



# World Council of Churches

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Geneva, August 4, 2022

His Beatitude Anastasios,  
Archbishop of Tirana, Durrës, and All  
Albania  
Orthodox Autocephalous Church of  
Albania

Your Beatitude,

*"We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people" (Col. 1:3)*

Again and again we give thanks to our God for the great and most precious gift to all God's people and to the Church of our common Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the person of Your most respected Beatitude, the Archbishop of Tirana, Durrës and all Albania.

We join our Orthodox sisters and brothers in Albania and all around the world, and we give thanks for You, Beatitude, as you celebrate this year thirty years of both struggle and joy, despair and hope, tribulations and great achievements in leading the Church of Christ in Albania.

We give thanks to God, Beatitude, for all your efforts during three decades to bring the Orthodox Church of Albania from darkness to the light of Christ; from death to resurrection in Christ; from total destruction to an exemplary growth in Christ.

On behalf of the entire fellowship of the World Council of Churches, we always give thanks to God, for You, Beatitude, for your life and witness, for your active participation in the long pilgrimage on the way to reconciliation and unity. We are deeply grateful to God for the erudite scholar, the prolific writer, the fervent missionary, the good loving and caring pastor, the worldwide known and respected man of dialogue and herald of peace, reconciliation and love in inter-religious and international fora.

We are grateful to our God for the sixty-plus years of Your blessed presence in the ecumenical movement, starting at the World Conference on Mission and Evangelism in Mexico City, in 1961. You have walked with us, opened for us new horizons in our missionary vocation; you have led us, and generously shared with us your wisdom; you have inspired us with your genuine and enthusiastic commitment to the Gospel.

As we prepare for the 11<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the World Council of Churches under the theme "**Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity,**" we would like to assure you that we will give once again thanks to God for Your ministry, Beatitude. We will give thanks for a ministry inspired and fuelled by Christ's love and by love for Christ; a ministry that always proclaimed and sought the reconciliation of churches, peoples, and nations;

a ministry that all the time invited for prayer “for the unity of all” and encouraged every effort towards achieving this unity.

Allow me, Beatitude, to conclude this message on your thirty years at the head of the Orthodox Church of Albania, praying as an Orthodox priest, a prayer from the liturgy of St John Chrysostom:

*“Among the first remember, Lord, our Archbishop Anastasios; grant him to Your holy churches in peace, safety, honour, and health, unto length of days, rightly teaching the word of Your truth”.*

With filial love and respect,



Fr. Ioan Sauca  
Acting General Secretary  
World Council of Churches