to Ascension of the Lord Parish, Montreal, QC, was assigned Parish Priest effective June 1, 2025.

**VASILE, Rev. Fr. Lucian**, who was attached to St. Varlaam of Moldova Parish, Riverview, NB, was assigned Parish Priest, effective June 29, 2025.

### **RETIREMENTS**

**GRAMA, Protopresbyter Remus**, was granted retirement and released from his duties as Parish Priest of St. Mary Cathedral, Cleveland, OH, effective July 1, 2025.

**MORAR, Protopresbyter Onisie**, was granted retirement and released from his duties as Assistant Parish Priest of St. John the Baptist Parish, Woonsocket, RI, effective September 1, 2026.

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**PREDA, Protopresbyter Marian**, was granted retirement and released from his duties as Parish Priest of St. John the Baptizer Parish, Kannapolis, NC, effective September 1, 2025.

### DEPOSITIONS

**ALECSE, Protopresbyter Constantin**, who was suspended on November 4, 2022, was deposed by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America from all sacred functions of the Holy Priesthood, and his name was removed from the ranks of the clergy, effective April 30, 2026.

**CAPSA, Rev. Fr. Constantin Iustin**, who was suspended on August 28, 2025, was deposed by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America from all sacred functions of the Holy Priesthood, and his name was removed from the ranks of the clergy, effective November 12, 2025.

### AWARDS

*During the 2026 Spring Session of the Holy Synod, the following clergy received the Synodal Award of **Archpriest**: Reverend Fathers Ionut Preda, Silvius Sfera, and Vasile Trif.*

### PARISH CHANGES

#### ELEVATION

**St. George Parish, Toronto, ON**, was elevated to the status of Cathedral, effective July 27, 2025.

#### NEW MISSIONS

**Saints Cleopa & Paisie Mission**, Salt Lake City, UT, established May 30, 2025.

**St. Sofian of Antim Mission**, L'ile-Perrot, QC, established May 8, 2026.



**FINANCIAL REPORT  
EPISCOPATE SUPPORTER**

Psa Mary Copacia, Shelby Twp, MI .....\$100.00

**2026 EPISCOPATE ASSESSMENT**

St George, Toronto, ON .....\$11,445.00  
 Annunciation, Montreal, QC .....\$11,130.00  
 St Mary Cathedral, Cleveland, OH .....\$10,000.00  
 St Mary, Calgary, AB .....\$9,660.00  
 Holy Forty Martyrs, Aurora, ON .....\$8,085.00  
 St John the Evangelist, Vaughan, ON .....\$5,250.00  
 St Mary, Laval, QC .....\$5,250.00  
 Holy Nativity, Chicago, IL.....\$5,000.00  
 Holy Brancoveanu Martyrs, Lachine, QC .....\$4,620.00  
 St Varlaam of Moldova, River Glade, NB .....\$4,200.00  
 St John the Baptist, Charlotte, NC .....\$3,990.00  
 Holy Cross, London, ON .....\$3,150.00  
 St Andrew, Houston, TX.....\$2,310.00  
 St George Cathedral, Southfield, MI.....\$2,000.00  
 Sts Constantine & Helen, Lilburn, GA .....\$420.00  
 St Joseph of Maramures, Hazleton, PA.....\$210.00  
 St Mary, Portland, OR.....\$105.00  
 St Nicholas, Alliance, OH.....\$105.00

**GENERAL DONATIONS**

Katherine Miroy, Stafford, VA .....\$1,200.00  
 (ACE Fund – IMO Steve Miroy)  
 National ARFORA.....\$1,200.00  
 (Vatra Household)  
 National ARFORA.....\$1,200.00  
 (Camp Vatra)  
 National ARFORA.....\$750.00  
 (Preotese Retreat)  
 National ARFORA.....\$500.00  
 (Seminarian Fund)  
 Roxana G Florescu, Farmington Hills, MI.....\$100.00  
 Anonymous .....\$7.00

**HIERARCH TRAVEL EXPENSE**

Sts Constantine & Helen, Indianapolis, IN .....\$3,204.02  
 Holy Trinity, Miramar, FL .....\$2,000.00  
 St John the Baptist, Glendale, AZ.....\$1,500.00  
 St John of Wallachia, Ridgewood, NJ.....\$1,500.00  
 Holy Trinity, Miramar, FL .....\$1,000.00  
 St Andrew, Pittsburgh, PA .....\$1,000.00  
 St Andrew, Potomac, MD .....\$1,000.00  
 St Dimitrie, Easton, CT .....\$1,000.00  
 St John the Baptist, Kitchener, ON .....\$1,000.00  
 St John the Baptist, Woonsocket, RI.....\$1,000.00  
 Holy Trinity, Miramar, FL .....\$1,000.00  
 St Mary, Chicago, IL.....\$1,000.00

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National ARFORA .....	\$600.00
St Varlaam of Moldova, River Glade, NB .....	\$585.80
Descent of the Holy Spirit, Merrillville, IN .....	\$520.16
Holy Cross, Hollywood, FL .....	\$500.00
St Mary, Elmhurst, NY .....	\$500.00

**MEMORIAM**

Doina & Alexis Vircol, Wilmette, IL .....	\$300.00
(IMO Parents: Zamfira & Vasile)	
Daniel & Maria Plantus, Clarkston, MI .....	\$250.00
(IMO Constantin & Veturia Nicula)	
Silvia Costea, Northville, MI .....	\$100.00
(IMO Deceased Family Members)	
Gabriela Gheordunescu, Livonia, MI .....	\$100.00
(IMO Cristian Gheordunescu)	
Cathy & Lenny Jones, Philadelphia, PA .....	\$100.00
(Seminarian Fund)	
National ARFORA .....	\$100.00
(IMO John Pop Jr)	
National ARFORA .....	\$100.00
(IMO Felician Iancu)	

**VATRA GENERATIONS**

Anonymous .....	\$10,000.00
Atty Michael Lawrence, Layton, UT .....	\$1,510.00
Akron Community Foundation, Akron, OH .....	\$1,000.00
Sonia Voiculescu/Hans Kaesgen, Valley City, OH .....	\$1,000.00
Katherine Miroy, Stafford, VA .....	\$800.00
(IMO Steve Miroy)	
Holy Cross, Phoenix, AZ .....	\$500.00
Lucy Pop, Northbrook, IL .....	\$500.00
(IMO John Pop, Jr)	
Mihai & Mihaela Sadean, Lake Grove, NY .....	\$500.00
DeeDee Kuharik & Gary Rezabek, Medina, OH .....	\$200.00
M/M Alex Mindea, Chicago, IL .....	\$200.00
Valerie A Nutial, Chicago, IL .....	\$200.00
(IMO John Pop & FHO Nelson/Kougias Families)	
Silvia Costea, Northville, MI .....	\$100.00
Adrian & Maria Leu, Waxhaw, NC .....	\$100.00
Valerie M Nelson, Chicago, IL .....	\$100.00
Anonymous .....	\$50.00
M/M Lenny Jones, Philadelphia, PA .....	\$50.00

**CAMP VATRA DONATIONS**

Marcel Podar .....	\$200.00
Carmen Podgurschi .....	\$100.00
Constantin Nicolae .....	\$50.00
Mihaela Williams .....	\$50.00



# VATRA GENERATIONS APPEAL

*Preserve our legacy. Inspire tomorrow.*



Goal  
\$900,000

\$ 753,852,47  
collected as of  
June, 17, 2026



Find more information at  
[ROEA.ORG/VATRAGENERATIONSPROJECT](https://ROEA.ORG/VATRAGENERATIONSPROJECT)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**