His Holiness Patriarch Daniel of Bulgaria Leads Liturgy at the Representation of the Russian Church in Sofia



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On February 27, 2025, the Representation of the Russian Orthodox Church—the Church of St. Nicholas in Sofia, Bulgaria—solemnly marked the 75th anniversary of the repose of St. Seraphim (Sobolev), Archbishop of Bogucharsky, the Wonderworker of Sofia.

On this festive day, the Divine Liturgy at the Patriarchal Representation was led by His Holiness Patriarch Daniel of Bulgaria.

Concelebrating with the Primate of the Bulgarian Church were: the Chief Secretary of the Holy Synod, Bishop Gerasim of Melnish; the Protosyncellus of the Sofia Metropolis, Archimandrite John (Peshev); the rector of the Representation, Archpriest Vladimir Tyshchuk; the rector of the ancient Church of St. Sophia—the Wisdom of God, Stavrophore Economist Kiril Didov; the rector of the Church (Rotunda) of

St. George the Great Martyr, Economist John Kukov; the rector of the Church of St. Petka of Samardzhi, Archpriest Georgy Spasov; Archpriest Alexey Maksimyuk; clergy of the Church of St. Panteleimon the Great Martyr, Archpriest Dmitry Tukhchiev and Priest Seraphim Zhelev; a cleric of the Lovchan Diocese, Priest Spiridon Nikolov; the Patriarchal Protodeacon Ivan Petkov; a cleric of the Patriarchal Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Protodeacon Dean Korunoski; and a cleric of the Church of St. Panteleimon the Great Martyr, Deacon Alexander Morozov, as reported by the Representation's website.

Praying at the Divine Liturgy were the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Bulgaria, E.V. Mitrofanova; political figure Rumen Petkov; the First Secretary of the Russian Embassy, V.Yu. Solodkin; guests from various regions of Bulgaria; and numerous parishioners of the Representation. Despite it being a weekday, the church was filled to capacity with believers who came to honor the memory of St. Seraphim and partake of the Holy Mysteries of Christ.

Following the Liturgy, a moleben (prayer service) to St. Seraphim was held in the center of the church.

After the prayer service, His Holiness Patriarch Daniel addressed all those present with a sermon, noting in particular: "Our hearts and souls rejoice on this feast day of St. Seraphim of Sofia, just as the hearts of his spiritual children were comforted and rejoiced in the 1930s when he served here in the city of Sofia, and in the years that followed—now 75 years have passed since his departure from this world, but the spiritual support, consolation, and joy of being able to come here, venerate the place of his repose, and receive blessings and sanctification through his holy prayers have never ceased. We know from the circumstances of his life that God's Providence directed him to us, ordained him to come to Bulgaria and serve here during that difficult time when the Bulgarian Orthodox Church was separated from communion with the other Orthodox Churches; yet despite all this, as a pastor, he always gathered his spiritual children together, reconciled them, and led his flock to unity."

His Holiness particularly highlighted the theological works of St. Seraphim, emphasizing that his episcopal conscience never remained indifferent when dangers to the purity of the Orthodox faith arose: "All this was dictated by his genuinely Orthodox spiritual experience. His sermons reflect high theology and deep erudition—as is known, he was a teacher and rector of several Orthodox seminaries. At the same time, he always revealed and expressed the truths of faith and the rules of spiritual life in simple, understandable words, close to the minds and hearts of the faithful."

"St. Seraphim is a great consolation, a source of grace, and a spiritual oasis for us," said the Primate of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. "It is a great blessing that such a saint shone forth in our capital in our time. He is close to us in time, in spirit, and in experience, for his life unfolded before the eyes of his contemporaries, some of whom are still alive. While leading an ordinary life, outwardly no different from

others in the hustle and bustle of the capital city, he at the same time lived in great piety and purity, devoting himself to prayer, fasting, and acts of mercy, loving his spiritual children, with whom he established strong bonds of love that continue to this day."

In his response, the rector of the Representation, Archpriest Vladimir Tyshchuk, thanked His Holiness Patriarch Daniel for leading the Divine Liturgy in this church on the 75th anniversary of the repose of St. Seraphim of Bogucharsky. "We are very glad that you found the opportunity to lead the prayer on this holy day and, through your prayers, to strengthen all of us as we approach the upcoming period of Great Lent," he said.

On behalf of all the parishioners, Father Vladimir presented His Holiness with an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos "Seven Arrows," noting that it was before this icon that members of the parish community prayed in the run-up to the Council that elected the Patriarch of Bulgaria: "May this icon remind you that here, in this church, people always pray for your ministry. And we, looking at this icon, also understand how deeply the Patriarchal heart grieves over any disorder in the Church and cares for the good of all its spiritual children. We will ask the Lord that, through the prayers of the Most Holy Theotokos and St. Seraphim, He may strengthen you in your Patriarchal ministry for many good years, and that your service in this church on the feast day of St. Seraphim may become a blessed tradition."

After the service, the Primate of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church venerated the honorable relics of St. Seraphim in the crypt of the church.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/92928/