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## **Romania: Orthodox Church starts an ecological project inspired by Laudato si'. In partnership with Caritas Ambrosiana. 160 young people involved**

Environmental education, awareness of the ecological crisis, responsibility for the environment: these are the key goals of the pilot project of “eco-initiatives” launched by the Romanian Orthodox Church in partnership with Caritas Ambrosiana. Inspired by Pope Francis’s encyclical Laudato si’, the project started by the “Foundation for Philanthropy” and by Missione Sociale “Diaconia” will take place in Romania and Moldavia for two years, as reported by the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate in a release. “Eight parishes of the archeparchy of Bucharest and eight parishes of the Orthodox Metropolis of Bessarabia are involved, but we hope to extend the project to the entire Romanian Orthodox Church”, Ciprian Ioni??, the priest who is the coordinator of the project, explains to SIR. Caritas Ambrosiana will provide training courses to some young Romanians and Moldavians, who will then be trainers in their own countries. A total of 160 young people from different Orthodox parishes will take care of implementing the project. “They are the carriers of this project – Ioni?? confirms –. What is needed is a change of mentality, raising awareness of ecology, and they can be the makers of such change”. By investing 200 thousand euros, the Romanian Orthodox Church means to help its priests and volunteers be more responsible for the environment, develop awareness-raising and information campaigns on social media, organise events and educational campuses, and promote a guide to good environmental practices.

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