



HOLY TRINITY

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



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CHURCH BULLETIN

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The 30th Sunday after Pentecost

Gospel Reading Luke 18: 18 - 27

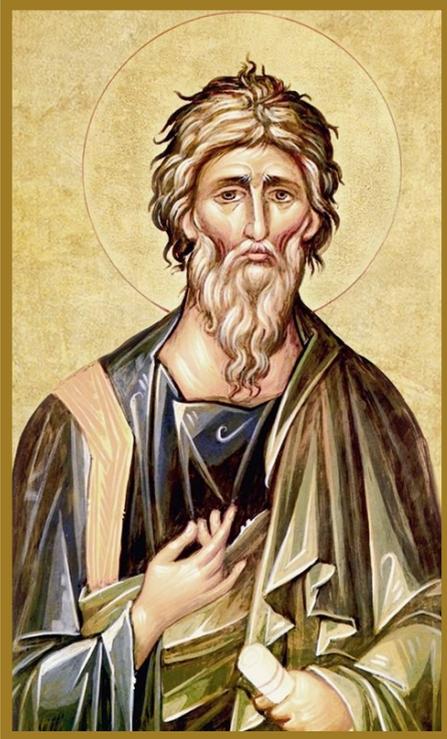
At that time a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' " And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven;

and come, follow Me." But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?" But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Then Peter said, "See, we have left all and followed You."

Apostle Reading Colosians 3: 12 - 18

Brethren, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and

be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.



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Synaxarion. Sunday November 29, 2020 (The 30th Sunday after Pentecost)-Fast Day (Fish Allowed): Holy Martyrs Paramon and Philumenus; Holy Venerable Pitirun. **Monday November 30:** Holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called, Protector of Romania; Holy Hierarch Andrei Şaguna, Metropolitan of Transylvania; Holy Hierarch Frumentius, Bishop of Ethiopia; Saint Sebastian, Bishop of San Francisco and Jackson

Exchanging Earthly Riches for Heavenly Ones

People who go to Mt. Athos or to Valaam or to another famous monastery actually see and hear some amazing miracles. I know a man who had a conversation with a very holy monk. The monk spoke some wisdom. The conversation ended and the man started to leave. But he stopped to ask one last thing. Then by the Holy Spirit he felt that the monk's soul had already



ascended to Heaven but was interrupted by this one last question. The man saw the monk standing still and he spiritually felt the monk's soul slowly come back down from Heaven in order to finish his talk with him. He said it was like waiting for an elevator to come down. This is what happens when we truly have our treasure in the Kingdom of God.

What is interesting is the speed of this monk's ascent to Heaven. He was able to easily and quickly ascend to Heaven as soon as a conversation ended. Coming back down to earth to talk to people was what took the most effort for him. He was able to fly to Heaven so fast because he was only attracted to the riches of God.

The Lord Jesus once spoke of this heavenly treasure. It was when He met a rich man who obeyed all of God's commandments in the Bible all his life. But Jesus told him he was missing one thing. If he wants to have treasure in Heaven, eternal life, he must sell all he owns and give it to the poor and then be Christ's disciple. But the rich man could not do this. So Jesus said it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to Heaven. The Disciples realized that the vast majority of people are just as hesitant to sell everything they own, so how can anyone go to Heaven? Jesus said that what is impossible for man is possible for God.

What happened here was a rich man who loved the riches of earthly life. And it was clear to the Disciples that the great majority of people similarly love the riches of this earth. It is just the way most people think. They work

hard and they struggle to save and they want to keep their riches. In most cases, it is totally normal, understandable and necessary. However, their minds can get quite occupied, or too occupied, with all of earth's riches, possessions, money.

But some Christians, like that monk, do not have riches on this earth but in the Kingdom of God. Instead of being occupied with earthly riches, or being attached to human delights,

his mind was only on heavenly riches. He was occupied with the Holy Spirit; he was attracted to Angels; he was attached to heavenly comforts. So it was real easy for him to fly up to Heaven in his soul.

Most people are the opposite. It takes great effort to raise the soul to Heaven, so they can easily and quickly fall back down to earthly thoughts. This is because their minds are on social affairs and earthly riches and bodily comforts. But when your soul is mostly occupied with God, you can easily ascend to Heaven but you come down to earth slowly because it is not so attractive.

The Lord Jesus Christ made it quite clear that in order to fly to Heaven forever, we need to live a life of exchanging our earthly riches for heavenly riches. He says each one of us must give away some of our earthly riches as often as possible, to lose our love for money and exchange it for a love of spiritual money, a treasure in Heaven. This means moving our earthly money to the church, moving our earthly money to a needy person, moving our earthly money to a decent charity. Of all the ways to raise our hearts from earth to Heaven, losing a love for money and giving it to prayer is super-important for eternal life. And when you feel good about giving more riches away, you know that you have sincerely gained God's gift of love.

Amen.

Fr. Andrew Gromm

(Source: <http://stgregoryseaford.org/media/sermons>)

Be Thankful

This is the thirtieth Sunday after Pentecost. The Epistle Lesson is taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:12-16. The Church at Colossae was not founded by St. Paul, but by Epaphras one of his disciples. While St. Paul was pleased with the general progress of the community, he was concerned that influences from a number of native pagan beliefs and Judaism were having a distorting effect on the Gospel preached to them. They were becoming syncretistic.

This tendency toward syncretism is a problem in our own time as well. We can see the phenomenon at work particularly in "New Age" thinking that takes a little of this and a little of that and blends them into a not so very coherent set of beliefs. St. Paul was warning the Colossians against drifting in this direction.

In this letter St. Paul urges the Colossians to shape themselves in the image of Christ. He calls them to remember their new status, "as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved." He tells them to clothe themselves with "heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience." (v. 12) He instructs them on what it means to be a Christian, a follower of Christ. We are not simply to have kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, but these must be heartfelt. Our behavior toward one another should go beyond outer forms and social convention; it should spring from the deepest recesses of our being.

He wants them to see their goal: to be like our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. "Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive." (v. 13) We are to support one another. We are to put up with one another. When tested or offended we are to forgive one another "just as the Lord has forgiven you." St. Paul is telling us to transform ourselves by the power given us by the Holy Spirit.

He then says to them, "Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." (v. 14) It is possible to have these virtues of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and even patience without having love. Love is what makes these

other actions real and complete. Without love they will lack the substance necessary for them to withstand time. Love is the glue that "binds" our virtuous act with our deeper intention. It makes us whole.

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body." (v. 15) The word "rule" could also be translated as "umpire," (even though it might sound a little awkward). What St. Paul means is that as an emotion love can sometimes be an unsteady gauge. Just observe the various ways 'love' is used and misused in our common speech. When we are wrestling with difficult questions, when all of our thoughts and emotions are engaged, we need to let Christ's peace be the arbiter. It serves as a stabilizing influence. While we might go back and forth, Christ's peace remains a steady guide. It rules over all the pettiness or spite we might feel. If we allow Christ's peace to arbitrate our emotions, we become one with Him. We become one with the Body to which we were called.

"And be thankful." (v. 15) St. Paul makes this a stand-alone statement. Like "love, which binds everything together," thankfulness is a state of being that changes us. It is the perspective that reinterprets all of our experiences.

When we thank someone for what they've given us or done for us, our words and sentiments should direct us to transcend the gift in order to focus on the giver. While a kind act can never be thought of small or inconsequential, we also know that the one who offers it is far more important than what was given. When we are thankful we move from focusing on ourself to focusing on the giver. We are drawn out of ourself to see the other. This is the essence of thankfulness.

We might say "thank you" to other people a thousand times a day, and rightfully so; but the deeper question is: do we really mean it? Are we employing the words "thank you" as simple social convention, or are they actually a reflection of our inner disposition? Striving to make our sentiments truly heartfelt points us to the goal to which St. Paul is directing us: "be thankful."

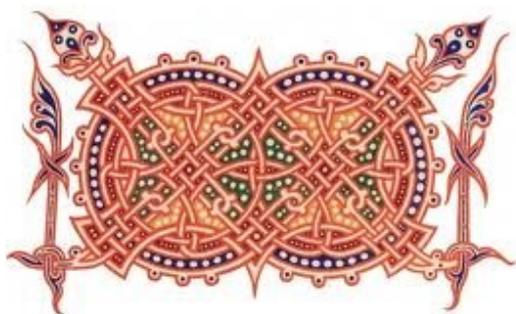
“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.” (v. 16) St. Paul uses another word in this verse very much like “thankful.” He tells the Colossians and us to teach and admonish one another in wisdom and “with gratitude.”

Gratitude and thankfulness have a similar root meaning: joy or pleasure. When we are truly grateful or thankful we also have a joy deep inside us. We take pleasure in the act of kindness shown us. More importantly, we take joy in the one who gives us this. When we are thankful the joy changes us.

St. Paul tells the Thessalonians: “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18) We know we have grown in Christ when our thankfulness is not conditioned on external events. It is easy to give thanks when things are going relatively well. It is another matter to give thanks when things seem to be going badly. Can we still open a voice of praise to God even when the wind is blowing against us?

Brothers and sisters, as we celebrate our national day of Thanksgiving, let us reflect on the true nature of thanksgiving, and be grateful always and in every circumstance.

Fr. Nicholas Apostola



HOLY TRINITY'S Liturgical Schedule from November 28 to December 6, 2020

**Saturday November 28 -
fish allowed**

**Sunday November 29
(30th Sunday after
Pentecost - fish allowed):**

9:00 am - Matins

10:00 am - Divine Liturgy

11:00 am - Sunday School

11:30 am - Memorial Service for
Fr. Timotei Avram's Family

12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

**Monday November 30 -
Holy Apostle Andrew
(fish allowed):**

9:00 am - Matins

10:00 am - Divine Liturgy

12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

**Tuesday December 1 -
National Day of Romania**

**Saturday December 5
(fish allowed):**

11:00 am - Sacrament of the
HOLY UNCTION

**Sunday December 6
(27th Sunday after
Pentecost - fish allowed):**

fish allowed):

9:00 am - Matins

10:00 am - Divine Liturgy

11:00 am - Sunday School

12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

Holy Hierarch Andrei Şaguna, Metropolitan of Transylvania

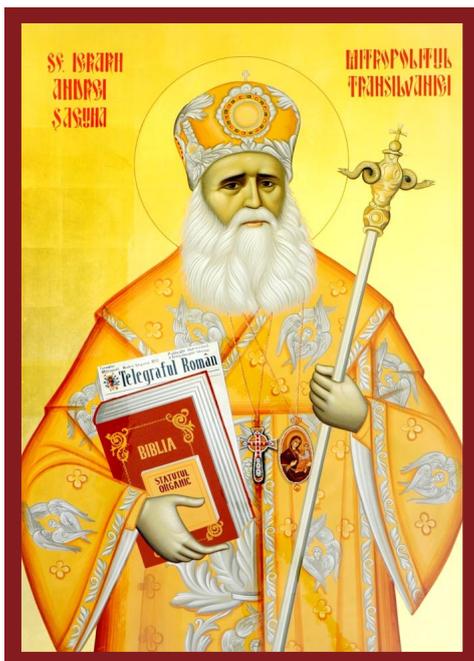
In 2011, the Holy Synod formally glorified one of the greatest hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna of Transylvania. On October 29, 2011, at Holy Trinity's Cathedral in Sibiu., a multitude of about 10,000 people attended Şaguna's canonization ceremony.

St. Andrei Şaguna was born on December 20, 1808 in Miskolc (northeast Hungary) to an Aromanian family, Naum and Anastasia Şaguna, née Muciu. Both his maternal and paternal grandparents had been settled to Hungary from Grabova, near Moscopole (in nowadays Albania). As the Balkans had fallen under the Ottoman Empire and many Christians were forced to convert to

Islam, they had to flee from the land of origin to take refuge in the Habsburg Empire. Like many other Aromanians in the Balkans in the eighteenth century, the Şagunas and Mucius settled in the town of Miskolc. Prosperous merchants and pious orthodox believers, they were among the founders of the monumental churches in the town. Miskolc counts very few Orthodox Christians among its inhabitants today.

Naum Şaguna was a merchant, too, but he had rather the nature of an artist. Because he did not have the necessary skills for that profession, he lost his entire fortune. However, he thought he could overcome that unfortunate event and be saved if would join the Austrian army. For this, he had to also join the Catholic Church in 1814. Unfortunately, he died only a few years later, leaving behind a young widow, Anastasia, with three small children. They had to face terrible hardships. The youngest child, Anastasius – the future Holy Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna – was only six years old then. Twenty years later, he was to declare that he had never been "spoiled by fate" and that he had been destined to earn his bread "by the sweat of his brow" (Gen. 3: 19). "I can say with heart serene that from my childhood until today, I have never known what it means to live an easy life," the great Metropolitan once said.

As we have pointed out, by opting to formally convert to Roman Catholicism, his father, Naum, naively thought he would provide a good Catholic education and a better



social status for his children. Subsequently, by virtue of being the children of a Catholic deceased father, the three Şaguna orphans have been officially declared catholic by the Catholic school authorities, and have been enrolled in Catholic schools, despite their mother's opposition. However, with the support of some wealthier relatives, the brave Anastasia has managed to tacitly resist the pressure of the Catholic authorities and to raise her three children in the Orthodox faith. Thus, the youngest Athanasius began his primary school at the "Greek-Wallachian" School in Miskolc, which was supported by the local Aromanian Orthodox parish. Being gifted with a sharp intelligence and showing much love for study, he graduated from the Piarists' Catholic "Superior" Gymnasium (High School) in Pest (now

Budapest), and then enrolled at the University of Pest, where he followed brilliant studies of Philosophy and Law.

It should be mentioned that in December 1826, when he was already major, Anastasius decided to officially rejoin the Orthodox Church. It seemed that after graduation young Şaguna would have enjoyed the opportunity to start a nice career as a lawyer, judge or teacher. And yet, at the urging of his pious mother, young Anastasius chose to study Orthodox theology and to enroll in the Theological Seminary in Vršac (Serbian Banat today), where the Serbian Metropolis of Karlovitz (now Sremski Karlovci)—the administrative center of the Orthodox Church in the Habsburg Monarchy, had established a Romanian section.

Near the end of his three-year theological studies, Anastasius Şaguna turned his steps towards the monastic life. Before he turned 25, in October 1833, following a year of "novitiate", Anastasius Şaguna was tonsured a monk at the Hopovo Serbian monastery. He chose to bear the name of St. Apostle Andrew. A learned monk, who studied Law, Philosophy and Theology, he was also a proficient polyglot who knew almost all the languages spoken in the Austrian Empire. Besides his thorough knowledge of Greek, Latin and Slavonic, he mastered Romanian, including his mother tongue, the Aromanian dialect; he was also fluent in Hungarian, German and Serbian.

Andrei Şaguna was appreciated by the Serbian Orthodox hierarchs for his intellectual and moral qualities. Thus he started a successful ecclesiastic career in the Metropolitanate of Karlowitz: first as professor of theology at the Romanian section of the Seminary of Vršac, then as a secretary of the "Archdiocesan Consistory" and assessor (counselor) to the Orthodox Metropolitan of Karlowitz. He was ordained deacon (1834) and then a priest (1837). He became also an Archimandrite and served, in turn, as the Abbot of four Serbian monasteries: Jazak, Bešenovo, Hopovo and Kovilje.

He has worked within the Metropolitanate of Karlowitz for 13 years. During all this period, he began to be increasingly concerned about the fate of his countrymen in Transylvania. Deprived of any national, cultural, political and religious rights, they were not allowed to have their own bishops. Thus, the Romanian Orthodox Church in Transylvania was led by Serbian bishops, who were under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Karlovitz. Under these circumstances, Saguna he was becoming a convinced nationalist, Saguna refused to join the Serbian Orthodox Church hierarchy in Sremski Karlovci.

The year 1846 marked "a real milestone" in the life of young Archimandrite Andrei Şaguna. As Instead, he was to leave for Transylvania - where he was appointed "Vicar General" to the vacant seat of the Romanian Episcopate of Transylvania, in Sibiu, by Metropolitan Joseph Rajačić of Karlowitz.

Saint Andrei Şaguna thus started out working in the middle of his fellow Romanians, whom he aimed to draw towards a higher understanding of their ecclesiastical and national life: *"I want to awaken Transylvanian Romanians from their deep sleep, to straighten their will, and to guide them to all good works, to all that is pleasing [to God and people – our note, N.B.], to all that is true and just."*

In December 1847, "the council" of the deans in Sibiu elected Saguna to the vacant position of bishop of Transylvania. As his election was confirmed by the Imperial Court in Vienna, St. Andrei was thus ordained bishop by Metropolitan Joseph of Karlowitz in the spring of 1848. In the speech he delivered on that occasion, the young



bishop (he was only 40 years old) stated the main lines of an action program, showing that it was necessary to revive the former Romanian Orthodox Metropolis of Transylvania, as a fundamental institution around which all Romanians' cultural, national, social and religious actions could coagulate. In his view, the re-birth of the Metropolis was not just a matter of national dignity, but an issue required by *"the need of the church, the people's salvation, by the spirit of the times"*. He knew that great difficulties and obstacles were to arise to prevent the fulfillment of this goal of the Romanians, but he warned his listeners that *"overcoming obstacles has always been my greatest joy and it will continue to be my joy in the future, too."*

The young bishop would prove to be the "providential personality for the Romanian national revival. He not only understood to fulfill in an exemplary way his mission as a Church leader, but also to assume - as he had promised - full responsibility in solving all the problems of his countrymen." (Ovidiu Moceanu).

From the beginning, he wanted to be a real good father to all his flock. Having the support of his "co-ministers", the priests - as the Holy Hierarch used to call them - his goal was to bring the faithful Romanians to the light of science and salvation; to raise them from "the rusty darkness of ignorance to the quiet haven of science and enlightenment."

On the very day of his ordination he left for Sibiu, where Romanian revolution had broken out. Arriving in Sibiu, he was greeted by Simion Bărnuțiu, a Transylvanian-born Romanian historian, lawyer, and one of the leaders of the 1848 revolutionary movement, who asked him to take "the leadership of the nation." Thus, the Greek-Catholic leader expressed the desire of all Romanians *"to have him in the forefront of the national movement, not only for the influence he could exercise over the crowd by his hierarchal dignity, but by his distinguished qualities of his energetic and impressive personality."* St. Andrei's response to this request was quick and sincere.

He directly and devotedly involved himself in all the actions promoting Romanians' national "emancipation." The main objective of these actions was to acquire the official recognition of the Romanians as "a nation,"

enjoying equal rights with the Hungarians, Saxons and Szecklers.

The second one was the abolition of serfdom. Thus, on May 3/15, 1848 he chaired the Great National Assembly in Blaj (along with the Uniate Bishop Ioan Lemeni). The Assembly elected him the chairman of the Standing Committee of the Romanians, a kind of provisional government.

Şaguna was twice chosen as a delegate to present Romanians' claims to the Imperial Court in Vienna. Therefore, he was rightly acknowledged as one of the leaders of the Romanian national movement in Transylvania. If Simion Bărnuţiu was considered its ideologist, and Avram Iancu the military leader of people's armies, St. Andrei Şaguna was the "diplomat" of the Romanian revolution in Transylvania. Later, he was elected a member of the Parliament (the Diet) of Pest, a member of the Imperial Senate in Vienna, Chairman of the National Conference of the Romanian political gathered in Sibiu and Alba Iulia. Everywhere he has supported and defended the legitimate rights of Transylvanian Romanians dignity.



Another objective was that the Romanian Orthodox Church in Transylvania leave the jurisdiction of the Serbian Metropolitan Karlovitz, under which it was improperly placed by the imperial court in Vienna, and be elevated to the rank of a Metropolis. His courageous struggle to achieve this goal began immediately after the Revolution when he published three pamphlets on the need to reactivate the Orthodox Metropolis of Transylvania, abusively disbanded by the Habsburg authorities in 1701.

The obstacles that Orthodox Romanians in Transylvania had to overcome were enormous: the first one was the Imperial Court of Vienna, represented by the Minister of Religious Affairs, Count Leo Thun; the second one was the Serbian Church, headed by Metropolitan (later Patriarch, 1848) Joseph Rajačić and, last but not least, the Uniate Church of Transylvania. Later, in 1860, Şaguna was amazed to find out that even the Orthodox bishop of

Bucovina, Eugene Hacman was against his plans, aiming to become a metropolitan bishop himself.

However, after 15 years, his efforts were crowned with success. In December 1864 approved the restoration of the Old Metropolis of Transylvania, and Andrei Şaguna became Archbishop of Sibiu and Metropolitan of Romanians in Transylvania, Banat and Crişana. He then established a by-law, known as the "Organic Statutes", which was approved by a national-religious Congress in 1868. It provided the Church autonomy in its relationships with the State, and the laymen participation in church life. The Orthodox Church of Transylvania was governed by these Statutes from 1868 to 1925, but its basic principles have been preserved to this day in the following statutes.

Metropolitan Andrei was a true "founder" of Romanian culture in Transylvania, a true "minister of culture and education". The great bishop knew that Romanians in Transylvania had no chance to acquire their political, cultural and economic rights but through implementing a national strategy capable to organize strong cultural and educational institutions. Romanians' awakening from their stupor could

not be achieved but through a thorough education system that only the Church was able to organize, based on its own structures and according to its own principles of organization. Only such a school system might lead towards the cultural emancipation of our nation. Later, in 1864, at the Diocesan Council, Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna was to say that "*the Church can not be imagined without School and the school is a complementary part of the Church.*" Thus, at the First Council held after his installation as a bishop, they decided to reorganize the old theological school in Sibiu (built in 1786) as a Theological and Pedagogical Institute. The two "sections" of the Institute were to be preparing the future priests and teachers for about 800 primary schools in Transylvania (of which more than half were created by Şaguna). The role of this Institute was to educate young teachers for the task of raising people through culture, as well as to prepare dedicated and competent ministers of the Word of God. In each village,

the priest had to become the school principal, and the deans were to become school inspectors in their districts.

The bishops were to assume the management of the superior schools. The curricula were redesigned and a vast plan aiming to print all the necessary textbooks was initiated. Even the simple reading of the list containing the titles of the books printed during this period is impressive. Over 25 textbooks were published at the urging of the Holy Metropolitan, some of them being written by Saint Andrei himself.

Researchers that have studied Şaguna's period have noticed the numerous achievements recorded, from 1850 to 1860, by the Romanian nation in Transylvania under wise and courageous leadership of St. Andrei. The success of this cultural program, designed and implemented by the Holy Metropolitan, would have been unattainable without the "Diocesan Typography" in Sibiu, established in 1850, where the all the books needed by the Church and the School were to be published. The "Romanian Telegraph" newspaper (with an uninterrupted appearance from January 1853 until today), a new edition of the Bible in 1856-1858 and several textbooks and church service books have been printed here. This is why in 1872 the Holy Metropolitan noted with satisfaction in his *Pastoral Handbook* that obtaining, in 1850, the right to establish the typography and "to print school books and Orthodox church books" was a success which was to be defended: "*Let us keep this right as the apple of our eye.*"

Romanians also owe Şaguna the official approval to establish the Transylvanian Association for the Romanian Literature and Culture (Astra) whose president he was for six years. Also, under his leadership and initiative, young secondary and university students have been awarded scholarships by the Archdiocese of Sibiu.

Holy Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna passed away on June 16/28, 1873, being buried in the proximity of the main

church in Răşinari. According to his last will, his burial service was performed by a single priest, "with no eulogy and no pump". Despite his truly monastic humility, the Orthodox believers have properly honored him. Especially after his death they have had much devotion for him, and a true "popular cult" of Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna has been developed.



Holy Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna was the providential bishop that God sent to the Orthodox Romanians in Transylvania at a time when they were most in need of a man of action, learned and wise, able to face with courage the authorities' hostility in order to defend their rights and to restore their national dignity.

As Ovidiu Moceanu rightfully puts it, "seldom could we encounter in our history and culture a personality which would have the strength" of the Holy Metropolitan. The

inner resort that gave him this amazing spiritual strength was, of course, his faith in God, and his immense love for the Romanian people and the flock entrusted to him.

Throughout his entire pastoral activity, his religious and national endeavors aimed at achieving a goal for which the Transylvanian Romanians had been fighting for centuries: the "salvation of our nation" from all historical oppressions.

There is therefore no wonder that most authors, either Romanian or foreign, that have bent on his personality and wrote books, studies and articles about his life and endeavors, consider St. Andrei Şaguna as the foremost hierarch the Romanian Orthodox Church has had throughout its history.

Fr. Nicolai Buga

(compiled from several sources)

