

BISHOP IRINEU DUVLEA

Curriculum Vitae

1962 — On April 19, Ioan Duvlea is born in Alba-Iulia, Alba County, the son of Ioan and Aurelia Duvlea. He would later receive the monastic name **Irineu** upon entering monastic life.

1968–1978 — Attends the first ten grades at the Industrial High School in Teiuș.

1980 — Enters the monastic community at **Brâncoveanu Monastery – Sâmbăta de Sus**, under the pastoral leadership of **His Eminence Antonie Plămădeală**, Metropolitan of Transylvania. He begins his monastic formation.

1981 — He is tonsured as a rassophore. At the same time, he begins his studies at the Theological Seminary in Cluj-Napoca, which he continues until 1987.

1983 — On May 3, he is ordained **hierodeacon** by **His Eminence Ioan of Helsinki**, Metropolitan of Finland, with the blessing of His Eminence Antonie Plămădeală. On May 24, he is tonsured a monk by **His Grace Lucian Făgărășanul**, receiving the name Irineu. During the period 1980–1986, he has the unique opportunity to be one of the closest confidant of **His Eminence Nicolae Mladin**, who had withdrawn to Sâmbăta de Sus for health reasons.

1984 — On November 17, he is ordained **hieromonk** by **His Eminence Antonie Plămădeală**, in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Sibiu.

1987 — After graduating from the Theological Seminary in Cluj-Napoca, he begins studies at the “Andrei Șaguna” Theological Institute in Sibiu, completing them in 1991.

1988 — On August 15, he is elevated to the rank of **protosinghel** by **His Eminence Antonie Plămădeală**, in recognition of his monastic and pastoral activity.

1989 — He begins visiting the United States, where he had relatives; these contacts would later contribute to his growing relationship with Romanian Orthodox communities in America.

1991 — He graduates from the “Andrei Șaguna” Theological Institute in Sibiu with a licentiate thesis entitled *“The Rules for the Organization and Functioning of Monasteries in the Romanian Orthodox Church.”*

1993 — On January 1, he is appointed by **His Eminence Antonie Plămădeală** as abbot of Brâncoveanu Monastery and Exarch of the 15 monasteries and 10 sketes of the Archdiocese of Sibiu. On August 15, he is elevated to the rank of **Archimandrite** and solemnly installed as abbot, in the presence of **Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I** and **Patriarch Teoctist**. He receives the **Patriarchal Cross of Constantinople**.

1994 — On the occasion of the visit to Romania of **His Eminence Nathaniel Popp**, Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America (ROEA), at the invitation of Patriarch Teoctist, Archimandrite Irineu welcomes him together with the brotherhood of Sâmbăta Monastery. At that time, the relationship between the two hierarchs becomes strengthened.

1995–1996 — Continues his ministry as abbot and exarch of the monasteries of the Archdiocese of Sibiu, forming and guiding numerous monks and clergy.

1997 — As a delegate of **His Eminence Antonie Plămădeală**, he visits Offenbach, Germany, to honor a benefactor of Sâmbăta Monastery. With the metropolitan's blessing, he makes two pilgrimages to **Mount Athos**.

1998 — Makes pilgrimages to monasteries in Bulgaria and Greece and to the tomb of **Saint Nicholas in Bari**, Italy.

1999 — The Congress of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate in America recommends that **His Eminence Nathaniel Popp** select one or more auxiliary bishops. Thus begins the process that would lead to the election of Irineu Duvlea to the episcopate.

2000 — On September 24, **His Eminence Antonie Plămădeală** elevates him to the rank of **Mitrophore Archimandrite**, and in December he leaves for the United States together with seven monks from Sâmbăta de Sus, at the invitation of His Eminence Nathaniel.

2001 — On February 23, the monastic group arrives in Detroit, with the blessing of **His Eminence Antonie Plămădeală** and under the omophorion of **His Eminence Nathaniel Popp**. The **Monastery of the Ascension of the Lord** is founded, and Archimandrite Irineu becomes its abbot. The monastery begins to develop into a center of spirituality for Romanian Orthodox Christians and for Orthodox communities in the Detroit area.

2002 — In the spring, a commission appointed by **His Eminence Nathaniel** selects three candidates from among 14 for the episcopate. On May 28, the ROEA Electoral Congress, with 117 delegates, elects Archimandrite Irineu Duvlea as Auxiliary Bishop. On June 28, the election is confirmed by the ROEA/Canada Congress, and on July 24 it is confirmed by the Holy Synod of the **OCA**. On November 2, he is consecrated bishop in **Saint George Cathedral** in Southfield, Detroit, becoming **Bishop of Dearborn Heights and Auxiliary Bishop to His Eminence Nathaniel Popp**.

Among those participating in his consecration are **His Eminence Nathaniel Popp**, **His Eminence Nicolae Condrea**, delegate of Patriarch Teoctist, **His Eminence Christopher**, **His Eminence Kiril**, **His Grace Serafim**, **His Grace Demetri**, and **His Grace Nikon**.

2003 — Begins the effective exercise of his office as **Auxiliary Bishop of ROEA**, under the authority of Archbishop Nathaniel. In July, he ceases serving as abbot of the Monastery of the Ascension of the Lord, being succeeded by **Archimandrite Dr. Mihail Filimon**.

2003–2010 — Episcopal Ministry. Bishop Irineu carries out an active pastoral and administrative ministry within the ROEA, visiting parishes and missions throughout the United States and Canada and supporting the development of communities, the preservation of the Romanian Orthodox faith, and Romanian cultural identity. He participates in ecclesiastical events in North America and Romania and maintains close ties with the Mother Church.

2010–2015 — Emergence and Escalation of the Conflict between Archbishop Nathaniel and Bishop Irineu. Differences in vision between Bishop Irineu and Archbishop Nathaniel regarding the administration of the ROEA and the exercise of episcopal authority become increasingly pronounced, leading to the gradual restriction of Bishop Irineu's activities within the ROEA.

2014 — Investigation and Disciplinary Proceedings. After approximately 12 years of service as Auxiliary Bishop, Bishop Irineu's case is subjected to **ROEA's manipulated disciplinary procedures** and referred to the **Orthodox Church in America (OCA)**, marking the beginning of the formal stage of the canonical and institutional conflict. The AADC archival documentation raises objections concerning the conduct of the proceedings, the evidence presented, the examination of witnesses, and Bishop Irineu's effective opportunity to defend himself.

2017 — Removal from the Episcopate. The OCA sham proceedings conclude with the very much contested **removal and exclusion of Bishop Irineu from the episcopal rank** (of ROEA and OCA). Bishop Irineu categorically contests the decision, but the institutional rupture between him and the ROEA/OCA becomes effective, with significant consequences for the Romanian Orthodox diaspora in North America and for

Orthodox life in America. A new stage of his ministry begins at the “Holy Ascension” Monastery, where he continues as Bishop and Abbot.

2018 — Ministry at the “Holy Ascension” Monastery. Bishop Irineu continues this new hierarchical, monastic and pastoral stage as Bishop and Abbot of the “Holy Ascension” Monastery, amid legal disputes concerning the monastery’s property. In his liturgical ministry, he continues to commemorate the **Ecumenical Patriarch**, His Beatitude Bartholomew, who had honored him on August 15, 1993, with the “Patriarchal Cross of Constantinople.”

2020 — The community loses the former property of the **Monastery of the Ascension of the Lord**, but through the generosity of the **Mariana and Adrian Lupu Leica family**, **Bishop Irineu receives** a new property for the monastery, a former Protestant church in Clinton, Michigan. Thus, the new monastic establishment, the **Holy Trinity Monastery**, is established.

Viewed in light of his entire journey, the history of Bishop Irineu Duvlea and **Holy Trinity Monastery in Clinton** is, above all, a testimony to **faith, steadfastness, and the strength to move forward**. What began at Sâmbăta de Sus, continued in Detroit, and was reborn in Clinton is not merely the history of a monastery, but the history of a vocation that refused to be extinguished in the face of trials.

The years of hardship, conflict, and material loss could not erase what had been built through prayer, sacrifice, and love for the Church. In Clinton, the light of monastic life continues to shine. Bishop Irineu continues his monastic and liturgical ministry **with the blessing and under the omophorion of His All-Holiness Bartholomew, Ecumenical Patriarch**, who is commemorated during the services he celebrates. The archival documentation presents this as an important sign of the continuity of his ecclesiastical and liturgical ministry as a hierarch and abbot, in keeping with the vision attributed to **St. Arsenie Boca**.

Perhaps this is the deepest lesson of the entire journey: **a work built in faith may be tested, but it cannot easily be destroyed**. People may change places, institutions may make decisions, and times may change, but prayer, monastic vocation, and the memory of genuine sacrifice remain.

Today, **Holy Trinity Monastery in Clinton** remains a place where the past meets the present, while hope looks toward the future. The lamp burning here is, at the same time, a tribute to those who built this tradition and a testimony that, where faith and steadfastness exist, **God can cause what seemed lost to blossom again**.

Sources:

- Biography updated by Nicoleta Mija Benos, [Diaspora Ortodoxă – Irineu Duvlea](#)
- AADC Archives, [AADC Archived Documents](#)
- Bishop Irineu Duvlea, [Bishop Irineu Duvlea Archive](#)
- Bishop Irineu Duvlea CV, [Bishop Irineu Biographical Data](#)