

Patriarch Daniel. *Rebuilding Orthodoxy in Romania.*

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Romanian Orthodoxy is not very well known beyond the country's borders. After the fall of the communist regime, we can speak of a revival of the Romanian Orthodox Church. The outstanding personality of the post-communist period in Romania is the current patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, His Beatitude Father Daniel Ciobotea.

This volume is edited by theologian Chad Hatfield, a priest and professor of pastoral theology at St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York. Entitled *Rebuilding Orthodoxy in Romania*, this book was published in 2021 by one of the most important publishing houses of the Orthodox world, namely *St Vladimir's Seminary Press*, in New York, USA.

The book contains various studies, speeches and interviews of His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel. The main purpose of this work, according to the editors, is to offer English speakers the opportunity to read about the situation of the Orthodox Church in post-communist Romania. Unfortunately, an introduction and a message from the author are missing, but no doubt this translation project has the blessing and consent of Patriarch Daniel.

The volume is divided into five parts, unequally divided. The first part includes four studies and presentations, of which the first two are from His Beatitude's doctoral thesis, entitled *Theology and Spirituality: Their Relationship with the Contemporary World*, defended at the Orthodox Theological Institute in Bucharest in October 1980. The third study entitled *The One Church and the Many Churches; Orthodoxy: Its Identity and Its Witness* was originally published in 2008 and is a brief historical and theological presentation of the Orthodox Churches. The last article in this part is dedicated to his mentor, Fr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae (1903-1993).

In the second part, selected speeches of Patriarch Daniel are translated: on the occasion of the patron saint of the patriarchal cathedral and at the officiating of the canonization of some Romanian saints in the period 2008-2018: Saint Dionysius Exiguus, Saint Neagoe Basarab, Saint Martyr Constantine Brâncoveanu, Saint Jacob of Putna, Saint Silas, Saint Paisius, Saint Nathan, Saint Joseph the Merciful, Saint George the Pilgrim. These texts have the role of briefly presenting the life of these local saints, some with universal resonance.

The third part of the book is dedicated to young Romanian Orthodox and contains ten speeches of the Patriarch Daniel that have at their center the religious and moral education of young people. The first text was presented at the national congress *Christ Shared with the Children*, organized by the Romanian Patriarchate in collaboration with the World Vision Romania Foundation, held September 16-18, 2013. The following texts were presented at various pastoral conferences, international events, at the International Children's Day, and also at the International Orthodox Youth Meetings, organized in Romania in Cluj-Napoca (2015), in Bucharest (2016), in Iași (2017), in Sibiu (2018) and in Craiova (2021). All these texts speak about the importance of education for young people but also about the joy of having them in the Church. Patriarch Daniel participated in all the international meetings of the Orthodox Youth, in the presence of the local clergy and laity. Orthodox young people from different Orthodox areas of the world were also invited to these meetings.

The fourth part is dedicated to the great modern sculptor, Constantin Brâncuși (1876-1957), and contains three presentations about Christian perspectives of his works and life.

The most known ensemble made by the sculptor Brâncuși is found in his hometown, Târgu-Jiu, in Gorj County, a region in the southwest of Romania. The most important pieces of the ensemble are the following: *The Table of Silence*, *The Gate of the Kiss* and *The Endless Column*. In these presentations, Patriarch Daniel realizes a theological and spiritual interpretation of these works, but also of the Christian life of Constantin Brâncuși.

In the last part of the book we find two interviews given to Romanian Public Television, in 2007 and in 2017, the only ones he has given during his patriarchal period. Also, two presentations were translated: on the occasion of the centenary of Romania and the consecration of the National Cathedral, called also Romanian People's Salvation. In the end, the editor found it appropriate to also translate the biography of His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel in order to make his life and activity known.

Considering that the book contains studies and presentations chosen from the activity of Patriarch Daniel, which presents different aspects of church life in post-communist Romania, with joy and trust we recommend this translation to our readers. We could maintain that this book is a short presentation of the mission of the Orthodox Church in post-communist Romania, Patriarch Daniel being the spiritual and administrative leader. This work stands as a testimony of the missionary activity of the last decade of the Romanian Orthodox Church, regarding the religious education of young people, and also of Romanian cultural identity.

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