



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI

ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEATH

OF HIS BEATITUDE TEOCTIST,

Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church *His Eminence Daniel*

The Locum Tenens

Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate

Bucharest—Having received news of the death of His Beatitude Teoctist, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, I hasten to express to you, to the Holy Synod and all the members of the Church my heartfelt condolences, and to assure you of my spiritual union with all those who mourn the passing of this distinguished and highly regarded Church leader. The visit of my beloved predecessor Pope John Paul II to His Beatitude Teoctist in 1999, and the return visit of the Patriarch to the Bishop of Rome in 2002, will remain in the memory of our Churches as a particular gift of God's grace, which strengthened and gave new impulse to the growing friendship and improving fraternal relations between the Churches. Both men were filled with a determination to write a new page in the history of our communities, overcoming a difficult past which still burdens us today, and looking forward with confidence to the day when the divisions among the followers of Christ will be overcome. I pray that the Romanian Orthodox Church will rejoice in the legacy of Patriarch Teoctist's many years of wise ministry, and that you will be sustained and comforted by the fruits of his apostolate as you commend his noble soul to the merciful love of our heavenly Father. In conveying my closeness in prayer at this time of grief, I also wish to express my earnest good wishes for you and your brother Bishops as you guide the Church in this time of transition. With fraternal affection in the Lord. **BENEDICTUS PP. XVI**