

## THE CENTENARY OF THE ROMANIAN PATRIARCHATE

### FEBRUARY 4, 1925 – BY ESTABLISHING THE PATRIARCHATE IN THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, “BY THE WILL OF GOD AND THROUGH ITS OWN POWERS, THE ROMANIAN PEOPLE CAME TO SHOW, WITHIN ITS INTACT ANCIENT BORDERS AND IN ITS FREEDOMS, ITS PERFECT MATURITY AND NATIONAL STRENGTH”

Stoica LASCU

**Abstract:** The paper presents the fundamental acts, made public in the press of the time, of the establishment of the institution of the Patriarchate of the Romanian Orthodox Church, in 1925. After obtaining and recognizing Independence (1877/9 May-1878/1 June), the proclamation of the kingdom (14/26 March 1881) and the obtaining of autocephaly (1885/25 April) – the establishment of the Patriarchate came as a normal fact in the evolution of the young modern Romanian state.

**Keywords:** *Patriarch Miron Cristea, Romanian Patriarchate, Nicolae Iorga, Alexandru Lapadatu*

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*Among the landmark dates of this year in our national history, it is beyond any doubt that the celebration of the Centennial of the Romanian Patriarchate resonates with the existential spiritual hopes and Christian-Orthodox feelings of almost the entire population of the Country, of the Romanian Orthodox faithful everywhere. Consecrated by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church as the Year of Homage to the Centennial of the Romanian Patriarchate and the Commemorative Year of the Romanian Orthodox Spirituals and Confessors of the 20th Century, 2025 constitutes a time of happy circumstances in recalling historical processes, facts and people from the past of the Temple of our ancestral Faith – of the history, in fact, of the Nation. In a contemporary world that is increasingly globalized and, at the same time – fortunately for the peaceful and prosperous future of all humanity – interdependent in its civilizational and spiritual pluralities, the call to reveal our existential and institutional foundations can only be, for today's generations, as useful an example as possible...*

*The adjacent remembrances of this relevant national-Orthodox Centenary of ours – constitute a process that begins with the date on which, in fact, the Holy Synod approved the elevation of the Metropolitan-Primate to the rank of Patriarch, on*

February 4, 1925 (the enthronement taking place on November 1), a process that was completed on Sunday, October 26, 2015, when the consecration of the Cathedral of the Salvation of the People took place (the construction of which was invoked, in his speech, on February 4, 1925, by the newly elected Patriarch Miron Cristea).

The present documentary group reveals public attitudes and accounts from 1925 – from the approval by the Holy Synod, on February 4, of the elevation of the Metropolitan-Primate to the rank of Patriarch, to the handing over of the Tomos by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, on September 27, to the enthronement of the Patriarch, in the Cathedral of Bucharest, on November 1, 1925.

All the documents and testimonies of this period were published in a stand-alone volume, in 1925 – added in 1926 – by Archimandrite Titu Simearea.

„The decision of the Holy Synod was debated in the two chambers of the Romanian Parliament and adopted under the name of Law no. 669/1925 for the elevation of the Archiepiscopal and Metropolitan See of Wallachia, as Primate of Romania, to the rank of Patriarchal See. On 12 February 1925, the law was voted on by the Senate and received 89 votes in favor and 2 against and, five days later, on 17 February 1925, the Chamber of Deputies was unanimously in favor, with 156 votes for the law. It was saluted by senators and deputies in the two chambers through the voices of outstanding personalities of Romanian culture and politics from all the historical regions of the country and from all political parties, such as Alexandru Lapedatu, Ion I. C. Brătianu, Constantin G. Dissescu, Elie Dăianu, Mihail Gropșan, Gheorghe Ghibănescu, Nicolae Costăchescu, Petre Gârboviceanu, Iuliu Maniu, Ion Mihalache, and Ioan Lupaș”<sup>1</sup>.

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### **The Patriarchate of Romania Professor Iorga's Opinions**

In recent times, there has been much discussion in Orthodox clerical circles, as well as in political circles, about the need to establish an Orthodox Patriarchate of Romania in place of the Metropolis of Bucharest. As the preparations of the government and the Holy Synod are very advanced for the adoption of the relevant law, we addressed Professor Nicolae Iorga, asking him to share his opinions on this matter.

He kindly answered us the following:

She kindly asked us the following:

The Necessity of Establishing the Patriarchate

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<sup>1</sup> Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan, *The Transylvanian Contribution to the Founding of the Romanian Patriarchate*, in “Transylvanian Review”, Vol. XXXIV, No.1, Spring 2025: 39 [36-53].

“I believe that the establishment of the Patriarchate is appropriate for several reasons.

Because our Orthodox neighbors have it.

The Serbian Patriarchate dates to the days of Tsar Dushan, from the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century. The Bulgarians had an older Patriarchate, which today is represented by the Exarchate with a patriarchal character.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, like those of Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria, has long been a Greek national body.

The Russians also created a Patriarch at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

We are the only Orthodox people with a simple Metropolitan Primate at the head of an autonomous church. And yet, when the Wallachian Metropolis was founded, the Metropolitan was a patriarchal exarch. At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Metropolitan of Moldova had – recognized by all Orthodoxy – the signs of patriarchal dignity. For two centuries, all the Eastern patriarchates were dominated by us.

#### Restoring the Unity of Orthodoxy by Federative Ways

Today, the unity of Orthodoxy has long passed from the ecumenical monarchy – which has lost its international character and all its prestige, being barely tolerated by the national and secular Turkish state – to the possibility of a federative form, whose members must each have the importance of the state they represent.

In the synod, which is announced, in May 1925, in Jerusalem, we cannot be represented by a leader inferior to those of the other nations of Orthodoxy.

One more fact is added.

#### Explanation of the Existence of Our Metropolitan Churches

It is natural that Transylvania, which was not part of an organized Romanian state, should have its metropolitan, who was also subject to our metropolitan sees from the beginning.

It is less logical than three, four Bukovina counties to have a metropolitan with a single suffragan and that titular.

In our past, Chisinau was not the capital and was content with a single archpriest, and Hotin had a bishop only because it was a Turkish fortress and the Turks also had other districts with Orthodox inhabitants. The bishopric was moved from the White Fortress around 1400, and the bishopric of Ismail, founded after the re-annexation of the three counties of Southern Bessarabia, by the Treaty of Paris, was only a temporary form of our ecclesiastical affirmation in the conquered lands.

But it is understandable that the Romanians of Bukovina and Bessarabia would want to have their heads of the Church adorned with metropolitan prestige.

#### Why is the Title of Patriarch Imposed

But, if, after the Union, when there were two metropolitans in a small country, the one in Bucharest could especially by the simple title of Primate, which is borrowed from the Primacy of Hungary, therefore from the Catholic organization in the

neighboring state – now, when we had three metropolitans subject to the Primacy and perhaps, soon with the one planned for Bessarabia, four, the patriarchal title is imposed.

Once it meant descent from an apostolic foundation. But, as in the West, the patriarch of Aquileia, de Grada or of Venice are not descendants of the apostles, as in the East, only the legend of the propaganda of the apostle Andrew could explain the patriarchate in Moscow – and this legend extends to our countries as well. THE PATRIARCHATE MEANS ONLY THE SUPREME PRESTIGE IN A NATIONAL CHURCH WITH A HISTORICAL PAST.

#### Who should Be the Patriarch

The objection to representation expenses and the difficulty of choosing a person, raised in a newspaper of such a high cleric, has no value. Who is the Metropolitan Primate in the Capital of a unified Romania, he is by right the Patriarch of the autonomous Romanian Church, an equal member of the Orthodox community. And Romanian society is obliged to surround the new Romanian Patriarchate with all the necessary prestige, even in the absence of state resources”<sup>2</sup>.

Emil Ciucianu

### **The Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate** *Statements of the Minister of Religious Affairs*

Asked by the press, Mr. Alex. Lapadatu, Minister of Religious Affairs and the Arts<sup>3</sup>, made the following statements on the issue of the establishment of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate.

#### Reasons for Its Establishment

After noting that everyone responsibly agrees, the minister says:

The creation of the Romanian Patriarchate is demanded by the current situation of numerical and moral superiority of the Romanian Orthodox Church over the other foreign Orthodox Churches – by the role sometimes more significant than that of all the Patriarchates combined that our Church has had in the past, for centuries, as defender and protector of the Christians of the East and by the political prestige that the Romanian State enjoys among the other Orthodox States, a prestige that it must also preserve through the position of its Church.

Indeed, today, after the disintegration of the Russian Empire and the disorganization of the Church there, we are left with the largest Orthodox State, with a population of true believers more numerous than in any other and with a Church that has

<sup>2</sup> Emil Ciucianu, *Patriarhatul României. Părerile d-lui profesor Iorga* [The Patriarchate of Romania. Professor Iorga's Opinions], in “Universul”, 42, No. 282, December 9, 1924: 1.

<sup>3</sup> See, in context – Nicolae Edroiu, Alexandru Moraru, Dorel Man, Veronica Turcuș, *Alexandru Lapadatu (1876-1950), ctitor de instituții științifice și cultural-bisericești*, Renașterea, Cluj-Napoca, 2009 /160 pp./

reestablished its synodal unity since the first year of the creation of the new Romania and is now on the way to achieving the unity of its administrative organization.

The Romanian Orthodox Church was, then, as is known, even after the establishment of the Russian Patriarchate and the growth of the Muscovite Orthodox power, the defender and protector of the Christians of the East, from pagan domination. And this is not only in moral matters, but also in material and cultural matters. None of the Orthodox Churches can claim such a role, which would place it – even in this respect – in a situation of superiority over the others. Finally, the political prestige that the Romanian State enjoys among the other Orthodox States necessarily demands that its national Church not remain, in relations with their Churches and joint actions with them, in a situation of inferiority, only by the fact that, in its hierarchical order, it does not yet have a national Patriarchate like them.

These are the reasons – undoubtedly more than sufficient – for the creation of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate. To them one more can be added. Namely, if the Romanian Catholic Church in the country will naturally exist in a single metropolitan province with its headquarters in the Capital, it is not possible for the official Church of the Romanian State, the Orthodox one, to remain in a hierarchical situation of equality. And this is not for reasons of self-love, but for certain reasons of the State.

Can the Orthodox Church and the Romanian State institute a Patriarchate Themselves? Certainly yes. Our Church is autocephalous, and the State is sovereign. The Church and the State can therefore give themselves the organization that they believe best suits their needs and interests. For the present matter, all the more so since, by establishing a Romanian Patriarchate, absolutely nothing changes in the current organic constitution of our Church and no harm is brought to its relations with the Ecumenical Church of the East, the only one with which the Romanian Orthodox Church is in connection, as regards the unity of dogmas.

#### How Will It Proceed?

As I said before, the initiative lies with the Holy Synod, the only body with the power to propose the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate. The proposal was also formed by His Holiness the Metropolitan of Moldova, as a senior member of our Episcopate. It is subscribed by all the other hierarchs and will be accepted, solemnly, by His Holiness the Patriarch. Synod, which will later draft the act of this historical moment, develops the considerations that led it to raise the Archbishopric and Metropolitan See of Ungro-Wallachia to the rank of Patriarchate.

This act will be communicated, as is customary, to the four ecumenical Patriarchs of apostolic origin (Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria) and, of course, for condescension, to the Patriarchs of national creation of the other Orthodox Churches.

The Government will then come to consecrate, by law, the existence of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate.

As for the method, opinions are divided.

Some believe that this should be done in connection with the law of unification of the Church since then, they say, this Church acquires its perfect unity, and the Patriarchate must present itself as an attribute of this unity.

Others are of the opinion that, since it is an act of national character, of epochal historical significance, the establishment of our Patriarchate must be done by special law. I share this point of view, because I believe that the unity of the Romanian Orthodox Church was restored in 1919 when its four parts met in the Holy Synod.

#### When Will the Patriarchate Be Established?

As soon as possible. Maybe even after the holidays. In any case, the Ecumenical Council of Jerusalem, next May, in which the Romanian Orthodox Church will participate, must find us with the Patriarchate established<sup>4</sup>.

### **The Patriarchate of the Romanian Orthodox Church**

It was decided to establish the Romanian Patriarchate. Naturally, this patriarchate will not change the organization of our Orthodox Christian Church in any way. It was said that the Patriarchate in Bucharest is necessary, as a matter of prestige, because, compared to other Orthodox Christian Churches in the East, our autocephalous Orthodox Church has a considerable number of believers.

There are also other considerations, of a church political nature, which argue in favor of establishing the patriarchate.

Because of the Russian Revolution, the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church decreased significantly in the East. In November 1917, a great pan-Russian council, attended by all the bishops of Russia and numerous priests and laity, reorganized the Russian Orthodox Church around the Patriarchate of Moscow. Metropolitan Tikhon was elected patriarch. The title of patriarch had been abolished in Russia in 1682. After the Bolshevik coup, another religious regime was inaugurated in Russia. The Soviet government declared that it did not recognize any religion, but respected freedom of religion. Reality, it persecuted and continues to persecute all religions. Church property was confiscated and nationalized by the Moscow government.

At the end of 1920, a “supreme ecclesiastical direction” was established with the consent of the patriarchates of Moscow, Constantinople, and the Serbian Orthodox

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<sup>4</sup> xxx *Patriarhatul ortodox român. Declarațiile ministrului cultelor* [The Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate. Statements of the Minister of Religious Affairs], in “Universul”, 42, No. 286, December 13, 1924: 1.

patriarch. This direction established several dioceses in the states detached from the former Russian empire.

In Constantinople, Berlin, London, and various cities in America, great Orthodox Christian activity was observed.

The Bishop of Sevastopol, Benjamin, who had taken refuge in Constantinople, undertook a campaign to reorganize the Russian Orthodox Church. Catholics also agitated, but in a different direction. The Vatican, taking advantage of the Russian revolution and the disastrous effects that this revolution had on the Russian Orthodox Christian Church, pursued and pursues the realization of a Western plan for domination of the Slavic world.

Both Pope Benedict XV and Pope Pius XI made attempts to end the “Eastern schisms”, with the aim of achieving the “union of the Christian churches of the West and the East”. It is true that since 1622, when *de Propaganda Fide* was created, the papacy has pursued the same goal, but without success.

The Russian Revolution and the Soviet regime allowed the Vatican to intensify its propaganda for penetration into Russia, following the disorganization of the Russian Orthodox Church and the considerable diminution of its prestige. The creation of the Eastern Congregation by the Vatican was the first stage in the direction of Catholic infiltration into the East.

The attempts made by the new regime in Turkey to weaken the authority of the patriarchate of Constantinople also gave the Vatican the opportunity to intensify its propaganda in the East.

At the Catholic congress in August current year, held in Velehrad, in Moravia, practical means were studied for the preponderance of the Catholic Church in the East, as well as for the union of all Christian churches under the domination of Rome.

This policy of the Vatican cannot leave us indifferent.

Therefore, the establishment of the Romanian patriarchate also has a political importance, given the situation in which the other Orthodox churches and patriarchates in the East find themselves<sup>5</sup>.

### **The Romanian Patriarchate**

All Orthodox believers felt an inexpressible gratitude upon the announcement of the establishment of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate, intended to give the national church its true influence in the European East.

No Orthodox church deserves its elevation to this high rank more than the Romanian Church, because it was the shield of Christianity in the East, more than any other. In its name, the great wars against Islam were fought, all our voivodes

<sup>5</sup> xxx *Patriarhatul bisericii române ortodoxe* [The Patriarchate of the Romanian Orthodox Church], in “Universul”, 42, No. 287, December 14, 1924:1.

were fighters for Christianity, Șerban Cantacuzino fought under the walls of Vienna to defend the cross, Brâncoveanu sacrificed his life for the faith.

The Church, defender of law and nation, the Church, preserver of customs, was owed this honor, which it earned through its immeasurable sacrifices.

But this patriarchate requires a well-established conception of the great purpose it has, of the financial sacrifices that must be made by the state to ensure its full brilliance and the ability to fulfill its mission both at home and abroad.

If the Patriarchate is only a change of title, replacing the word Metropolitan Primate and is only a form to flatter us, then it can no longer have the importance that in our conscience we want to attribute to it; and if, as is whispered, this title is given to the first Orthodox hierarch only as an apparent privilege to reassure Orthodox Christians by showing them that the national Church retains its primacy, but with the aim that this comfort be used for the establishment of a united Metropolis in the Capital, we believe that a great national and political mistake is being made.

The Patriarchate to which the Romanian Orthodox Church has every right, and which is imposed by our Christian, political and national interests can only have its purpose by ensuring its effective church leadership and giving it a free hand in all matters concerning the church.

The Patriarchate for us is the ministry of souls finally establishment and the one called to lead it must be the master of his archiepiscopal throne, having to give an account of his work only to God.

A patriarchate having an ecclesiastical representative at its head but being placed at the discretion of the executive power and forced to beg for support in order to be able to fulfill its duties; such a patriarchate, only in name, cannot benefit us and on the contrary will lower the prestige of the Church in the state and abroad. That is why we, who eagerly await the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate, the homage of gratitude that the entire Romanian nation brings to the mother Church, the protecting Church, the Church of all our aspirations and all our hopes, could not conceive that this great historical fact, of Christian, social and political glorification and foresight, would be only a simple change of title made with much pomp, but without foundation and without any result. The Holy Synod has in its hands the resolution of this issue so important for our future.

May the Lord be able to resolve it as it should<sup>6</sup>.

Alexandrina Gr. Cantacuzino

#### A Great Church Event

### **Proclamation of the Patriarchate of Romanian Orthodox Churches**

#### *Solemn Session of the Holy Synod*

### ***ACT OF ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PATRIARCHATE***

<sup>6</sup> Alexandrina Gr. Cantacuzino, *Patriarhatul român* [The Romanian Patriarchate], "Universul", 42, No. 285, December 24, 1924: 1.

***Statements of Mr. Alex. Lapedatu - Minister of Religious Affairs and Arts  
- Speech of His Holiness Miron -  
The First Patriarch of Romania***

The Holy Synod met yesterday in a solemn session, in the presence of Mr. Alex. Lapedatu, Minister of Religious Affairs and Arts. His Holiness Nectarie, Metropolitan of Bukovina, read the proposal by which His Holiness Metropolitan Pimen of Moldavia made it in a previous session and following which the Holy Synod was called to elevate to the rank of Patriarch of Ungro-Wallachia His Holiness Dr. Miron, Metropolitan Primate of Romania.

THE MEMBERS OF THE HOLY SYNOD UNANIMOUSLY DECIDED THAT THE CURRENT METROPOLITAN PRIMATE OF THE COUNTRY SHOULD BE ELEVATED TO THE RANK OF PATRIARCH OF HUNGRO-WALLACHIA.

The Act for the Establishment of the Patriarchate

Here is the content of the act for the establishment of the highest hierarchy of our national church:

“By the will of God and through its own powers, the Romanian people have come to show, within their ancestral borders and in their freedoms, the perfect maturity and national strength to which they have risen. This maturity and strength are in their hands victories, they are in their hands adornments, *they are in their hands deposits of strength and elevation*; but above all, they are rights and duties, which bind them, from today onwards, in the most natural way, to the body and fate of great nations, that is, to the responsibilities and duties of those peoples and states, which have created and continue to create progress in the civilization of all mankind.

The Romanian people of today have therefore risen, in their own eyes and in the eyes of humanity, through their own merit, not only above his slavery and his shortcomings of the ages which prevented him from pouring into the work of advancing the world the entire value of his own nature, but he rose to the superior and worthy rank of cooperator and guarantor of this work of general progress and infinite civilization.

This rank, however, founded as we see on his strength and maturity today, imposes on the Romanian people the obligation to create and to appropriate all the means and institutions, not only cultural, political and economic of a civil and secular order, but also ecclesiastical ones, through which he can put into value for the civilizing role to which he is called, his soul, his capacities and his inner qualities and to ensure for the common good, the fruition of his labors and achievements. As a natural consequence therefore of this civilizing rank and role, *the Romanian people establish from today onwards, through its own sovereignty, political and*

*ecclesiastical, the Patriarchate for the Romanian Orthodox Church, recognizing the Metropolitan of Bucharest of the Country, the title of Patriarch of Romania.*

From today onwards, by virtue of this act of superior ecclesiastical endowment, the Metropolitan of the Romanian Capital will bear with protocol and canonical title the designation of *«Archbishop and Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, Patriarch of Romania»*.

Upon the establishment of this Romanian Patriarchate, our Church and State were thus urged and justified, in addition to the reasons above, by the increase, both in number and in Orthodox population, of the country's Dioceses.

From the eight that existed before the War of National Unity, the country's dioceses have today risen to 18, that is, they have increased by 10, having 5 metropolitan sees among them and, all together, counting a Romanian Orthodox population of over 14 million.

Through this increase, today's Romania has become a leading Orthodox power in the Christian East, far surpassing Yugoslavia, which has long had its Patriarchate, revived again in our days, and which represents for the Orthodox Church of the whole world a foundation and a strong arm of support, just as, unfortunately and with the most inconsolable pain for the Romanian people and Church, many of the old, canonical and so brilliant historical Patriarchates of universal Orthodoxy can only represent in number and social position. The ecclesiastical importance of today's Romanian people has also contributed to the creation of the Romanian Patriarchate, just as the ecclesiastical importance of Russia before Tsar Peter the Great created for Russia the Russian Patriarchate of that time.

It should be known, however, that in addition to the current significance of the Romanian Church, it is also appropriate to take into account its past significance *for the creation of today's Patriarchate, that is, the philanthropic and protective role it played by supporting the Christian East under the Turks*, with the financial means of the Romanian people and with its comforts, as well as the role of defender of the Orthodox faith in the East that the Romanian Church fulfilled in the 17<sup>th</sup> century against Protestantism through the councils of Suceava and Iași and through the work entitled *«Confession of the Orthodox Faith»* by the Romanian Metropolitan Petru Movilă, approved and used, after its revision by the Eastern Patriarchs, by all Orthodox churches.

Based on this consideration, it was natural and certain to recognize the Romanian State Church, not only the right but even the duty to create in its current situation, a Romanian patriarch, like the one that the Holy Synod is establishing today.

Therefore, in view of the maturity and strength of the Romanian nation, which has become free and whole today by the will of God and by his powers, in view of the obligation of this people to put its maturity and strength to good use, for the progress and civilization of humanity, both today and tomorrow, through all the institutions and means that it would believe necessary for this purpose and based especially on

our ecclesiastical autocephaly – that is, the right of the Romanian Orthodox Church to freely dispose of itself as it sees fit, apart, of course, from dogmas, morality, worship, and canons in connection with this common and obligatory deposit for all the churches of the Orthodox peoples –, *St. The Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church decides* in its meeting today, February 4, *the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate*, the first head of the Romanian episcopal college, to be titled in the future «Archbishop and Patriarch of Romania».

This decision will be submitted to the Hon. government for legal confirmation and, for sanction by His Majesty King Ferdinand I of Romania. At the same time, it will be communicated to all sister churches throughout the Eastern world who will not delay in enjoying this increase in power and importance of their Romanian sister, sending her with love and haste their fraternal embrace and recognition”.

Speech of Mr. Alex. Lapedatu, Minister of Religious Affairs

Highly Most Holy and Most Holy Fathers!

Now that the Holy Synod, with unanimity of feelings and wills, has decided to raise the Metropolitan See of Ungro-Wallachia to the rank of Patriarchal See and its current holder, His Holiness Metropolitan dr. Miron Cristea, in his capacity as Primate of Romania, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, allow me, as Minister of Religious Affairs, to show you the reasons of State for which the government I represent will yes, with great satisfaction, legal form of the decision of the Holy Synod, a decision that will remain, for the future, undoubtedly, a historical moment in the development of the life of our ancestral Church.

Highly Holy and Very Holy Fathers!

The organization of the Romanian Orthodox Church is so closely connected with that of the State, that the phases of its development are also those of the State. The founding of Wallachia and the assurance of its independence under Alexandru Basarab brought with it the organization of the Metropolitanate of Ungro-Wallachia (1359), just as, likewise, the founding of Moldavia and the assurance of its independence under Alexandru the Good brought with it the organization of the Metropolitanate of Moldavia and Suceava (1401).

These metropolitan organizations, the hierarchical independence from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, lasted as long the political formations that gave rise to them. For the Union of the Principalities (1859) and the unification of their public life (1862) *caused the need for a new organization of the national Church*, in relation to the considerably increased political situation of moderate Romania.

To satisfy this need, the authors of the 1866 Constitution wanted to include in art. 21 of their work, as principles of the future church organization: the hierarchical non-attachment of the Romanian Church to any foreign hierarchy and its synodal leadership.

And, indeed, with the consolidation of the union under the reign of Prince Carol, the Holy Synod was established in 1872, in relations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and with the other Orthodox Churches only as regards the unity of dogmas and canons, and the metropolitan see of Ungro-Wallachia was declared – as the oldest, resident in the capital of the country and holder, since its establishment, of patriarchal attributions (“Exarch of the Lands”) [*Exarh al Plaiurilor*] of the Primate of Romania, and after the War Independence (1877-78) and the proclamation of the Kingdom (1881).

*The autocephaly of the Romanian Orthodox Church was decreed and obtained in 1885. Therefore, while modern Romania gained through war and affirmed through royalty its complete national sovereignty, its Church became autocephalous and synodal, that is, the leader, through its council of bishops, of its spiritual purposes. This autocephalous and synodal organization, with a metropolitan primate at the head, of the Orthodox Church beyond the mountains lasted long as the political formation that gave rise to it – the Old Kingdom. Because the establishment of the current Romanian State, of national unity, also imposed the necessity of reorganizing our Church, in relation to its new composition and political significance.*

As in 1866, the authors of the 1923 constitution wanted to include in their pact (art. 22) the principles of this reorganization, namely: maintaining our Church’s external position, compared to the other Orthodox Churches (autocephalous), they determined its internal situation, compared to the other Cults (dominant) and granted it – in addition to synodal leadership regarding spiritual affairs – the right to administer, through its own bodies, made up of laymen and clergy, its ecclesiastical, cultural, foundational and epitropic affairs, with the obligation that the modalities of this management and administration be unitary for the entire Church.

Within these principles, the draft law on the organization of the Romanian Orthodox Church and the statute for the application of this law were drawn up, a statute drawn up by the Church and regarding the details according to which it is to manage and administer, in the future, through certain representative corporations and executive bodies, its spiritual and lay matters.

What remains to be done by the present law is to determine the rank that should be held, in the church and state life, by the hierarchical head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, *since his previous quality as Primate of Romania no longer corresponds to either the current situation of our Church or the traditions of disorganization in the Orthodox Churches.*

Indeed, the Romanian Orthodox Church today consists of the Metropolitan and an Archbishopric, with 13 suffragan dioceses. For through the union of 1918 to the two metropolitan organizations in the old country, three more were added:

1. The Metropolis, formerly of the Orthodox Romanians in Hungary and Transylvania, now of Transylvania, Banat, Crişana, and Maramureş, a metropolis over which the Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia had the right of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, since the foundation of his see, as Exarch of the Plains.

2. The Metropolis of Bucovina, and

3. The Archbishopric of Bessarabia, now only of Chişinău, which, although separated from the old Metropolis of Moldavia and Suceava, find themselves, by the nature of the conditions in which they were born and developed, in situations of law and fact, which we must accept and recognize.

With the exception the Archbishopric of Bessarabia, which was part of the Russian Church, the two Metropolitanates mentioned above, that of Transylvania and that of Bukovina, entered the Romanian unity as autocephalous Churches. Their reunion in a single church organization, of a national character, gives this organization a special importance that must be confirmed in the new hierarchical order of the Romanian Orthodox Church, different from what it has been up to now.

For if in 1872 it was possible to conceive between the two metropolitan sees, gathered in a common synod, a simple relationship of precedence of one over the other, it is because the Metropolitan Sees they represented were, in terms of their origin, historical development, role and importance, on an equal footing *ex aequo* and because in the then state of the Romanian State and its Church, the title of Patriarch was certainly still inappropriate and premature, so it was necessary to resort to a title borrowed from the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, a title that does not exist in the tradition of the Eastern Church and constitutes, without a doubt, a unicum in its organization.

*However, things look different today, after half a century.* The hierarchical head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, has under his moral authority, as president of the Holy Synod, three Metropolitanates with well-defined historical individuality and an Archbishopric of the significance of a true metropolitanate.

And since neither from a historical nor from a canonical point of view can any serious impediment be invoked against such an elevation in rank of the head of our national Church, this, the Church, in the power of its autocephaly, and the State, by virtue of its sovereignty, *agree to consider that the elevation of the Archbishop and Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, in his capacity as Primate of Romania, to the rank of Patriarch of The Romanian Orthodox Church is a necessity of our new church organization,* demanded by the situation of our Church within the Romanian State and by its situation among the other Orthodox States, as one that has, with the exception of Russia, the largest number of Orthodox believers.

This fact is so natural and in the logic of the historical evolution of our church life that it has imposed itself, simultaneously, on the leaders of the Church and the State and is regarded by all as a necessity of national order.

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Moreover, the establishment of the Patriarchate in the Romanian Orthodox Church does not change in any way the organic constitution of this Church, just as, at its time, the establishment of the Primate of Romania did not change anything in the organic constitution of our Church at that time. The attributions of the patriarch, granted by the holy canons and by the laws of the country, are not and cannot be of a nature to alter the current character of our church life nor to violate the rights and prerogatives, canonical and legal, of the Romanian Episcopate.

Such an institution will not change the relations of the Romanian Orthodox Church with the other Orthodox Churches. These relations will remain the same – of spiritual and dogmatic unity and solidarity, for the defense of common church interests. The Romanian Patriarchate can at most give our national Church, regarding its internal life, an authority and prestige that the Orthodox Churches have achieved in such a hierarchical institution, and this can only be for the good and benefit of Orthodoxy in general.

#### Speech of His Holiness the Patriarch

His Holiness, deeply moved, uttered a few uplifting words through which he showed that the great act accomplished by the Holy Synod does not concern only the humble and temporary HH.P. person, but also the very development of the Romanian church. On this occasion, His Holiness finds it the place not only to thank His Holiness Synod for the decision taken, but to ask him to put in more effort and work in the future to build a large and modern theological faculty in which future ministers of the altar would be trained and a large cathedral would be erected in the capital of the country as befits our national church<sup>7</sup>.

#### **The Speech of the First Romanian Patriarch**

His Holiness Patriarch Miron, visibly moved, says that the honor being given to him now is not addressed to his temporal being, but to the holy Romanian Orthodox Church. As a visible sign of this special event – says His Holiness – I express my

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<sup>7</sup> xxx *Un mare eveniment bisericesc. Proclamarea Patriarhatului BISERICII ORTODOXE ROMÂNE. - Ședința solemnă a Sf. Sinod. - ACTUL DE ÎNFIINȚAREA PATRIARHATULUI. - Declarațiile d-lui Alex. Lapedatu Ministrul cultelor și artelor. - Cuvântarea Sanctității Sale Miron Primul Patriarh al României [A Great Church Event, Proclamation of the Patriarchate ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES. - Solemn Session of the Holy Synod. - ACT OF ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PATRIARCHATE. - Statements of Mr. Alex. Lapedatu Minister of Religious Affairs and Arts. - Speech of His Holiness Miron the First Patriarch of Romania], in "Viitorul", 18, No 5.076, February 6: 1, 2.*

desire to see the following desires of the entire Orthodoxy in Greater Romania fulfilled:

- 1) The creation of numerous scholarships for young people to go to the great cultural centers in the West and East to study the science of theology, and from whom the staff of the church and the Romanian patriarchate would then be recruited;
- 2) The reorganization of the Faculty of Theology in Bucharest, so that it would be a center of Orthodox theological culture. For this, he proposes the establishment of two new chairs for Slavic theological literature and for Greek theological literature;
- 3) Next to the Romanian patriarchate, a great academy of oriental church music should be established, in which this type of music could be studied and cultivated;
- 4) The erection of a monumental cathedral of the Romanian nation, which would be one of the artistic treasures of the European East<sup>8</sup>.

### **The Patriarchate**

The historical act of the Holy Synod has a special significance not only for us, Romanians, but also for the entire Christian Orthodoxy. This act has a special importance because of the crisis that the other Orthodox Christian churches in the East are enduring.

The Romanian Patriarchate is a new power called to collaborate with the others in the spiritual advancement of the peoples under the auspices of the Church of the East.

From the words spoken by His Holiness, in the solemn session of the Holy Synod, it clearly emerges that the great spiritual power of Christian Orthodoxy aims to carry out an admirable and wisely considered plan, in order to preserve the unwavering prestige of our Church, especially in these times of spiritual and moral crisis, when the apostolic preaching of missionaries is needed by lost souls more than ever.

It is not a simple decorative mantle, a protocolary elevation of the supreme priestly dignity in Bucharest, but it is a historical event, with deep meaning, in the whirlwind of serious concerns of the present hour.

This is the noble interpretation that must be given to the historical fact of the Holy Synod. Our Church had the right to elevation, through the sacrifices and contributions that it brought, throughout history, to the inviolability of the prestige of the Church in the East.

The history of the Romanian nation is almost confused in the mists of the ages, with the history of our Church itself, to which the Voivodes have always given the significance that it should have in a Christian state.

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<sup>8</sup> xxx *Cuvîntarea primului Patriarh român* [The Speech of the first Romanian Patriarch], in "Universul", 43, No. 29, February 6, 2025: 7.

This being the case, it is logical that the event should take on the proportions of a national holiday, a natural justification of the efforts, on the spiritual path, of the Romanian nation.

In relations with the other pontiffs of Christian Orthodoxy, the Romanian Patriarchate will contribute with its lights to the clarification of so many great problems that concern Christianity everywhere today and will concern it even more from now on.

Here is the undeniable importance of the historical fact accomplished, with due solemnity, by the high figures of the Christian Orthodox Church within Greater Romania<sup>9</sup>. \_\_\_\_

### **Holy Synod Meetings**

#### ***- Around the Establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate. A Priest Against the Patriarchate. - Expulsion of the Patriarch from Constantinople -***

##### **Day II**

The members of the Holy Synod held a meeting at 10 am, under the presidency of His Holiness Patriarch Dr. Miron Cristea.

Also taking part were: V.G. Ispir, Secretary General of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and St. Brădişteanu, Director General of Religious Affairs.

##### **A Bishop Against the Patriarchate**

His Holiness Visarion, Bishop of Hotin, who was to make statements against the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate, was asked by members of the government to withdraw this statement. From the information we have, His Holiness Visarion was asked that if he insisted on his opinion, his statement in this case should be considered as one of an intimate nature and not be included in the report of the debates of the Holy Synod.

However, His Holiness insisted on expressing his point of view. He declared to the press that he could communicate absolutely nothing about what was said at the meeting of the Synod.

From what we could find out, Bishop Visarion made a long statement on the current state of the Romanian Orthodox Church and that at a time when so many great things were to be accomplished in the church field, the establishment of the patriarchate would be inopportune.

##### **Only Eligible Metropolitans and Bishops**

The members of the Holy Synod also discussed some points about the act for the establishment of the patriarchate. Thus, it was decided that only metropolitans and bishops in office would be eligible for the dignity of patriarch.

A commission composed of the bishops: Bartholomew of Râmnicu and Nou Severin, Metropolitan Nectarie of Bukovina and Bishop Lucian of Roman, was

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<sup>9</sup> xxx *Patriarhia* [The Patriarchate], in "Universul", 43, No. 30, February 7, 1925: 1.

delegated by the Holy Synod to draft the act by which the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate would be made known to all Orthodox churches.

The Synod then discussed the issue of the expulsion of the Ecumenical Patriarch Constantine from Constantinople.

In connection with this issue, it was decided that a protest address would be sent through the government to the government of Angora, asking it, in friendly terms, to specify the importance that the Ecumenical Patriarch has for the entire Orthodox world and to demand the renunciation of the act of expulsion.

At the same time, it was also decided to send a telegram of sympathy to Patriarch Constantine, now in Thessaloniki.

The Synod will hold a new meeting today<sup>10</sup>.

Al. Agnese

### **The Romanian Patriarchate**

The establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate is certainly an act of great importance. A unified Romania, with the numerous adjoining lands in which our church had a leading position, had to have a patriarch as the supreme head of the church.

The act of establishment of the patriarchate is legitimized not only on considerations deriving from the role that our State has here in the East, as a political factor of the first order, but also on other grounds. From eight – says the act of establishment – as they were until the war of unification of the nation, the dioceses of the country have today risen to 18, that is, they have increased by 10, having also 5 Metropolitanates and totaling a Romanian Orthodox population of over 1 million. Naturally, from this point of view, the new reform of the organization of our church is fully justified.

The vote of Synod designated Metropolitan Miron Cristea as the first patriarch. There could not have been a more undeserved choice than the one made in the person of this eminent prelate<sup>11</sup>.

### **An Event in Our National Life - The Romanian Patriarchate -**

<sup>10</sup> Al. Agnese, *Ședințele Sf. Sinod. - În jurul înființării patriarhatului român*. Un preot contra patriarhatului.- Expulzare patriarhatului din Constantinopol. - Ziua II [Holy Synod Meetings. - Around the Establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate. A Priest Against the Patriarchate. - Expulsion of the Patriarch from Constantinople. - Day 2], in "Universul", 43, No. 30, February 7, 1925: 5.

<sup>11</sup> xxx *Patriarhatul românesc* [The Romanian Patriarchate], in "Neamul românesc", XX, No. 30, February 7, 1925: 1.

An act of overwhelming national importance – an epochal event – was accomplished the other day, in the solemn session held by the Holy Synod.

The hierarchs of the Holy Romanian Autocephalous Church and the representatives of the government of the Country established the Romanian Patriarchate.

Thus, not only was a cherished dream of the hearts of Romanian believers everywhere realized, but a measure that had long been necessary for the prestige of our authority as a State and Church was also fulfilled.

The Romanian people, having reached the respected situation they have with their own powers, also makes in the religious field, full proof of their maturity, affirming Romanian supremacy in the spiritual life of the Balkan Peninsula.

If long national efforts, made over a long series of years, finally led to the unification of the Romanian borders, the love of God of this people of ours and the cult of the ancestral faith could not fail to find their crowning in the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate. In the days of the King who, first, had the glory of being Romania's for the first time, unified – the founding of the Patriarchate of Bucharest is the affirmation of spiritual power, in addition to political power.

As for the man whom God called to such a high honor of being the first Patriarch of Romania, He was blessed with qualities that make Him “a chosen one” in the fullest sense of the word, and a pledge of preserving the brilliant toil of the holy Romanian Church<sup>12</sup>.

### **The Patriarchate of Romania**

In the last session of the Holy Synod, the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate was decreed, with the current Primate Metropolitan of the country, His Holiness Miron Cristea, being declared the first Patriarch of Romania.

The founding act, which we have also reproduced, was read in a session of the Holy Synod. It shows the reasons that determined the highest forum of the Romanian Orthodox Church to proceed with the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate. A special law will soon be submitted to the Legislative Bodies, and to the approval of His Majesty the King, thus completing all the legal forms for the establishment of the Patriarchate.

I was surprised to see that a part of the Serbian and Greek press does not see the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate with good eyes, although through it nothing is done other than raising the Romanian church to a rank that it has long deserved, and although the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate is nothing more than a strengthening of the Orthodox church.

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<sup>12</sup> xxx *Un eveniment în viața noastră națională – Patriarhia Română* [An Event in Our National Life – The Romanian Patriarchate], in “Universul”, 43, No. 32, February 9, 1925: 3.

Even before the Christmas holidays, Mr. N. Iorga clarified the issue of the Romanian Patriarchate historically, showing that the Romanian Orthodox Church has every right to establish this ecclesiastical dignity.

We regret that in the act of establishment these historical reasons were not insisted on, in order to be able to restrict from the beginning the objections of the Orthodox churches neighboring us.

Mr. N. Iorga showed that all the Orthodox people in the neighborhood have their patriarchates. The Serbian Patriarchate dates back the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, being established under the rule of Tsar Dušan. The Bulgarians had a patriarchate even before the Serbs, and today they have an exarchate with a patriarchal character. The Russians have had a patriarchate since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The autocephaly of the Orthodox churches necessarily led to the creation of patriarchates.

Mr. N. Iorga showed that the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, the oldest patriarchates in the East, have long been, for the most part, Hellenic national bodies.

Among the Orthodox countries, says Mr. N. Iorga, we are the only people with a simple metropolitan primate at the head of an autonomous church, so there can be no susceptibilities on the part of the other Orthodox churches towards the establishment of the Roman Patriarchate. Considering historical considerations, Mr. Iorga shows that we have historical indications from the most distant past for the establishment of this ecclesiastical dignity. Thus, when the Metropolitanate of Wallachia was established, the Metropolitan of this province had the quality of "patriarchal exarch", in the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Metropolitanate of Moldavia had the signs of patriarchal dignity.

— "Today, *said Mr. Iorga*, the unity of Orthodoxy has long passed from the ecumenical monarchy to the possibility of a federative form, whose members must each have the importance of the State they represent. The patriarchate, according to Mr. Iorga, "means nothing more than the supreme prestige in a national church with a historical past".

If some of these arguments did not enter the act of establishing the Romanian Patriarchate, they will be revealed in detail, we are sure, when the law for the establishment of this high church dignity is voted. We believe that in this way all the unfriendly voices from the neighbors will be silenced, which deny the Romanian church of having a complete hierarchy as others have for a long time.

The purpose of establishing the Romanian Patriarchate was specified in several points by the first Romanian Patriarch, in the speech of thanks he delivered at the Synod: the flourishing of the Romanian Orthodox Church, through the following means:

The creation of a General Staff of the Romanian Orthodox Church by sending young people to the great cultural centers in the West and the East, to study

theological science. In this way, the Romanian Patriarchate would give a scientific boost to theological studies, and it would be possible to proceed to raise the moral stature of the church among the faithful population and especially the educated class.

Experience proves that today's society requires from its priests not only the fulfillment of the ritual, but also that they be at home in all matters of a religious, moral and social nature, which agitate humanity.

The second desire of the His Holiness Miron would then contribute greatly to the scientific boost in the church field: the reorganization of the Faculty of Theology in Bucharest in such a way that it becomes "a center of Orthodox theological culture". And the other wishes of the first Romanian patriarch are of a purely cultural and ecclesiastical nature, such as the establishment of an Academy of Oriental Church Music and the construction of a monumental cathedral. So, the other neighboring Orthodox churches can only rejoice in the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate, from whose cultural benefits they will also be able to enjoy. It is a reason to rejoice especially now that the Turkish State treats the Patriarchate of Constantinople as it is known.

We are convinced that the establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate is a historic date in the troubled life of the Romanian Orthodox Church, and that the Romanian nation will have great ethical and cultural benefits from the activity that is foreseen following this historical act<sup>13</sup>.

### **The Patriarchate**

The Senate voted yesterday the law by which the Romanian Orthodox Church is elevated to the rank of patriarchate.

It is an act of the greatest importance, fully justified by the current situation of Romania in the world of Eastern Christianity. The Romanian Orthodox Church was virtually, by its autocephalous character, in the rights and situation of the patriarchate. The political importance that Romania acquired through national unification and through the new relations with the other churches, represented in the faith of the new citizens of the state, imposed the transposition and form of a situation of affairs. The Romanian Patriarchate does not have a religious tradition, but it certainly has a political one. As Patriarch Miron rightly said yesterday in the Senate, this tradition is linked to the glory itself of Stephen the Great who was called the "Athlete of Christianity".

Of course, with this new elevation, the Romanian Orthodox Church gains new spiritual duties.

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<sup>13</sup> xxx *Patriarhatul României* [The Patriarchate of Romania], in "Patria" [Cluj], VII, No. 31, February 11, 1925: 1.

All Romanians are eager for them to be fulfilled as fully as possible, for the spiritual upliftment of the people according to the tradition of tolerance, peace and good understanding, which rightly made the moral and Christian distinction of Orthodoxy – and especially of Romanian Orthodoxy<sup>14</sup>.

D.

### **National Constituent Assemblies**

#### ***The Senate***

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#### ***Meeting of February 12, 1925***

The President opened the debates at 3:15, in the presence of the ministers: I.I.C. Brătianu, V. Brătianu, Al. Constantinescu, G.G. Mârzescu, I.G. Duca, N.N. Săveanu, N.D. Chirculescu, General Moşoiu, Al. Lapedatu, Dr. C. Angelescu, General Mărdărescu, and I. Nistor. Mr. V. Brătianu, the Minister of Finance, asked the senators to set a day for him to make a presentation regarding the results of the activity at the reparations commission,

Mr. Al. Lapedatu, the Minister of Religious Affairs, submitted the bill for elevating the Ungro-Wallachian Metropolis to the rank of patriarchate. The submission of the bill was greeted by senators with stormy and prolonged applause, as well as with shouts of “long live!” addressed to His Holiness the Primate Metropolitan Dr. Miron Cristea.

Mr. Min. Al. Lapedatu also presented the bill for the organization of the Romanian church and then read the documented explanatory statement accompanying the bill. Approving the proposal of Mr. Toni Iliescu, Vice-President, the extreme urgency for discussing the bill was admitted – in accordance with the new regulation – and the senators went into session.

After a 20-minute break, the public hearing was reopened.

Mr. Drăghicescu read the report of the sections, prepared by Mr. Prof. C. Dissescu. Father Ilie Dăianu, and Mr. M. Groşanu, Prof. Ghibănescu, M. Vasiliu-Botoşani, and Prof. N. Costăchescu, from the opposition, declared that they would vote for the draft law. Mr. Prof. Const. Dissescu, rapporteur, expressed his satisfaction at having been elected rapporteur of the draft law

#### Voting of the draft law

The draft law was put to the vote. The senators approved it with 89 votes for and 2 against.

#### Speech of the Prime Minister

Mr. I. Brătianu, Prime Minister, delivered the following speech:

On behalf of the government, I would like to greet, first, the one whom the Senate has designated as Patriarch of the Church of Greater Romania.

<sup>14</sup> D., *Patriarhatul* [The Patriarchate], in “Adevărul”, XXXVIII, No. 12.620, February 14, 1925: 1

I do so with the feelings of love and gratitude that the common past of our nation and of our church inspires in all Romanians.

We cannot look to the past without these feelings filling our souls because the nation and the church, together, have triumphed through the vicissitudes and dangers of history, because together they have faced the difficulties and together they have overcome and grown in the new and decisive phase of the Romanian national state. (Long and prolonged applause.)

Gentlemen, with this feeling inspired by the past, we look with faith and hope to the future and see in the growth of the authority and prestige of the church a new guarantee of that peace of mind, of that love, of that brotherhood, which is necessary for both our society and our state. (Applause.)

Feeling thus, I direct my most fervent prayers to heaven to give our nation and its church all the powers it needs so that it may develop in order and peace, consolidate itself and fully manifest its qualities. (Applause.)

Gentlemen, today's act is imposed, as I said, by the past and by all the relationships that have linked the nation and status to the Orthodox Church.

Since the founding of the state, national metropolitanates have also come into being, and when the Byzantine Empire collapsed, the patriarchs and the Orthodox Church have not had more faithful protectors, more careful and loving, and I may add with greater means for its assistance, than those who were at the head of the Romanian states (long and prolonged applause).

The monuments of the Holy Mountain, as well as the lives of the patriarchs who have stood at the head of the Church in times of misfortune, can testify, throughout history, to these feelings of love and piety constantly manifested by those who represented the Romanian states. (Applause.)

It is therefore natural; it is logical work that is being realized today. In the new situation of the Romanian state, the new situation of the Church of majority of our people must also appear. This is also imposed as a need for justice. In the fraternal life of the Orthodox everywhere, our Church is right to have the rank and place that is due to it through its historical past and through what its believers represent in the life of the nations and in the life of religions. (Prolonged applause). Gentlemen, these were the words that led us to the act that our colleague from the Cults presented to you. In it, of course, as I have told you, our feelings for the Church of the majority of the citizens of this state are manifested, but in it everyone, even those who do not belong to this Church, must see our love and respect for the entire religious spirit and for all those Churches, which represent in the society of Greater Romania those feelings of which we were just speaking, of brotherhood and love on which we are convinced that our new and modern state must be founded. (Frenetic applause, repeated for a long time.)

I am convinced that the act carried out today will be received as it was received in the Senate, with love and gratitude, by the whole world, not only by the Orthodox

world, but by all the honest souls determined to represent in these regions of the world the spirit of peace, of tranquility that they need. (Stormy applause.)

Gentlemen Senators, the Church of which I spoke to you, and the man who represents it today so worthily, so happily for the important phase of its development, are so connected in my soul that I do not consider it necessary to insist on the wishes for His person. They constitute only a repetition of those that I have expressed.

I have such faith in the powers that from today on the new Patriarch will put into fulfilling His holy and great mission, that I do not consider it necessary to insist on it. With all my heart I say to him: let him live and fulfill this mission to the fullest. (Endless applause, standing ovations.)

Mr. Pherekyde's Speech

D. M. PHEREKYDE, President of the Senate, said: "I will not add anything to the words that showed the magnitude of the act you have committed by the vote you gave. However, I wish, on behalf of the Senate, to bring His Holiness the Patriarch all the warmer congratulations, since the Senate has not only been accustomed to listening to the beautiful words of His Holiness the Metropolitan, the best advice he has given them, but at the same time, it has surrounded, as all those shepherded by His Holiness, have surrounded the high Metropolitan with warm love. He is the object not only of the veneration and respect of all, but is the object of true unanimous love.

On behalf of the Senate, I say to you, His Holiness, may you live many years for the prosperity of the church you govern".

The Response of His Holiness Patriarch Miron

The near seniority the apostolic mission of Christianity among the Romanians; the centuries-old work of the church in educating the people and preparing them for temporal contentment and eternal happiness, its predominant role in national culture, literature and art and in the entire social life of Romanians everywhere; the rare solicitude and the great services that the church of our old Danube principalities has still shown towards the churches and ecclesiastical establishments of all the peoples of the Eastern faith; its significant contribution to the clarification and defense of the Orthodox faith in times of danger – all these have long shown its great purpose in the life of the nation and have long exalted the Romanian church in the eyes of all the Orthodox peoples.

And, when, after so many victories of the Romanian Voivodes over the enemies of Christianity itself, His Holiness the Patriarch the Pope of Rome declared Voivode Stephen the Great an "athlete of all Christianity", the merits of the Romanian people for Christianity and civilization have passed into the realm of world history.

The supreme hierarchs of the Romanian church were for centuries distinguished with the dignity and power of hierarchs, that is, patriarchal delegates. But nowadays, the wisdom full of prophetic foresight of the leaders of the small

Romanian kingdom, springing from the patriotism of their immortal forerunners, the conscious and centuries-long work of the leaders of the Romanian people from the provinces freed by the brothers of the old kingdom, and above all the unsurpassed ethnic, Christian and civic virtues of the Romanian people, led by a King, who – recognizing those virtues, cultivating and steeling them and basing herself on them – knew how to concentrate the entire national energy towards the embodiment of its supreme ideal and with a Queen, who thanks to her chosen spiritual qualities knew how to electrify an entire nation in difficult days – have enlarged the country, encompassing all the Romanians from Dacia Trajana within its natural borders and strengthening all its settlements.

On such traditions of the past that give spiritual nourishment and on the basis on the virtues developed by the people in our days, it was only natural that the church – the good and protective mother of the nation – would receive a new development, rising to the supreme rank of the patriarchate.

So today, when the representatives of the country and the nation complete in the Senate the vote of the church, of the holy Synod, my entire gratitude, contentment and paternal blessing are directed to the beloved Romanian people, in all its classes, to the leading leaders of the country of all political and social shades and especially to our most exalted King and our Glorious Queen, wishing them to always carry forward the destinies of the country in the same fused harmony.

In conclusion, His Holiness thanked everyone for the wishes they made him.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Today, we have meeting at 3 p.m.<sup>15</sup>

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**Parliament  
Chamber**

*Continuation of the Session of February 17*

***The Establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate was Unanimously Voted for  
Speech of Mr. Iuliu Maniu***

Mr. Iuliu Maniu, president of the Romanian National Party, delivered the following speech, to the unanimous applause of the Assembly:

I welcome with joy the decision of the Synod of the Romanian National Orthodox Church to elevate its head to the rank of Patriarch, and I receive, on behalf of the

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<sup>15</sup> xxx *Adunările Naționale Constituante. - Senatul. - Ședința dela 12 Februarie 1925* [National Constituent Assemblies. - The Senate. - Meeting of February 12, 1925], in “Viitorul”, XVIII, No. 5.085, February 14, 1925: 4.

Romanian National Party, with sincere gratitude the Royal Message, through which this bill is presented, intended to elevate this national Church in dignity, and to prove once again the close connection that has always existed between the Romanian State and the Church. (Applause.)

Indeed, I do not know if there are any other people in whom the fate of the Church has been so closely linked, to that of the State, of the nation, of the faith, as in the case of the Romanian people. The power of the Romanian state, the splendor of the royal throne also meant the splendor of the Church; the humiliation of the Romanian people and the humiliation of the Romanian state also meant the humiliation of the Romanian Church. And when, due to the harshness of the times, the lips of the Romanian people became silent, they spoke through the church *slova*; and when Romanian breasts were toiled and tormented by suffering, they found no hope and comfort except in the prayer of the altar, in the light that came out of a monk's cell or from a poor, humble, small priest's house, but always roomy for the most grandiose aspirations of the Romanian people! (Long, prolonged applause.)

How much I wish that on this day of solemn gratitude, the souls of those altar servers, who poor, humiliated, often hungry, served the faith, tradition and aspirations of the Romanian nation, would float above our heads, and that the souls of those priests, who, thrown into prisons, who were elevated by the Turks, and not to dignities, ended their lives for the glory of the Romanian nation, would penetrate our entire being, so that we would not only give this Church gratitude, but also give it the ability, free and powerfully endowed with all the necessary things, to represent the Romanian people in a dignified manner and to present itself before the whole world and before us as the worthy representative of the spiritual life of the Romanian nation. That the church of the most numerous Orthodox people in Southeastern Europe may maintain eminent relations with other peoples of the same confession, so as to contribute to the fulfillment of the great mission of the Romanian people in these parts of the world, on those paths that, if the power of the state cannot penetrate, but the power of faith certainly penetrates.

And to His Holiness, the First Patriarch of the Romanian National Autocephalous Orthodox Church, I wish him to rule and shepherd for many happy and prosperous years. (Applause.)

I ask him that, as a result of the struggles and work he did alongside us for the emancipation of a nation, he ascended to this brilliant ecclesiastical step, he may strive to elevate the Romanian soul close to divinity through the work of the bishop, turning into reality the holy word "peace on earth and good will among men" (prolonged applause).

#### Other speeches

Mr. C. Jornescu ([Party of] Averescu) brings on behalf of the People's Party the adhesion to the bill for the establishment of the Patriarchate. And she does so, she says, from a double feeling.

The feeling of deep gratitude for the role of the Church in the past of the nation; let us remember the dark times, when only in the cells of the monasteries the light of the Romanian school still flickered, as well as in the times of conquest, when only in the vicinity of the church did the Romanian nation find its unshakable faith in the life force of this people.

Apart from what is more uplifting is the confidence in the future role of the Church for the unity of the reunited nation.

If the sword abolished the old earthly borders, it is the turn of the church, through the superiority of Christian ideas, to unite the souls of all.

In light this role, raising the prestige of the church is the elevation of the nation itself. And it is symbolic that the place of Patriarch returns to one of the greatest sons of Transylvania, as an imperishable symbol of perfect brotherhood.

Mr. I. Mihalache declares on behalf of the peasant party that he associates himself without any reservation and votes for this draft law.

There are other laws, which start from concerns of very high order, concerns that summarize our national soul in its aspirations, in its pride and prestige (appl.). In the face of these concerns, party differences cease. Always in the face of them we will find ourselves in only one party: the party of all Romanians (appl.). Such is today's act, extraordinary in its importance.

The Church has kept the flame of the Romanian soul untouched. The Church has kept the Romanian state itself in certain circumstances (appl.).

And when God has made us worthy in his mercy, through the blood of our brothers, and through the support of our great Allies, to see gathered together, within Greater Romania, all the sons of the nation, we have seen gathered together all the Romanian Orthodoxy from the four metropolitanates and archbishoprics, under the de facto leadership of a single ruler. And, the old honorary title of "Exarch of the Lands" suddenly became a reality, the head of the Church actually meeting the fullness of the attributions of the leader of the metropolitanate, the fullness of the attributions of the Patriarch (appl.).

It does nothing but consecrate through a state of law, that which God has made us worthy to have after the war, as a state of fact (appl.).

We have the faith that a new era is being inaugurated, in the life of the Church and in the moral life of our State.

A new era is announced to us, laws are announced to us, which will ensure the Church from the invasion of poisonous politicism. We wish, gentlemen, that at least the porch of the Church, we all feel that we are brothers stripped of all worldly care. With the hope that we are inaugurating a new era, an era of self-leadership, of self-government of the Church through its hierarchs, through its synods, through its councils, by clergy and laity, with this hope, we wish His Holiness Patriarch Miron to revive the glory of Șaguna for all Orthodoxy within the Romanian nation (appl.).

Fr. I. Lupaş makes a long history of the past of our national Church; expresses his joy that the first Patriarch is a Transylvanian, the son of a peasant, concluding that this is proof of what men of merit our peasantry, left to freely decide its fate, can produce. He expresses his faith and conviction that His Holiness will continue to fulfill the program of the great Şaguna and concludes with the wish that the Romanian Patriarch will always be a pillar of strengthening the Romanian state.

#### Government's Word

Mr. Al. Lapedatu, Minister of Religious Affairs and Arts, said that the unanimous approval with which this bill was met in the Legislative Bodies, both in the Senate and in the Chamber of Deputies, is a living and eloquent proof that the act committed by the Holy Synod of our national Church, on February 4, by raising the Archbishopric and Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia to the rank of Patriarchal Seat, is a truly national act (appl.). And it is natural, because from the speeches that were delivered here and from the speeches that were delivered in the Senate, it is clear that it is in the conscience of all of us, in the feelings of all of us, that this act, committed in the days of Greater Romania, is not only one more form in our future church organization, which this future should legitimize, but it is a consecration of a historical development of centuries, which, in today's political and national conditions of the Romanian nation, is insistently claimed, both by the church organization and by the new situation that the Romanian State has gained in southeastern Europe (appl.).

Therefore thanking the rapporteur for the thorough clarification with which he presented you my bill, and thanking the speakers, who have succeeded each other at this rostrum, to bring their word and that of the parties they represent before the country, for the words so wise and full of beautiful, national and Christian feelings, which they have said here, on behalf of the government that I represent, I would like to associate myself, just as sincerely and wholeheartedly, with the wishes that they all made to the first Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church and who, the lucky star of our nation, made him not only one of the best sons of the nation, but also one of the most brilliant hierarchs of our ancient Church (prolonged applause). The bill is taken into consideration and then voted unanimously by 156 votes, with the entire opposition also participating in the vote, a fact that has happened for the first time in this parliament.

M.G. Orleanu, the President of the Chamber, blessed today, which sees our Church raised to the height to which the services call it, which for centuries it has done and is doing for the Romanian nation.

Schools were created around it, the first books came out of its printing houses, under the encouragement of the Heads of the Church the books necessary for the services of the Church are translated. Nowhere has the Church done so many services to the nation it shepherded.

Under its influence, the idea of national unity is born.

We were often defeated, but each defeat awakened in our soul new energies, whose moral support was faith in God. After showing the other merits of our Church in the past of our nation, she says that the calling of our Church is great.

There can be no civilization without moral teaching at its foundation. And there is nothing more moral than Christian teaching. Love of neighbor, helping those in need, equality between people, as well as justice in the relationships between them, all of these placed under the protection of Divinity which could be more sublime.

I offer my warmest wishes for the future of our Church, and to the Patriarch, who at its head will be the director of this huge moral force, I show the great trust that the entire nation places in His Holiness (appl.).

Mr. President Orleanu suspends the official meeting, according to the regulations, so that Patriarch Miron can respond, not being a deputy, before the Assembly, considered assembled in the unofficial meeting.

#### The Patriarch's Response

The Patriarch MIRON says that from the admirable explanatory statement, which accompanies the bill now voted and presented by Mr. Minister of Religious Affairs, Mr. Alexandru Lapedatu, through the classic presentation of your rapporteur, Petre Gârboviceanu, a good and deep expert on the past of our country, as well as from the very beautiful speeches of all the distinguished representatives of our political parties, you were all able to convince yourselves who are those imperishable stones in the head of the Church, which today advances, by the unanimous will of the country, to the supreme step of the patriarchate. They are, gentlemen of the deputies, the merits of our church in the entire past of the nation and the country – as Mr. Maniu, Mr. Jornescu, as well as the other distinguished speakers of today have said so beautifully – it is the unanimous soul of our people, a soul created and formed by its church – as Mr. Mihalache – are the forces, the qualities of our nation and our country today, increased and elevated, are the beautiful hopes and aspirations that the nation and the country will continue to have in the future with its mother, our Romanian church (applause).

And this Church, gentlemen of the deputies, is not formed by its clergy alone, nor even by its hierarchy, nor by its temporal head, but the true Church, the living Church, is the great multitude of all its believers (prolonged applause).

So, the honor that you have shown me through your beautiful and unanimous vote in these historical and epochal moments as representatives of the entire nation, is not only my honor, as the temporal head of this Church, but it is the honor of the entire Church as a collective, it is the honor of each of its believers, it is the honor of each of you. who represent this nation in the country's parliament (applause).

When therefore, both in my name and in the name of the Holy Synod, which said its first word, my gratitude and that of the church, for the beautiful and unanimous vote, with which you elevate our church to the highest level of the

patriarchal hierarchy, I wish and pray to the good God, that this new institution of the Romanian patriarchy, may unite our souls, all of us, in a strong and steadfast will to work and to sacrifice as much as possible, that this Romanian patriarchy may become what we all desire, a beacon of light and warmth, which may illuminate and warm even the deepest folds of the soul of each believer of our church, with the sublime teachings of the Savior and the Lord, so that honor, humanity, the supreme goal of the public interest may descend into all our public actions (prolonged applause).

On the other hand, I wish that this Romanian patriarchy be the beacon that will cast its rays of light and warmth far and wide upon the peoples with whom we have ties, fraternizing them all, on the basis the most sincere and true Christian and evangelical love (applause).

I see in this the unanimous love of all the leaders, scholars and intellectuals of our nation, towards that healthy and inexhaustible reservoir of physical and spiritual energy, which is the Romanian peasant. (Prolonged applause, the Assembly applauds standing.)

In the name of this Romanian peasant, in the name of this hope for our future, I express my gratitude to you for the beautiful historical and epochal example, that in such a great, majestic and national act, you have proven once again that the Romanian nation, its leaders, all the parties, yes any nuances are one, in one thought and one soul. (Prolonged applause.)<sup>16</sup>

### The Church

**The Establishment of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Romania**  
**- Some Dates from the History of Our National Church.**  
**- *The Contributions of the Romanian People to the Defense***  
***and Support of the Orthodox Faith. - The accomplishment of a Great Act of***  
***Justice***

On the occasion of the presentation in the Assembly of Deputies of the bill for raising the archiepiscopal and metropolitan primacy of Romania to the rank of Patriarchal Seat, Mr. Petru Gârboviceanu, the rapporteur of the law, prepared a very well-documented report, in which, after showing how this high church hierarchy

<sup>16</sup> xxx PARLAMENTUL. CAMERA. Continuarea ședinței dela 17 Februarie. S'a votat cu unanimitate înființarea patriahatului român. Cuvântarea d-lui Iuliu Maniu [PARLIAMENT. CHAMBER. Continuation of the session of February 17. The Establishment of the Romanian Patriarchate Was Unanimously Voted for. Speech of Mr. Iuliu Maniu], in "Universul", 43, No. 41, February 20, 1925: 5.

came into being in various Christian countries, he communicates the following important dates on our national church:

#### The Apostolic and Canonical Organization of the Past

With the founding of the Romanian Principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia, the wise rulers sought to give the Church of their States an apostolic and canonical organization, and thus the Metropolitanate of Ungro-Wallachia was founded in 1395, under Alexandru Nic. Basarab and Moldavia in 1401, under Alexander the Good [*cel Bun*], in canonical dependence on the Patriarchate of Constantinople, but governed only in the spirit of the 34<sup>th</sup> apostolic canon, which says: “The bishops of each nation (nation) should know the first among them and esteem him as their head and not do anything more significant without his decision; and they should only do those things that refer to the diocese and the villages of the subjects. But he (the first) should not do anything without the decision of all, for thus there will be good understanding, and God will be greatly glorified, etc.”

In 1859 the Romanian Principalities were united, and in 1866 the Constitution of United Romania was voted, and the following was provided in art. 21, relative to the Church: “The hierarchical independence of the Romanian Church from any foreign Hierarchy and its synodal leadership”. Based on these Constitutional provisions, the law for the election of Metropolitans and Diocesan Bishops, as well as the establishment of the Holy Synod of the Holy Romanian Orthodox Church, was voted in 1872. Through this law, the Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia was added, in addition to the titles he had, the title of Primate of Romania and President of the Holy Synod.

In 1885, by patriarchal *tomos*, the autocephaly of the Romanian Church was formally recognized, as a natural consequence of the proclamation of Romania’s independence and its elevation to the rank of Kingdom, preserving with the Ecumenical Patriarchate only the dogmatic and canonical unity, as otherwise preserved by all Orthodox Churches.

#### The Old Title of the Primate of Romania

The old title of the Primate of Romania was Archbishop and Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, Exarch of the Plains, Vicar of Nicomedia, later of Ancyra, and in the 17<sup>th</sup> century of Caesarea of Cappadocia, that is, the first Metropolitan after the Patriarch of Constantinople.

As Exarch of the Plains, the Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia was the Vicar of the Patriarch for the Christians across the Carpathians, at first Romanians and Hungarians, since they were Orthodox Christians, and later only Romanians. The Bishops or Metropolitans of the Romanians across the mountains were ordained by the Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, in the Metropolitan Cathedral of their residence.

The last metropolitan ordained hierarch in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Bucharest, because Theodosius, was Athanasius, who, in 1700, united under certain conditions with the Church of Rome.

As the vicar of Caesarea-Cappadocia, the Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia was a kind of co-patriarch even in the lands of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, because he was allowed to ordain hierarchs for the sees of Bishop and Metropolitan of those lands.

But why this special attention and honor from the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the Archbishop and Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia? Because the Romanian people on the left bank of the Danube were steadfast in the Orthodox faith and a pillar of support for all Orthodoxy. After the occupation of Constantinople by the Turks and especially during the Phanariot era, the Romanian lands were almost flooded with Christians from the Turkish Empire, who came for propaganda and especially for help. There is no Patriarchal seat, no Episcopate or Metropolis in particular, no Monastery or holy locality, where the seal of Romanian piety and generosity would not be found. In Mount Athos, there is not a single monastery out of the 20, so-called imperial ones, that has not been restored or endowed with precious treasures and riches. Under the strong impression of the persecutions suffered by Christians in the East, the Romanians had come to dedicate a third of the land of our countries to the cause of religious institutions in those parts, in addition to large and endless movable assets.

And battalions of monks, soldiers of Christ, hierarchs, bishops, and metropolitans came for help.

It often happened that 2 or 3 patriarchs were found in the Romanian lands at once. At the funeral of Antioch Cantemir, all 4 patriarchs of the East were present. The patriarchs of Ipec and Ohrid were also here for guidance and help. Some of them remained forever on Romanian soil. The Patriarch of Constantinople, Nifon, was even Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia.

#### The Prestige of the Orthodox Church

In a word, the Church of the Eastern Patriarchates and the republic of the monks of Athos were maintained and supported with rich Romanian wealth.

I would also like to remind you that the Orthodox Church of the Romanian countries was in such a moral position that in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, two synods of an almost ecumenical nature were held in Iași to combat Catholic and Calvinist propaganda, and in the latter synod, the “Orthodox Confession” was drafted and approved, drawn up by Petru Movilă, the Great Metropolitan of Kiev, son of a Romanian prince, and which is to this day the normative book of faith in all Orthodox Churches. Moreover, Vasile Lupu, the Voivode of Moldavia, during whom the latter Synod was held, was considered the great patron of all Eastern

Orthodoxy, a true descendant of the Byzantine emperors. Vasile, the defender and generous nurturer of Eastern Orthodoxy, according to Professor N. Iorga, had such moral authority that he even recommended candidates for the vacant positions of Patriarch. Thus, Paisius, the abbot of Galata in Iași, and Vasile's protégé, was consecrated in his foundation Trei-Ierarhi, on March 23, 1645, as Patriarch of Jerusalem. The Romanian Orthodox Church in both Principalities was in fact the shining star full of confidence and hope for Eastern Orthodoxy.

#### For the Realization of Justice

In the days we live in, the secular dream of our nation has been fulfilled, all the Romanian provinces have united in a single State of Greater Romania.

From now on, there are no more dividing walls between brothers of the same blood, of the same language and law. We have here in the eastern part of Europe, a State with a population of over 17 million inhabitants, of which almost 14 million are Orthodox Christian. We are, apart from Russia, the most powerful Orthodox state. For the sake of our State, for the secular virtues of our people, for the services rendered by the national Orthodox Church to the Romanian States throughout the past history, for it has been one with the State in all moments of its life, whether of joy or of sorrow, then it is fitting that our Orthodox Church should not remain inferior in terms of superior administrative organization in comparison with the other sister Churches.

And we want this, neither out of jealousy nor out of ambition, but only according to holy justice. Therefore, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church has unanimously decided that the Archbishopric and Metropolitan Seat of Ungro-Wallachia be elevated to the rank of Patriarchate of Romania.

And now let me be permitted to evoke the memory of the greatest scholars and hierarchs of the Romanian Church everywhere: Veniamin of Costache of Moldavia and Suceava; of Silivestri Moraru of Bukovina; of Simeon Ștefan, Sava Brancovici, and Andreiu Șaguna of Transylvania; of Teodosie, Antim Ivireanul, and Grigore Miculescu of Ungro-Wallachia, and I hope that their spirit will inspire the elected representatives of the Romanian people to unanimously accept this bill, through which the Primacy of Romania is elevated to the rank of Patriarchate.

It is a solemn moment for the National Assembly and the joy is great, because the first hierarch of our Orthodox Church, who will bear this title, is His Holiness Metropolitan Miron Cristea, for personal merits and as the Holy symbol of the spiritual unification of our nation<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> xxx *Biserica. Înființarea Patriarhiei ortodoxe a ROMÂNIEI. Câteva date din istoria bisericii noastre naționale. Contribuțiile poporului românesc pentru apărarea și susținerea credinței ortodoxe. Realizarea unui mare act de dreptate* [The Church. The Establishment of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Romania. - Some Dates from the History of Our National Church. The Contributions of the Romanian People to the Defense and Support of the Orthodox Faith. - The accomplishment of a Great Act of Justice], in "Viitorul", XVIII, No. 5.088, February 20, 1925: 1, 2.

## THE PATRIARCHATE

**The Holy Synod Proclaimed the Romanian Patriarchate**

It was within its rights. In the Middle Ages, any State with an imperial character had the right to an autonomous, sovereign Church, which is called a Patriarchate. Our old Wallachian Exarchate itself, next to the independent [*neatârnat*] Prince of Argeş, was, despite the desire of the Patriarch of Constantinople to keep us in obedience to him, a guide to the Patriarchate, an implicit recognition of the right we have create it.

Furthermore – what I am surprised that the act by which the elevation of our autocephalous Church to patriarchal status was not stated – the Metropolitan of Moldova was recognized, at moment when the first Patriarch was seated in Moscow, *the privilege of wearing all the insignia of patriarchal dignity*.

I know what the Greek and Serbian Churches object to. They are acts of envy that bring them down. The religious situation in the whole world demanded, as did the ties that existed between states, something else: *a fraternal greeting*<sup>18</sup>.

N. Iorga

**A Great Solemnity at the Patriarchate of Bucharest**

**- The Delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople Handed Over Yesterday with a Special Ceremony the Document Ry Which the Orthodox Church of Romania was Elevated to the rank of Patriarchate. - Divine Service**

## Text of the Document Speeches

The elevation of the national Orthodox Church to the rank of patriarchate was made through a special law voted by the Legislative Bodies in the last session.

Only certain formalities remained to be fulfilled, so that the Romanian patriarchate would be recognized abroad.

Yesterday, the handing over of the act by which the Romanian patriarchate is recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople took place in the Metropolitan Cathedral, and at the beginning of next month, the celebrations for the investiture of the first Romanian patriarch will take place in Iaşi.

## Saturday Vigil

The solemnity of the handing over of the act of recognition (*Tomos*) began on Saturday evening, with a vigil. On this occasion, the choir of the Patriarchate's singing school under the direction of Hieromonk Teofil Ionescu performed beautiful pieces of church music.

<sup>18</sup> N. Iorga, *PATRIARHATUL Sfintul Sinod a proclamat Patriarhatul românesc* [THE PATRIARCHATE. The Holy Synod Proclaimed the Romanian Patriarchate], in "Neamul românesc", XX, No. 42, February 21, 1925: 1.

## Officiating the Divine Service

Yesterday morning, at 10 o'clock, in the presence of Mr. Al. Lapedatu, Minister of Religious Affairs and Arts and Mr. Dr. C. Angelescu, Minister of Education, a special divine service was officiated by Metropolitans Joachim of Chalcedon and Germanos of Sardeona, assisted by Bishops Platon Ciosu, Vicar of the Patriarchate and Teofil Mihăilescu, by Archimandrites Timoteos Evaghelinidis of the Greek Church in the Capital and Filaret Jecu, by Archdeacon Antonie and by the clergy of the Patriarchate. The choir distinguished itself particularly on this occasion. The service was officiated in Greek and Romanian.

While the divine service ended in the hymns of praise of the clergy and the choir of the patriarchate, Patriarch Miron was dressed in the patriarchal robe.

Then the Letter of authorization of the Delegates and the *Tomos* of the Ecumenical Patriarchate were read out.

Letter of authorization of the delegates of the ecumenical patriarchate

“Most blessed and most holy Archbishop of Bucharest, Metropolitan of Hungary-Wallachia and Patriarch of the Autocephalous Church of Romania, in Christ God, most beloved and most desired brother of our humility, Mr. Miron, Your Holiness, most beloved to us, in the Lord fraternally embracing you, we greet you most sweetly.

Our great Church of Christ, as a loving mother, rejoiced with great joy for all the great and most glorious events, which in recent times, through the right hand of the Lord, have been accomplished with the pious Romanian people and with the Holy Church of Romania.

Desiring therefore, in order to manifest this joy of ours even more closely, with gratitude we have synodically entrusted the most beloved members of our holy and venerable Synod, and our brothers in Christ, the Most Holy Metropolitans Ioachimos of Chalcedon and Germanos of Sardeona, as bearers of our letters entrusted to Their Eminences, accompanied by the First Dragoman of our Patriarchate, Mr. S. Constantinidis, to express in words how great joy of soul the great Church of Christ felt – mother! – for the greatness that has now reached the book of its beloved daughter and sister, the holy Church of Romania and the blessed Romanian people, and to show at the same time how earnest doxologies and prayers we raise to the Most High that from above He may abundantly pour out His grace and blessing, so that in the future, both the Church and the Romanian people may worthily progress even further for the better.

Asking Your Beatitude to receive these envoys of ours with love, to kindly present to the beloved of Christ the King and the most honorable royal government We embrace you again with a holy kiss in the Lord and remain Your Most Beatitude, beloved brother in Christ, Basil of Constantinople.

The *Tomos* of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople  
Metropolitan Germanos read the *TOMOS* of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

“Your Most Blessed and Most Holy Archbishop of Bucharest, Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia and Patriarch of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Romania, your most beloved and most desired brother among the liturgists of our humility, Your Excellency, Your Excellency, very dear to us, fraternally embracing you in the Lord, we greet you very sweetly.

With joy we congratulate Your Beatitude, for your new dignity which, by unanimous decision, is recognized by our holy and venerable Synod, of the holy church of Christ, as a loving mother, valuing and understanding the word and decision of her most beloved and most honorable daughter and sister, in Christ, the Most Holy Church of Romania has found no invincible obstacle, she wisely using the opportunity, from now on to give her loving consent and blessing, to those that, by the common decision of the Church and the state, have been accomplished in Romania.

Of course, this, with the conviction and hope that our entire holy Orthodox Church, at the first opportunity gathered in an ecumenical synod, or otherwise a great Synod, which according to the strict canonical order has the right to decide in the last instance on such matters, will not judge differently what was done with a good purpose and for the benefit and glory of the Church before.

Also, considering other real examples from before, we have the sure conviction that in these views of ours, we will have the other Most Holy Patriarchs and the first rulers of all the sister Orthodox autocephalous Churches with opinions, common and unanimous votes.

And from now on, there will be the assent of all, for the elevation of the sister Church of Romania to the patriarchal dignity both for honor and reward and for the fact that, with the blessing of God, the entire faithful Romanian people, growing through their political union, this honor is welcome and justified.

Adding to this the hope of even greater progress and flourishing in faith and piety, we consider that the elevation of the Romanian Church to the dignity of Patriarchate is necessary and useful.

Hope, therefore, that the elevation of the sister Church of Romania to the patriarchal step and height, thus accomplished, may be as a starting point for a new and greater prosperity and may all grace and all perfect gifts always descend upon it from Above.

We, blessing ourselves that from now on we will address Your Beatitude, the head of a patriarchal and fraternal church, wishing you all the worthiness, once again embrace you fraternally in the Lord, father, and remain with much love, Your Beatitude’s beloved and much desired brother in Christ, BASILE OF CONSTANTINOPLE”.

The volume of the patriarchate of Constantinople was read in Romanian by Father Titus Simedrea, secretary of the Holy Synod.

Metropolitan Ioachim of Chalcedon delivered a speech in Greek, which was translated by Prof. Dragomit Demetrescu into Romanian.

Speech of His Holiness Patriarch Miron

“The presence of Your Brotherhoods in the old and historic Cathedral of the first hierarch of the Romanian Church – as envoys of His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Basil of Constantinople – revives the memory of the glorious days in the life of the Orthodox Church and arouses a living joy in the souls of all the sons of my Church. We feel that it will also electrify the being of all the national Orthodox Churches with the desire to unite our ranks, who are the depositories of the true faith of Christ in all its genuineness and unshakable originality.

The Historical Role of the Church

It was certainly, in the evolution of the development of countries and nations, a natural necessity that the provincial, national and autocephalous Churches be led by an equally national authority, which would not bring harmful conflicts between the actions of the Church and the higher interests of the state and the nation, which do not contradict the eternal principles of the law of Christ and do not hinder a nation on the path to its most holy ideals. Thus, the Orthodox Churches have been able to perform enormous services over the centuries to the nations, who have confessed their faith, without losing sight of the supreme mission of the Church to prepare souls for their salvation, and in terms of eternity.

But the autocephaly of the Churches, under the force majeure of extremely unfavorable political circumstances and especially feeling the consequences of the unfortunate pressure on the Orthodox peoples by the formidable power of the Crescent – neglected and could not maintain more pronouncedly the so necessary church unity, without which Christianity cannot be perfected. Only daily do we utter the confession: I believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

This has greatly weakened the powers of Orthodoxy and in most small countries has darkened its days of glory and more conscious activity.

Vital interests oblige us all to renew the ties of closer unity of all national Orthodox Churches, without disturbing the normal course of autocephalous life, and even, developing into national patriarchates according to countries and nations. But the possible local whims of the national patriarchates must disappear in front of the great principle of Christian unity, led by our ecumenical and historical authority. In this regard, the delegation of the ecumenical patriarchate of Constantinople takes a powerful historical step, by coming to Bucharest, to bring the loving blessing of the ecumenical mother Church, on the acts of raising the Romanian Church to the rank of patriarchate and the fraternal greeting to its first titular.

I respectfully bow before the mission, to which Your Highness the Most Holy Patriarch and Master Vasily and his holy Synod, entrusted the bringing of the Patriarchal Tomos, and on behalf of myself, my Church and its believers

everywhere, I thank His Holiness Patriarch Vasily for the love, which he shows to us, to the Church and to our country on this occasion.

#### Solidarity of Orthodox Churches

May the mission of those from the center of the spiritual unity of Orthodoxy in Bucharest, and in other countries, contribute to removing the obstacles in the way of a gathering of all Orthodoxy in the world, which will strengthen its unity, invigorate its life for a more effective infiltration of the Gospel Spirit into all the individual and collective actions of its believers.

Only thus united will we be able to take part with full dignity in the world social-Christian movements, showing the fragmented confessions how the unshakable unity of faith, which the Orthodox Church has, is absolutely necessary in order not to deviate from the path of Christ and not to fall into the mistakes that caused the bloody and long religious wars of the past, and especially in order to be able to maintain the connection with the joy of faith of the One who founded the religion of love for all the peoples of the world.

On this basis, of true Christianity, the different and multiple confessions will gradually approach each other in a spiritual, world unity, which will smooth out the many passions and asperities and contribute to the descent of the kingdom of Christ on the whole earth.

#### Words of gratitude

Your Highness the Most Holy Patriarch and Master Vasilie, entrust him with the veneration and love of the faithful Romanian people, who, in gratitude for the love and goodwill shown to them, will strive, under our leadership and that of its present and future hierarchs, to work for the nobility and salvation of its believers, to strengthen and elevate ever higher the Church of Christ, so that – as a powerful branch – it may contribute to the progress of Orthodoxy and Christianity everywhere.

And Your Most High Most Holy Metropolitan Brotherhoods, may the merciful God reward you for the efforts of the brilliant fulfillment of your important and historic mission for which the Romanian Church will keep an indelible memory of you”.

D. prof. Dragomir Demetrescu translated the speech into Greek.

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The solemnity ended with a Te-Deum of thanksgiving for the Patriarch<sup>19</sup>.

### Tomorrow's Solemnities

<sup>19</sup> xxx *O mare solemnitate la Patriarhia din București. - Delegatiunea Patriarhiei din Constantinopol a predat ieri cu deosebită ceremonie documentul prin care biserica ortodoxă a României a fost înălțată la rangul de Patriarhie. - Serviciul divin [A Great Solemnity at the Patriarchate of Bucharest. - The Delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople Handed Over Yesterday with a Special Ceremony the Document Ry Which the Orthodox Church of Romania was Elevated to the Rank of Patriarchate. - Divine Service], in “Viitorul”, XVIII, No. 5.272, September 29, 1925: 2.*

### *The Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church*

Tomorrow, the solemnities for the investiture of His Holiness Dr. Miron Cristea as Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church will take place in the Capital of the Country.

Since the consecration of His Holiness Hierarch in this supreme ecclesiastical rank represents an act of particular importance both for the Orthodox Christian Church and for the Romanian nation, a nation that throughout history has remained steadfast in its faith, we consider it useful that on the eve of the investiture of the first Patriarch of Romania, we present here the declarations that Mr. Dr. V.G. Ispir, Professor at the Faculty of Theology in Bucharest and Secretary General of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, told our newspaper on the occasion of this great church event:

“Tomorrow, November 1, the investiture of His Holiness Dr. Miron Cristea, the first Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, will take place.

Much can be said about the personality of His Holiness given his high value as a man of the Church and as a man of vast church culture.

His precious contribution to the drafting of the law of church unification – but it could rightly be called the law of Patriarch Miron – determined a stage of progress and a new era of religious cultural development of our country.

Delegates of various Orthodox churches, the Ecumenical Church of Constantinople, the Greek Church, the Church of Yugoslav, of the churches in Bulgaria, Albania, and Poland, in a word also near oriental and all the Orthodox countries, neighboring us wanted to come.

What is the significance of the fact?

It is certain that it is not only a simple hierarchical elevation of a prelate of a country but an act of a special religious value.

Usually, history shows us that the elevation to the rank of patriarchy of a church was a political act, in the sense that a state reaching an important situation entails the elevation of the episcopal see. This was the case with the Ecumenical Apostolic Patriarchates of Alexandria, Rome, Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople, this was the case later of the elevation to the rank of Patriarchate church of Serbians and the church of Russians.

It could be said by analogy: Romania, for the first time unified as a nation, was entitled to give itself this religious apotheosis by raising the metropolitan see of Bucharest to the rank of Patriarchate.

But the solemn celebration of the Romanian Orthodox Church gives us the opportunity to remember the 800 thousand brave dead in the war of unification. Through their sacrifice, this elevation was made, because just as churches were built and glorified through sacrifices, so too was the glory of the Romanian Church built on huge sacrifices.

### The Role of the Romanian Patriarchate

What is the role of the Patriarchate the moment?

The Patriarchate today means synthesizing the entire organization of the Romanian Orthodox Church! — The 5 metropolitanates, of Moldova, of Transylvania, Bukovina, and Bessarabia, form an organic whole through this Patriarchate, which is the visible sign of the religious unity of our Nation.

In addition, its role also aims to raise the pulse of religious life to the ideal that the entire Romanian nation expects.

The program of the His Holiness [*I.P.S.S.*] dr. Miron Cristea, announced the occasion of his election by the Holy Synod of Romania, when he spoke to us about the reorganization of theological faculties and the religious activity of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the future, he shows us the special importance of the Patriarchate.

Through the Patriarchate, the Romanian Orthodox Church, reorganizing itself, will take on its role as the first authority within the churches of the same faith.

#### A New Affirmation of Orthodox Christianity

Orthodoxy in general will gain new forces to affirm religion in this part of the world. It has gained new and strong support in the relations between people. Today, when we speak of the security of peoples and the guaranteed pact, the Church is called to make its great contribution to the much-desired peace of the world.

The Orthodoxy has a decisive role in the Near East and the Balkan Peninsula, just as Catholicism has in the West, and we Romanians, aware of this role, fully appropriate the ideals of peace of the faith ancestors and as faithful soldiers of Christ, like the crusaders of old, we will fight for our faith and for the rise of Christianity in these parts, thereby consolidating the peace of Europe.

With these ideas, the entire Romanian people greet this holiday<sup>20</sup>.

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The Patriarchate

### **The Romanian Church's Relations with Sister Orthodox Churches**

#### **Interview with His Holiness Metropolitan Joachim of Chalcedon**

#### ***The Representative of the Patriarch of Constantinople on the Importance and Role of the National Church of Romania***

His Holiness Metropolitan Joachim of Chalcedon, President of the Mission Sent by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, is one of the most representative church figures in the Orthodox East.

<sup>20</sup> t., *Solemnitățile de mâine. Patriarhul Bisericii ortodoxe române* [Tomorrow's Solemnities. The Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church], in "Viitorul", XVIII, No. 5.300, November 1, 1925: 1.

However, given the critical situation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which, as is known, has suffered greatly and is still uncertain of its existence, in this era of great social transformations in the life of the Turkish state, the representatives of Patriarch Basil of Constantinople are obviously not happy to grant interviews, and if they do agree to speak to journalists, they avoid touching on any of the issues of religious policy that concern them, but on which they cannot pronounce themselves publicly.

Through the kindness of Mrs. and Mr. Lazaris, president of the Greek colony in the Capital, and using the good offices of Mr. S. Constantinidis, Grand Dragoman of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, we were able to have a meeting with the high prelates of Constantinople (His Holiness Ioachim Metropolitan of Chalcedon, Germanos of Sardeona and Photius of Derkoi [Derekoi, Istanbul]) in the house of Mr. Lazaris, where the high guests together with Mr. Professor Dragomir Demetrescu were invited to an intimate lunch.

#### A Conversation with the Metropolitan of Chalcedon

With great kindness, His Eminence Metropolitan Joachim, deigned to grant us a conversation.

The first words were, of course, to communicate to us the impressions gathered the occasion of the solemnity of the investiture of Patriarch Dr. Miron Cristea.

“I am still under the most beautiful and pleasant impressions, His Eminence tells us, which your beautiful and highly civilized country has produced in me. I found Romania whole, as beautiful and welcoming as I have heard people talking about it”.

Regarding the way they see our churches at the rank of Patriarchate, His Eminence Metropolitan Joachim tells us:

#### Impressions from the Solemnity of the Investiture

— “The love with which all the Orthodox churches have wanted to respond to the invitation that was made to them, to participate in the solemnities of the investiture of His Eminence Patriarch Miron, is proof of the good hopes that they place in a sincere and fruitful collaboration in the future.

In particular, the presence of the oldest Church, from Constantinople through the delegates sent to participate in the solemnities of the investiture, shows the spiritual love and satisfaction that we have felt. In particular, the Ecumenical Patriarch rejoices in this event (the elevation of the Romanian Church to the rank of sister church with that of Constantinople); because the Romanian Church was in the past the daughter of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Romanian people were considered the beloved people”.

We asked His Holiness what hopes the sister Orthodox churches have for the Romanian Church, a question to which he kindly answered us:

“Based on the great and powerful church movement that we have observed in Romania, we place the greatest hopes in the Romanian Church. You have a superior

clergy and learned theologians, who will carry out the work of the Savior. Especially the fact that His Holiness Patriarch Miron is at the head of this Church is a guarantee that he will show in the high dignity he occupies, all the great qualities with which he was endowed”.

#### The Union of Christian Churches

Continuing the exposition, His Holiness wants to thank the Romanian people, on behalf of the entire delegation, for the hospitality and honors with which it was received. He says that the delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate participated wholeheartedly in the great joy of the Romanian people and hopes that the relations between the two churches (from Constantinople and from Romania) which have always been close, will remain so from now on.

To our question about how he regards the action of unification of the Orthodox Churches, His Holiness, answers us that all churches are doing everything possible and working in a true Christian spirit to find a way so that the union of Christian peoples can be achieved as soon as possible<sup>21</sup>.

### Parliamentary Life

#### **National Constituent Assemblies** **Senate Tributes to His Holiness Patriarch Miron Cristea** *The Senate* *Meeting of November 4*

The meeting opens at 3:30, under the chairmanship of Mr. Tony Iliescu.  
On the ministerial bench, Messrs. Vintilă Brătianu, I.G. Duca, G. Cipăianu.  
Demonstration for the Patriarch.

His Holiness Patriarch Dr. Miron Cristea enters the Senate and takes his seat. The Patriarch of Romania is welcomed with applause by the senators who give him a standing ovation.

#### Speech by Mr. Arțăreanu

Mr. Dimitrie Th. Arțăreanu: Mr. President, senators, it was given to us to see, through the mercy and support of Almighty God and through the immense and bloody sacrifice of the glorious Romanian army, it was given to us to see the holy

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<sup>21</sup> xxx *Relațiunile Bisericii Române cu Bisericile ortodoxe surori. Interview cu Î.P.S.S. Mitropolitul Ioachim al Calcedonului. Reprezintantul Patriarhului din Constantinopol despre importanța și rolul bisericii naționale a României* [The Patriarchate. The Romanian Church's Relations with Sister Orthodox Churches. Interview with His Holiness Metropolitan Joachim of Chalcedon. The Representative of the Patriarch of Constantinople on the Importance and Role of the National Church of Romania], in "Viitorul", XVIII, No. 5.303, November 6, 1925: 1.

and secular dream of so many generations embodied, it was given to us to see the realization of the reunification of the Romanian nation, it was given to us to see Greater Romania, which, under the Romanian and wise leadership of our Great King Ferdinand I, the glorious among the glorious, has carved out, with sure steps, a new path, but full of a great future, in the concert of European states. (Prolonged applause. Ovarions.)

On the other hand, senators, as a natural consequence of this great event, we were given to see, gathered together, the Romanian Christian church, unwavering keeper of the national language and ancestral customs and whose pastor was elevated by law, and due to his special merits and the unanimous love of the entire Romanian people, to the high dignity of patriarch. *Voices*: Long live! (Prolonged applause.)

Mr. Dimitrie Th. Arțăreanu: Let us devoutly thank heaven, with all our hearts and with all our warmth, for having made us worthy to live in times of such great national glory and to see, and even to be partakers of, these incomparably great events in the history of our dear homeland.

At the same time, gentlemen senators, taking advantage of the fact that, due to the law of the laws of our country – the Constitution – and our ancestral customs, the Most High Prelates, the Most Holy Fathers, Metropolitans and Bishops, are part and have always been part by right of the council of the country and, due to this fact, we have the great fortune to see in our midst the one who was raised to the highest level of our ancestral Church, the first Patriarch of Unified Romania, let us reverently present all our human love, to His Holiness, our Most Holy and Most Blessed spiritual and spiritual father, our warmest congratulations and let us wish him, with all our hearts, that his pastorate may be as long as possible and, just like that of his great predecessors, the great hierarchs of the Romanian nation, that his pastorate may be full of deeds that will make us proud and happy, as believers and those who May great deeds be for the glorification and exaltation of our ancestral Church, one and indivisible forever. (Prolonged applause.)

May the first Patriarch of Greater Romania live to a ripe old age and to the praise of our Romanian Church.

Long live our Most Holy Father, spiritual and spiritual; long live Dr. Miron Cristea! (The entire Senate, standing, gives a long ovation.)

The Archpriest Dăianu greets the first Patriarch of Greater Romania. The elevation of our Orthodox Church to the rank of patriarchate has gladdened the hearts of all Romanians, Christians and good patriots.

He wishes the Patriarch many happy and prosperous years. (Lively applause.)

Mr. G. Ghibănescu is very happy to have the opportunity to greet the first Patriarch of Greater Romania. The rise of the people on the national ground had to bring about its rise on the religious ground. By achieving political unity, we have also achieved spiritual unity.

The visits of representatives of sister Orthodox Churches to our solemnities mean that our Church enjoys prestige throughout the Orthodox world. (Applause.) Ask the high prelates to protect them so that they can worship in their church, in their language. Wish the Patriarch of Romania many years. (Live applause.)

Speech by Mr. Tony Iliescu

Mr. Tony Iliescu, Vice-President: Your Holiness and happy Father, the Senate of Greater Romania is happy and proud that God has blessed it to have in its bosom the first Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

The act of investiture of Your Holiness, performed and celebrated in an incredibly uplifting atmosphere, in front of Your Holiness the representatives of the sister Orthodox Church, by all the faithful sons of our holy church, will certainly figure as one of the most brilliant pages of the history, and of our nation. The day of November 1, the beautiful day of eternal memory, distancing ourselves from earthly things and elevating our souls to the Lord, made us understand even more deeply the sublime mysteries of the church and the benefits of the holy faith.

In the name of the President of the Senate, who, due to misfortune, is still suffering, he deeply regrets that he was not able to personally take part in welcoming Our Holiness, in the name of the Senate and the entire bureau, welcoming you to our midst, who appreciate, admire and love you so much, we pray to God to grant you many more years for the happiness of the faithful and for the glory *in eternum*: of the holy church.

Long live Your Holiness, happy Father. (Unanimous prolonged applause, repeated for a long time.)

Speech by Minister Lapedatu

Mr. Al. Lapedatu, Minister of Religious Affairs and the Arts:

The Government wholeheartedly associates itself with the homage of love and respect that the Senate of the country pays to His Holiness the Patriarch, at moment when he steps into this assembly for the first time, of which he is a member by right. Senators, in the organization and tradition of our country, the leaders of the church, and especially those who once stood at its head, have often had an overwhelming role.

It is enough to recall the role that the Metropolitans of the two sister countries had when it came to electing the first lord of our union since 1859. It was natural that according to the constitution of Greater Romania, the one who represents our church in the national assembly would be in the new Romanian state with greater authority and prestige. The national assembly also gave this authority to our church when it was elevated to the rank of Patriarchate. And we, with all the representatives of the nation, are happy to note that the one who is at the head of the church as Patriarch, brings not only through the dignity that he represents this authority and prestige, but he brings it through his very person (applause), authority and prestige

that the Senate has had the opportunity to see many times so far from the speeches he has held in this room and will certainly see it in the future, and we wish that there will be as many as possible with the wisdom with which his Romanian and so deeply Christian soul will bring them to the debates of this high assembly.

On behalf of the government, I wish him health and well-being and as many years as possible to be in midst of this assembly, as he will be on the throne of the Patriarchate, leader of souls. (Lively and unanimous applause.)

#### The Patriarch's Words

H.E. Patriarch MIRON CRISTEA: Mr. President and colleagues, your love as colleagues for me on the one hand, and on the other hand your love as spiritual and spiritual sons for the spiritual father of the country makes it somewhat instinctive that at the height to which you have raised me you see me in superior colors. From this naturally, it results in the esteem, veneration and love that you have shown me on so many occasions.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart both to all of you and to the speakers who have interpreted feelings of congratulation to me at this moment. I thank you for the manifestations of sympathy, with which you greet my first step within the premises of this legislative body, now as Patriarch and invested and installed. I ask you to preserve this sympathy, this love for our church institutions and for our Romanian Orthodox Church in general, because from your sympathy I draw those powers that sustain me physically and spiritually, that strengthen me so that I can bear the heavy burden that it places on my shoulders and that steel me in my energy to contribute from now on to the preaching of the gospel of Christ, and to the defense of the interests of the church of the nation and the country. And I ask you to cultivate the love that you show me as sons of my soul in your relationships with your colleagues with whom the country and its trust have sent you here to work for its good. For love and affection are in social life for the good of the country just as the warmth of the sun is for the good production of nature.

With these words, I bless you all, I bless the work of this Senate, and I bless all the beloved citizens everywhere and my spiritual sons who with their trust send you into this mature body. Amen. (Unanimous applause.)<sup>22</sup>.

### **The Solemnity of the Investiture of the First Patriarch of Romania The Mission of the Romanian Orthodox Church**

In the past, the voivodes and metropolitans of the Romanian countries contributed through their acts to increasing the prestige of the Orthodox Church, to

<sup>22</sup> xxx *VIATA PARLAMENTARĂ. Adunările Naționale Constituante. Omagiile Senatului pentru Î.P.S.S. Patriarhul Miron Cristea. SENATUL. Ședința de la 4 Noembrie* [PARLIAMENTARY LIFE. National Constituent Assemblies. Senate Tributes to His Holiness Patriarch Miron Cristea. The Senate. Meeting of November 4], in "Viitorul", XVIII, No. 5.303, November 6, 1925: 4.

strengthening nationalism, the ancestral faith and the Romanian culture. H.M. The King, in his speech delivered at the Palace, on the occasion of the investiture of the first patriarch of Romania, recalled how “over the centuries, the Church has given us unity of language and feeling”, and today its duty is to contribute to the spiritual unification “which thirsts for the souls of all good Romanians, as the deer desires the springs of water”.

In addition to this noble mission of our Orthodox Church, to contribute as best and as quickly as possible to the spiritual unification throughout the whole of Romania, there is also a need for Christian collaboration with all the other churches in the East.

In our church history, several notable events are recorded from which the close connection that has always existed between our Orthodox Church and the other churches in the East emerges. In some eras, 2-3 patriarchs visited the Romanian lands.

Some of these high hierarchs, such as the patriarchs of Ipec and Ohrid, came to us for guidance and help, and at the funeral of Antioch Cantemir, the lord of Moldavia, all the patriarchs of the East were in Iași.

Nifon, the patriarch of Constantinople, also visited the Romanian land and remained there with the title and function of metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia. He shepherded with great wisdom and gentleness and left the best memories. All these facts prove that even a few centuries ago, our church enjoyed great moral prestige in the East and there have always been close relations between our Church and all the other Eastern churches.

On the occasion of the investiture of the first Patriarch of Romania, the delegates of the other patriarchates in the East, as well as the representatives sent to Bucharest by the heads of the sister churches in Russia, Poland, Greece and Bulgaria, wanted to emphasize not only the significance of the act of investing His Holiness, Dr. Miron Cristea, in the patriarchal chair, but also the high mission that our Church has to fulfill in the East.

The words spoken by the Metropolitan of Kiev, the scholar Anthony, on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church, at the ceremony of the investiture of our Patriarch, reveal the crisis that Orthodoxy is going through and the imperative need to establish spiritual ties, as close as possible, between all the bodies of the Orthodox Church.

The High Hierarch Anthony of Kiev, who is one of the greatest scholars of Orthodoxy, said that while in some parts the Church has suffered painful and undeserved blows, in Romania the humiliation is in full moral bloom, and the act of the investiture of the Patriarch gives it a strong radiance, which should fill with joy the souls of Orthodox believers everywhere. The Metropolitan of Kiev declared that the mission of the Romanian Church is all the greater today, as the need for a

spiritual action extended beyond the borders of Romanianism is felt, with the aim of strengthening the whole of Orthodoxy.

Almost all representatives of the Eastern Orthodox Christian churches spoke about this mission and of course we will also seek to respond to this mission through the closest and most sincere Christian collaboration, in the interest of strengthening Orthodoxy in the East.

#### How Solemnity Unfolded

The investiture of the first Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Dr. Miron Cristea, was a Christian celebration in which many citizens of the Capital took part. As early as 8 am, thousands of believers headed to the streets of the center beautifully decorated with flags, to see the Patriarch.

Primary school students, high school students, under the leadership of teachers, took their designated places on both sidewalks of the streets leading from the royal palace to the patriarchate.

At 10 am, when traffic was stopped on *Victoriei Avenue*, both sidewalks were packed with the public. The balconies and windows of the buildings, in front of which the procession was to pass, were occupied.

On the sidewalk in front of the left wing of the royal palace there was a company formed by the students the infantry school, and on the right the war orphans with small tricolor flags in their hands. In the courtyard of the palace, an honor company from the hunting regiment, with music, was waiting.

At the main entrance on the right were the choirs of the seminaries, and in front of the entrance to the ceremonial hall were the delegations of the monasteries of monks and nuns, the delegation of the faithful of the Ungro-Wallachian Metropolis, composed only of peasants, the delegation of the invalids of the war and the delegation of the inhabitants of Toplița, the birthplace of the Patriarch, in national costumes.

#### The Festive Liturgy

At 8:30 am Sunday, the Holy Liturgy was celebrated at the Cathedral.

The religious service was officiated by Bishops Platon Ciossu, assisted by the entire clergy of the Patriarchate.

The responses were given by the choir of the Patriarchate, under the direction of Maestro Cucu.

The Patriarch Dr. Miron Cristea, ministers Ion Brătianu, Al. Constantinescu, Mârzescu, Duca, Vintilă Brătianu, Dr. C. Angelescu, Al. Lapedatu general Moșoiu, general Mărdărescu, Chirculescu, Nistor, Inculeț and Tancred Constantinescu, Cipăianu under-secretary of State, metropolitans Anthony of Kiev, Joachim of Chalcedon, Germanos of Sardeona, Fodos of Cercul, Polycarp of Trichia, Dionysius of Warsaw, Dositeus of Jerusalem, Neophyte of Vidin and Emilian of Timoc, archbishop Nicolici, deputy bishop of Timișoara, metropolitans Pimen of Moldavia, Nicolae of Transylvania, Nectarie of Bukovina and Gurie of Bessarabia,

bishops Comșa of Arad, Iacov of Hușilor, Roman of Oradea Mari, Bartholomew of Râmnicu, Ghenadie of Buzău, Iosef of Caransebes, Iustinian of Cetatea-Albă and Dr. Stroie, military bishop; Bishops Evghenie Humulescu, Gheroghe Silistreanu, Ilarion Mircea and Filaret Mustea; Mrs. Al. Cantacuzino, Zoe Romniceanu, and C. Botez, Al Crăsnaru, Secretary General, Mr. General Nicoleanu, Prefect of Police, Romulus Voinescu, Director General of Security, Budurăscu and V. Ispir; Constantinidis, Grand Dragoman of the Patriarchate of Constantinople; Dragomir Demetrescu, Grand Nomophylax of Orthodoxy; Mr. generals Lupescu, Stratilescu, Holban, Ștefănescu, Sinescu, Davidoglu, Munteanu, Broșteanu, Panaitescu, Petalla, Popovici, Olteanu, Dr. Butoianu, Referendaru, Radulescu, I. Popescu, Strungaciu, Razu, V. Constantinescu, Samsonovici, Manu, Dr. Papiu, Zottu, Admiral Niculescu-Rizea; archimandrites Filaret Jocu, Galaction Gordon etc.

After the religious service, the entire attendance passed into the reception hall of the patriarchate, where a snack was served.

#### The Procession to the Palace

At 10:30 a.m., the procession set off from the patriarchate courtyard, in the following order:

Two mounted non-commissioned officers; Mr. General Nicoleanu, Prefect of Police; a carriage with the protoiereus; a squadron from the 4<sup>th</sup> Roșiori Regiment, led by the commander followed by three lieutenants; the royal ceremonial carriage with Patriarch Miron Cristea and Mr. Lapedatu, minister of Religious Affairs; a gala carriage with Metropolitans Pimen and Nicholas; a gala carriage with Metropolitans Nectarie and Gurie. The procession was closed by another squadron from the 4<sup>th</sup> Roșiori Regiment.

The Patriarch's carriage was escorted by two senior mounted officers.

Upon the entrance of the procession into the palace courtyard, the guard gave the honors, and the music began to play "towards prayer".

Upon entering, the Patriarch got down from the carriage and seeing the delegation from his native village, he invited four of them to attend the investiture ceremony. The Patriarch was led by the royal adjutants into a room next to the ceremonial hall (the Throne Hall),

#### The Solemnity of the Investiture

Meanwhile, all the personalities who had attended the holy liturgy of the patriarchate arrived at the royal palace, in the ceremonial hall. The members of the Holy Synod were dressed in the Holy episcopal vestments. Also present were the delegates of the foreign Orthodox Church, the ministers plenipotentiaries: Schneidauer of Belgium, Collas of Greece, Count Musacoji of Japan, Sir Deering of England, de Salis of Switzerland, Wielowietsky of Poland, Poklevski-Koziel, the Greek Catholic Metropolitan Suciuc of Blaj, Count Majlat, the Romanian Catholic Bishop; Carol Nagy, Reformed Bishop; Schulerus, Lutheran Bishop; Hogeia Military, Dr. Niemirower Chief Rabbi, then Messrs. Orleanu, N. Iorga, Buzdugan,

Dr. Costinescu, General Lupescu, Chief of the General Staff, all the generals present in the Capital, Niculescu-Dorobanțu, Berceanu, I. Panaitescu, Racoviceanu, Corbescu, Al. Gussi, D. Iuca, P. Gârboviceanu, Oct. Goga, Davidoglu, Archimandrite Filaret Mustea, Mrejeru, Archpriest Dăianu, Archimandrite Timoteos of the Greek Church, St. Brădișteanu etc.

Exactly at 11 o'clock, HM the King and Queen, Royal Highnesses Prince Carol and Princess Elena entered the throne room, preceded by Mr. General Angelescu, the Marshal of the Palace and members of the Royal Military and Civil House, taking their seats on the dais in front of the throne. Immediately after this, the Patriarch, surrounded by high church dignitaries, was led into the throne room.

Mr. Minister Lapedatu read the royal decree of installation and handed over the patriarchal crutch to His Majesty the King.

#### The Entrustment of the Crutch

The Sovereign, handing it to the Patriarch, said:

I entrust you with the patriarchal crutch and I wish you to shepherd the faithful of the country in peace.

#### Patriarch's Speech

Patriarch Miron Cristea delivered the following speech:

Your Majesties, Royal Highnesses,

On the occasion of my investiture as Metropolitan-Primate of the country, you very graciously indicated to me part of the program of immediate duties in the words, that "from this see I have a beautiful mission to carry out the religious policy of Michael the Brave, who by establishing the Orthodox Metropolis of Alba-Iulia aimed to bring together and unite all Romanian countries in church" and You expressed Your desire that the work of my calling "bring happy fruits for the thorough and unitary organization of the Romanian church"...

The desire was for my Humility and for my fellow-workers in the Lord's vineyard – bishops and clergy – a commandment, which I did not lose sight of for a moment, until with the benevolent help – sometimes even unanimous and full of enthusiasm – of all the factors of the country – headed by Your Majesty himself – we have not accomplished it, to the satisfaction of all those who have full experience in this regard. It is precisely in these months that the new and unitary law of church self-government – with the cooperation of the clergy and the faithful people – is being implemented.

As a crowning achievement of the merging of the five provincial churches into a unitary organization, the elevation of the metropolitan of the capital of the great country to the rank of Patriarch naturally followed. Without a doubt, this spiritual union of millions of believers will increase the spirit of giving for our people and their country and will form from the spiritual clot the most solid cement for the coagulation of the country and its normal development and in the future in an ever-stronger national unity.

On the other hand, the ecclesiastical union of all the ecclesiastical provinces will thus strengthen the powers of the Orthodox Church, so that it can revive its present-day establishments, and create new ones, so that it can deepen better – than in the past – the holy scriptures, drawing from their inexhaustible and pure spring living water for the generalization of evangelical convictions in ever wider circles, without which the church gets lost in groundless formalities and without having an infallible compass of Christian guidance for life. The concerns of all ecclesiastical bodies and of the factors that want to offer moral and material support must be directed towards this goal in the future.

Under their conscious leadership, our pastoral clergy – increasingly better prepared – will introduce more and more piety and art into our beautiful ritual, will increase in apostolic zeal and will increasingly begin to gain and maintain in all areas its educational role in our social life, giving this life a strong nuance of Christian culture and maintaining and ennobling in the culture of the nation that incense scent of ancient traditions, as it has transpired in the course of past centuries through the outdated roofs of our wooden churches, which have such imperishable merits in the formation of the unitary soul of the nation and in its steeling to survive, full of hope, so many dangers, as have passed over the heads of our fathers.

At the same time, the Church must gather means for a whole humanitarian, philanthropic and Samaritan work and affirm its natural role in the existing institutions of this nature, for without this its mission would remain incomplete. And in such matters the Church, more than any other institution, can pour out the spirit of disinterested charity upon its neighbor.

While the nation was in the midst the struggle for its existence, it was natural for the Church to put the greater part of its energies into the service of national ideals. And now – as the supreme ideal has been realized – the Church must direct all its powers to place at the foundation of all the individual and collective actions of its believers, the unsurpassed and so beneficial teachings of the gospel of Christ.

I am certain that to the extent that the Church will know how to satisfy these imperative requirements of its holy mission, the munificence of the country and all its factors will flow abundantly upon its efforts, which will have to pour everywhere that living water of its Christian teachings, as a healthy and nourishing sap for the entire individual, family and community life, making our country a model country and a field for the flowering of all Christian and civic virtues: a happy Christian Romania.

And outside, the Romanian Church will strive to secure for itself, in concert with the national Orthodox churches and, if possible, within the ranks of Christianity throughout the world, a place corresponding to its importance and to the magnitude of the religious, moral and cultural services, which it will be able to dedicate to the gospel and the cross of Christ.

Faced with these great and difficult problems in the service of which all the factors and all the institutions of the country must stand, my new dignity as Patriarch cannot be a place of glory and rest, but of work, according to the word of Scripture: "Whoever wants to be the greatest among you must be your servant" (Mark 43).

Work was also in my past the ladder of my elevation from the modest but honorable post of primary school teacher to the patriarchate.

Thanking you, Sire, with deep gratitude for the very high royal grace, with which you have so often bestowed upon me and for my investiture with the honorable but heavy crutch of patriarch, I declare that I will remain a faithful servant of the Church and the country from now on, until God maintains the modest powers with which He has endowed me, following the encouraging examples of Your Majesty, of our dear Queen, upon whom I implore God's blessing, asking Him to grant Your Majesties, Their Royal Highnesses the Crown Prince and his wife, as well as the entire royal family, many, many, many years of serene days, full of contentment and glory.

Response of His Majesty the King

H.M. The King replied:

Highly Holy and Blessed Father,

As happy as I was when you were called from over the Mountains liberated by the bravery of the soldier and the virtues of the Romanian people to the pastorate of the Hungarian-Wallachian Metropolis, I am just as happy today when I entrust you with the crutch of Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, after the Holy Synod, together with the National Assemblies, raised the Archbishopric and Metropolitan See of Ungro-Wallachian to the rank of Patriarchal Seat.

Since the time of the Bessarabians and the Muşatins, dismounted by the Country, who laid the imperishable foundations of the Ungro-Wallachian and Moldavian Metropolises, there has not been a more brilliant page in the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church than the one accomplished this year, by your elevation to the rank of Patriarch of the Primate of Romania.

National History proves that for us Romanians, NATION AND RELIGION have always been closely united. The Church took root slowly, in the shelter of the forests, together with the formation of the language, nationality and State. The State grew together with the Church. The Voivodes defended the Church, and the Church was the comfort and strengthening of the Voivodes. The language was created one and inseparable through the Church and across temporary borders, from Oltenia of the first monastic settlements to Maramureş which gave us the first monuments of the Romanian language. And the national spirit followed this unitary development of the language and culture.

But the role of our National Church also went beyond the southern borders, after the end of the Eastern Empire. With a generous hand, the Romanian Voivodes, in place of the fallen Christian emperors, were the protectors and helpers for the entire

Christian East, where so many holy places preserve memories of our Voivodes, defenders of the faith and rich benefactors of the Holy Churches crushed under the heel of the pagan. Starting with St. Niphon, Patriarch of Constantinople, how many Patriarchs and how many high church figures from the entire East, have not wandered through the Romanian lands, where they always found rich shelter and Christian comfort.

Justice triumphs, after centuries of work and patient sacrifice of the people in their entirety, from top to bottom, and of the small and large clergy; after so many great and Christian deeds of our Voivodes.

The Almighty has granted us the rare happiness of seeing the creation of the highest Church dignity: the Patriarchate, with the fulfillment of the unity of the Romanian State, within its natural borders and after the unitary organization of the entire Romanian Orthodox Church.

Highly Holy and Very Happy Father,

You mention the law for the unification of the Romanian Church in all lands. A good thing has been done, and I am sure that Your Highness, Most Holiness, will put your whole soul into this law of spiritual unification. We hope that through the teaching of our church, which has given us over the centuries, unity of language and feeling, we will reach more quickly and peacefully that measure of spiritual unification, which thirsts for the souls of all good Romanians, just as the deer desires the springs of water.

From the unification of the soul come great works of thought and feeling, and the deserved reward will be brought to our Church, which will help the people towards the accomplishment of this earthly goal.

Greeting all the representatives of the Orthodox churches from neighboring and friendly countries in our midst, I have no doubt that they bring us the goodwill of the sister Churches for a Christian collaboration, based on the teachings of love and understanding of our Savior Jesus Christ.

High Most Holy and Most Happy Father,

The Romanian peasantry, of which you are a worthy son, can be proud that it gave us from its bosom the first Patriarch of our national Church. And I, the first King of a unified Romania, thanking you with all my heart, in the name of the Queen, myself and my Family, for the words full of love and faith that you addressed to me, I wish you many and happy years.

Congratulations

After the solemnity of the investiture, the Sovereigns and Hereditary Princes congratulated the Patriarch and withdrew.

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In the balcony of the ceremonial hall were King George and Queen Elizabeth of Greece, Ex-Queen Sofia, with Prince Paul and Princess Irina and the Prince and Princess of Hohenlohe.

MM. L.L. The King, the Queen, the Crown Princes and the guests then went out onto the balcony facing Victoriei Avenue, and members of the diplomatic corps watched the procession pass from the windows of the ceremonial hall.

#### The Procession to the Patriarchate

From the palace, the Patriarch was led back to the Patriarchate in procession, on foot. The imposing procession was formed as follows:

Two platoons of students from the military school; the choirs of the theology faculty, the Central and Nifon and Pedagogical university seminaries; Mr. General Nicolescu, Prefect of Police; hieromonk Teofil Ionescu, carrying the patriarchal cross; the protoiereus of the Capital with tricheles; deacons and priests from the Capital dressed in the holy robe, epitachelion and canon cullion; delegations of monasteries; members of the Holy Synod, in hierarchal ornaments; Patriarch Miron Cristea, dressed in a cloak and with a crutch surrounded by foreign metropolitans; ministers; high dignitaries and generals; delegations of the faithful.

The procession was closed by two other platoons of students from the infantry school.

Throughout the procession (Street Victoriei – Street Carol – the Dâmbovița Quay – Maria Blvd.), the choirs of the seminaries and the choirs of the school students posted on the streets sang the “Patriarchal Hymn”. The procession was surrounded by cordons of gendarmes to maintain order.

Both upon arrival and departure, all the church bells rang.

This solemn procession deeply impressed, uplifting the souls of the faithful of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

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Upon the arrival of the procession, the patriarchal clergy intoned the religious hymn “Hosanna”.

The high prelates and members of the government took their seats in the two parts of the cathedral.

#### The Te-Deum

A Te-Deum of bishops was then officiated.

His Holiness Grigorie, Bishop of Arad, intoned the litany in the health of the Patriarch and the delegates.

After this, His Holiness Nectarie, Metropolitan of Bucovina and His Holiness Pimen of Moldova presented the epitachelion, the omophorion, the miter, the cross and the engolpon with which the Patriarch was clothed.

The Patriarch takes his seat on the patriarchal throne, dressed in white cloth, embroidered with silver thread, and the Metropolitan of Moldova Pimen pronounces the sacramental formula: “worthy is” *Vrednic este* repeated three times by the entire clergy.

Mr. Minister Lapedatu reads the royal decree of confirmation in the patriarchal chair of Greater Romania.

Speech of the Metropolitan of Moldova

His Eminence Metropolitan Pimen of Moldova emphasizes the importance of this event for the Romanian church.

Throughout the centuries full of strife, the Orthodox Church has always remained unshakable, and it has preserved our spiritual unity, despite all the attempts of the enemies to scatter us. His Eminence highlights the bravery of our ancestors, which is founded on Orthodoxy.

His Eminence is happy that in the name of the Holy Synod, of the entire clergy and of the 14 million believers under his pastorate, he can bring their perfect devotion to the first Romanian Patriarch.

Speech of Delegates of the Orthodox Churches

On behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Metropolitan Joachim of Chalcedon speaks, who brings the congratulations and good wishes of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to the Romanian Patriarch.

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On behalf of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Metropolitan Dositeus speaks, who confesses the joy he felt the occasion of the investiture of the Patriarch.

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Yugoslavia sends its greetings through its representative, Metropolitan Emilian of Timok.

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Metropolitan Polycarp of Trichia, on behalf of the Greek Church, wishes the Romanian Church and its first Patriarch a long pastorate for the good and happiness of the people.

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The High Prelate of Greece recalls the ties between the Romanian Church and the Greek Church.

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On behalf of the Russian Church, Metropolitan Anthony of Kiev brings greetings, who recognizes that the Romanian Church, raised to the new rank, will illuminate the entire Orthodoxy in the world; especially now when in some parts Orthodoxy has received undeserved blows and endured painful humiliations. The high prelate noted with joy that while in some parts the humiliation of the Orthodox Church was sought, in Romania, the Orthodox Church is gaining great moral stature by raising the metropolitan see of Bucharest to the rank of patriarch.

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Metropolitan Neophyte of Vidin brings congratulations on behalf of the Bulgarian Church. The envoy of the Bulgarian Church presented Patriarch Miron with a gospel and a New Testament, printed in Bulgarian in Wallachia in 1808 by Metropolitan Grigorie of Bucharest, an icon of St. Philofteia and a bottle of rose

oil. The High Prelate recalled the services rendered in the past to the Bulgarian Church, by the Romanian Church.

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On behalf of the Polish Church, Metropolitan Dionysius brings greetings.

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Speech of Patriarch Dr. Miron Cristea<sup>23</sup>

It is not for the first time that I am ascending the ladder of an episcopal see. I did this 16 years ago. From then until today and even starting with another 20 years before becoming a bishop, my activity in the church field and in many other fields of our public life, is an open book before the eyes of all.

“My speaking sheep” from the dioceses that I have shepherded, whether as a bishop or as an archbishop or metropolitan, according to the speech of the Evangelist John (X-4), “know the voice of their shepherd”, because I have often taught them. I can even say that – since the Romanian church existed – there has not been a hierarch as fortunate as me, who has had the opportunity to preach the gospel of Christ, the love of language, religion and estate, the love of people and country and the King, both in the old kingdom and in the liberated provinces, starting from Panciova, Izvin and Alibunar and up to Mehadia and Orșova, up to Turnu-Severin, to Brăila and Constanța, up to Galați and Reni, Basarabesca and Tighina, up to Bălți, Chișinău, Soroceni and Ungheni, up to Iași and Neamțu, up to Cernăuți and the Vișeuului Valley in Maramureș, over the Gutâi mountain to Chioar, up to Arad and Timișoara. In the edges of these borders, my voice echoed not once, but repeatedly, crisscrossing all the valleys and more significant localities.

So, my teachings, my exhortations, my advice and my counsel, in a word my soul, is well known everywhere, so that in these few moments, which are at our disposal today, I do not know what new I could tell you!

I will only state briefly that in 1910 I ascended the bishop’s chair of Caransebeș; in 1920 I was elevated to the chair of metropolitan primate of the country; and today – 1925 – the clergy and the people, led by H.M. our glorious king, with his wise advisors from the government and the Legislative Bodies, together with the representatives of all our political parties, elevate me to the highest chair of the first patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

But I must confess that this time – in addition to all the great support given from all sides with great filial love – I climbed the ladder of this chair with more difficulty, being taller; I climbed it with more concern, fearing that in the future I would lack that power of work and that youthful enthusiasm, with which on so many occasions

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<sup>23</sup> See, in context – Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan, *Patriarhul Elie Miron Cristea despre înființarea Patriarhiei Române*, în *Îndrumător bisericesc pe anul de la Hristos 2025*. Apare cu binecuvântarea Înaltpreasfințitului Dr. LAURENȚIU STREZA, Arhiepiscopul Sibiului și Mitropolitul Ardealului. Anul 173. Coordonare editorială: Î.P.S. Dr. LAURENȚIU STREZA, Editura Andreiana, Sibiu, 2025: 86-111.

I have stirred the souls of hundreds of thousands of believers to their deepest folds, electrifying in days – both hard and good – broad masses of the people and with which I have aroused so many tears of comfort, hope, joy and inspiration.

However, I find a strong comfort and encouragement in the words of the psalmist when he says: “It is God who lays down a burden, and it is he who helps us” (Ps. 68.20), to carry it.

Therefore, from now on I place my trust in the motto, which I chose for myself at the beginning of my episcopal calling: “My hope is the Father, my refuge is the Son, my cover is the Holy Spirit”. I pray to this Most Holy Trinity, to help me carry out the new task of patriarch with the same love of honest work, as in the past, and to you here present and to all the factors of the country, who have worked, and collaborated, so that today comes to us, may the same Holy Trinity reward you with good and health, what you have done for my church and for me personally, now and forever.

Amen!

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His Holiness the Patriarch is then congratulated by the members of the government, the foreign prelates and the assistance.

#### Lunch at the Chamber of Deputies

After the end of the Te-Deum at 2 o'clock, the Patriarch, the Prime Minister, members of the Government, foreign prelates, members of the Holy Synod and guests went to the palace of the Chamber of Deputies, where the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Arts offered a banquet.

At champagne, His Holiness Patriarch Miron Cristea toasted to His Majesty the King and the Royal Family.

King Ferdinand I – said the Patriarch –, who since the war has gone through great days together with his people, had the happiness of achieving national unity.

His Majesty also deserves the merit of having raised the Romanian church to the rank of patriarchate.

#### Speech of Metropolitan Bălan of Transylvania

His Eminence Metropolitan Bălan of Transylvania revealed the momentum of the Romanian nation that has developed in close connection with Orthodoxy.

The feast of the Patriarch's investiture is a celebration of all Orthodox churches. Never have all the representatives of Orthodoxy been gathered as they are now for this feast.

His Holiness wishes for the prosperity of all Orthodox churches.

#### Speech of Minister Lapedatu

After the Church and the Nation, through its authorized representatives, elevated the Metropolitan See of Ungro-Wallachia, as Primate of Romania, to the rank of Patriarchal See, and elevated Your Eminence to the dignity of Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, His Majesty the King, our august and glorious

Sovereign, today, according to custom, bestowed upon You the solemn investiture, with a ceremony that will certainly remain historic.

This people, who, throughout the centuries of continuous threats and dangers, found in their faith the strongest shield of their ethnic being and who, in order to preserve and strengthen this faith, made the church the leading institution of their national life, this people surrounds you, Your Holiness, as you know and see, with the warmest love and the highest respect.

And this not only because they realize the moral and national importance of the establishment of the Patriarchate in our church life, but also because they know and appreciate the chosen virtues, the rare qualities of Your Holiness's soul, and because they know you to have come from the ranks of the best and most hearty fighters for the achievement of our national unity.

For, child of the world of peasants of the Romanian land, who, for almost two thousand years, have supported and guaranteed, with their qualities, the continuity of Latin life, in these parts of the world, you were destined, Your Holiness, to reach, there, in Transylvania of millennial slavery, from the modest position of teacher, enlightener of the people, to the highest level of leadership that someone from our people could reach – that of bishop.

You are, therefore, among the sons of the nation, that rare and happy chosen one of Providence, whom it, in its great and boundless mercy, has ordained to follow, in the purposes of life, the very ascents of this nation, climbing, together with it, the steps of its political and ecclesiastical ascension.

That is why, on the occasion of this great national and church celebration, we extend to you, Your Holiness, with all the love and respect we owe you, our warmest wishes for health and happiness, praying to Heaven to grant you the age of the oldest and most renowned Patriarchs in the world, fully confident that you will be, throughout the pastorate of Your Holiness on the See of the Romanian Patriarchate, the living and inexhaustible source of faith, light and patriotism for the entire nation. Many years, Master!

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*Metropolitan Joachimos* of Chalcedon emphasizes the joy felt by all the Orthodox churches at the news of the elevation of the Romanian church to the rank of Patriarchate.

Proof of this fact is seen in the participation of so many foreign representatives. Expresses gratitude on behalf of the high foreign prelates to the H.M. King, the government, the hierarchs of the Romanian church and the entire Romanian people. *Metropolitan Pimen* expressed the joy he felt at this moment, when his friend, His Holiness Dr. Miron, was elevated to the highest rank.

Speech of the Prime Minister

Prime Minister Ion Brătianu spoke on behalf of the spiritual sons of His Holiness the Patriarch, in the most significant circumstance in the life of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

I have reached the age – says the Prime Minister – when deeds constitute the most eloquent manifestation of feelings. God has granted me the privilege of seeing things being accomplished, which find their expression in the feelings that are manifested today for the Romanian church and people.

Addressing the Patriarch, the Prime Minister says: “Most Happy” and congratulates him on the dignity and rank to which he has risen, for the happiness of an entire nation.

He wishes him all his life to deserve the name “Most Happy” for the good of the Romanian church.

H.E.S.S. *Patriarh* concluded the series of toasts, thanking him for the congratulations that were brought to him on this occasion and wishes that the love with which he was surrounded will be poured out on the entire people.

#### Religious Concert

At 5 o'clock in the morning Patriarch Miron, accompanied by high foreign and Romanian prelates, with the numerous attendances took part in the religious concert given by the “Carmen” choral society at the Athenaeum.

#### Gala Dinner at the Palace

At 8:30 in the evening a grand gala dinner was given at the Royal Palace, on Victoriei Avenue. Their Majesties the King and Queen, the Royal Family, Patriarch Dr. Miron Cristea, Mr. I. Brătianu Prime Minister with all members of the government, the President of the Chamber, former Presidents of the Council of Ministers, former Presidents of the Legislative Bodies, former Ministers of Religions, foreign delegates of the Orthodox Churches, members of the Holy Synod, the Roman Catholic Archbishop Cisar, the Roman Catholic Bishop Majlat, Dr. Niemirower, the Prime Ministers, the Deputies and Senators, who spoke at the Patriarchate's law, the army inspectors, Mr. Secretary General of Religions.

At the champagne, Patriarch Dr. Miron Cristea spoke, who in a chosen speech blessed for MM.LL. The King and Queen and for the members of the Royal Family.

#### The Speech of H.M. The King

“When I see gathered around Me at this fraternal feast, all the representatives of the country and especially all the representatives of the holy Orthodox Christian Church, on this memorable day when as the first King of all Romania I consecrated the first Patriarch of the Orthodox Christians from all over Romania, My thought goes back to the time of our Voevodes of pious memory.

With a faithful heart, with a humble mind and with a generous hand, they received and protected, in their countries, the servants of the Lord from all over the Christian East, driven here by turbulent times and severe deprivations. They, the Voevodes,

in addition to this Christian hospitality, sent for the glorification of the name of the Lord, their Book of Service, their donation of help, their word of encouragement, which all of these traversed the entire Balkans and crossed the Sea, reaching as far as distant Syria, as far as sandy Arabia, as far as beautiful Georgia, the neighbor of the Great Caspian.

Their deeds reveal the lofty thought that, for the sake of Christ the Savior, they, as true Christians, considered the needy as their neighbor, whoever he was and wherever he came from.

And so, above the Sea of this life, full of various unceasing troubles, the comforting breeze of closeness for all through the Orthodox Church blows in these parts of the earth.

But the Sea of this life has not calmed down. Its last terrible turmoil shook the earth from its foundations, and the waves of the earthquake are still felt today on the dials of human structures. The world is striving, we are all striving to descend over this Sea, the soothing veil of public peace. And what more unworthy collaborators could we have in this than the descendants of the apostles of the Lord, who left them Peace as a legacy: «Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you».

I consider myself in the spirit of my Voivode ancestors, protectors in their love of Christianity, when I wish that the Orthodox churches find means of rapprochement between themselves and between the whole of Christianity, so that from this rapprochement the Peace of the Peoples, given by the Savior, preached by the Church and desired by all of us, may spring forth”.

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The dinner ended at 11 pm, when MM.LL. retired<sup>24</sup>.

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