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Invited article

A Treatise on the Understanding of Marriage: A Plea for the Necessity of Pre-Marital Counselling

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Abstract:

The Lord Jesus, answering a question from the Pharisees concerning divorce said concerning marriage: “Have ye not read, that He Who made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they two shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Mt. 19:4ff). Thus, marriage is as old as creation itself, as old as the separation of the sexes: *male and female*. There was no other man for Adam to “marry;” there was no other woman on whom Eve could bestow her God-given affections. In one dynamic sentence the Lord Jesus ruled out homosexual unions of any kind (as well as human/”other” relationships which will naturally follow the legalization of homosexual “marriage” in the warped intentions of the Evil One!), as well as, the freedom to dissolve the Sacramental Union of Holy Matrimony for frivolous reasons! Therefore, it behooves every one of us who is contemplating marriage before God to “think it through” thoroughly before entering into this Sacramental relationship. We need to be like the King who counted his armies before going to battle and the builder who counted the cost before building his tower (Lk. 14:28ff), lest we begin to build and not finish, and what had been started and left unfinished become a mockery to us and to our lives in Christ.

Keywords: trust, love, giving, mind, submission, persons, one flesh, eternal

In the event that you, the reader of this article, are not aware of the statistics on divorce in today’s world, let me inform you that the divorce rate today is approaching sixty percent of all marriages. This means that six out of every ten marriages world-wide, will end in failure and dissolution. There are several classes of marriage “types” that have been

identified and categorized by those who study marriage for a living. These categories range from very poor quality marriages (designated as “shipwreck” marriages) all the way to the highest quality marriages (“exceptional” marriages). To this highest quality, only fifteen percent of all marriages attain, and half of those are second marriages. Thus, only about seven percent of all married couples “get it right” the first time, their one and only time, around. These statistics alone should put the “fear of God” into any of us contemplating marriage today!

What can we do about it? Should we all become as St. Paul and remain unmarried; become Monastics and join a Monastery or a Convent? This, of course, is not the answer: this is merely running from the problem and not facing it squarely and dealing with it. After all, any good Monastic knows and will tell anyone that comes to the Monastery as a refuge from life that the Monastery is not a refuge *from life* but a refuge *of life* only for those called by God specifically to come there for His purposes and Glory. It is a calling, not an escape.

By the same token, marriage is a calling as well. There are some who would tell us that the monastic life is superior to the married life: marriage is as much a pathway to holiness as is the monastic life. They are two paths that arrive at the same destination: the Kingdom of Heaven.

No matter what path we choose, it will not be an easy road. We can liken it to the discussion the Lord Jesus was having with his Disciples in Matthew 19:23ff wherein He began the discourse by saying to them: *Verily I say to you, a rich man shall scarcely enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* This, of course, shocked the Disciples because the common wisdom of the day was that earthly riches indicated the favour of God for a particular person and family. Thus, if the highly favoured of God were struggling to enter the Kingdom, what chance did they who were poor and in misery have of reaching that same Kingdom? He says, just to emphasize the point, that 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.* To this the Disciples respond: *Who, then, can be saved?* in great shock. The Lord’s answer to their question is a very simple one: *With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.*

It is very difficult for an Holy Monk or Nun to be saved because they are constantly having to resist the Evil One who is hurling temptations at them feverishly and they must battle him at every turn. The Evil One never sleeps! Ironically, the rich man has no worries about the Evil One assailing him because he has been lulled to spiritual sleep by his riches and the Evil One has no need of tempting him. Father George Calciu writes in his autobiography of a situation in a small Romanian village. There was a widow with many children who prayed very much for her children: around her home were many demons, very active and aggressive toward her. In the same village was a tavern where men sat drunk all day: in that tavern was one lazy demon who rested most of the day because he had no need to assail those already, and willingly, under his power!

I am getting side-tracked, however, from the point I am trying to make, which is this: the married life gets much the same attention from the Evil One as does the monastic life. The monastic is removed from society at large in the Monastery, but he or she is there praying the hours for all of us who cannot do so because we have families and/or worldly (in a good sense, *e.g.*, a doctor or nurse, or Parish Priest who ministers to others in need) concerns that prevent us from the prayers in which we all should be engaged. To attack the Monastic is to attack the power source behind society; they are the *fifty righteous persons* of Genesis 18:24ff for whose sake God would not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. As long as Abraham kept asking God for His mercy on the wicked cities for the sake of the righteous, God responded with His agreement to spare the cities. Abraham bargained God down to *ten righteous persons* but it was there that he stopped interceding and the Lord destroyed the wicked cities because only Lot and his family (four people: Lot, his wife, and their two daughters) abode there. God did, however, spare Lot and his family from being destroyed (except for his wife who looked back at the city against the instruction of the angelic visitors, and was turned into a pillar of salt) by leading them forth from the city before its destruction.

The family structure, those who are married and bearing children, is the mechanics of society. The family is the basic building block of any society. It is the place from which we take our identity as individuals, and this identity comes primarily from the father in the household. If the Evil

One will destroy mankind, he must attack the place where a person finds his identity in this life. The father's surname is the "family name" by which we are known; to not know one's father, directly or indirectly, is to be without identity in life. The father in the home stands in the place of God the Father in the eyes of his children: no matter how much we instruct our children at home, in school or in Church, they will relate to God in Heaven in the same manner as they relate to their earthly father, the Grace and Mercy of God notwithstanding. Read Hebrews 12:4ff and see how being forsaken by God because of sin, as St. Paul writes, is a definite sign that the one *not* being chastised for sin does *not* belong to the family of God: *For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth* (vs. 6). Then he goes on to say that we are to endure that chastening in order to be corrected back into the way of life. Following this, he tells us rather pointedly in vs. 8: *But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons*. The word *bastards* here is the Greek word νόθος, an adjective which means "illegitimate," a person without a father, thus, without the identity of a family. Saint Paul's argument in this passage relates to one of the three key elements in a family structure, *i.e.*, responsibility, on which we further elaborate later.

Many, many people in this world are on a never-ending quest to find out *who* they are and, by extension, to find out what their *purpose* in life is meant to be. They spend their whole lives asking the question: *Who am I?* Too many of them never find the answer and thus spend their whole lives in vain, with no purpose. They cannot relate to themselves and thus cannot relate to other people, especially in a legitimate love relationship because they will feel the call to "move along" in their endless quest for identity. Stability is something of which they know nothing at all.

The problem stems from the fact that they are asking the wrong question. In lieu of asking *Who am I?*, they should be asking the question: *Who's am I?* The answer to this question will give them the stability for which they search in vain; it will tell them who they are!

This is why the family is so important and why the Evil One wants so desperately to destroy it. Without a solid family structure in which to grow up and mature properly, people are, as St. James describes them,

like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed (Jas. 1:6). They are also described by St. Jude when he writes: *clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever* (Jude 12bf). Again I say with all caution, this can all be changed in an instant by the Grace of God in anyone's life because our God loves us and continually reaches out to us in Love and Mercy! It is up to us, however, to respond to that Love and Mercy with faith and trust; God will never force us to love Him.

Once we understand *who's* we are, then we will know who *we* are, and then we can properly relate to other people as well as physical realities. This relates to the idea of responsibility which I mentioned earlier. Again, I am getting a little ahead of myself, but there needs to be a mention of that aspect here as well. We certainly can understand relating to other people, but what about inanimate physical realities?

This revolves around the concept of private property. Where am I going with this? Let me explain.

When we think of private property and its great significance in the Constitution of the United States of America, we naturally think that Americans would be consumed with private property laws because America is such a rich country, founded upon the principles of free enterprise, etc. They would naturally be concerned with "keeping what it theirs." The truth of the matter is this: the founding fathers of the United States of America were godly men who understood the real meaning of private property. Just like they understood the words which they wrote for the good of their posterity guaranteeing every citizen "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." When we read the word "happiness" therein, we think of mirth, gaiety and the like. This, however, is not the meaning of the word as they penned it. What it means is the "pursuit of whatever one wishes to make *happen* in one's life," e.g., if one wishes to become a doctor or a Priest or a lawyer, one has the guaranteed right to pursue that dream: to "make it happen" to the best of one's ability. In our more modern parlance, the words "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" might be expressed as "life, liberty, and the freedom to be whatever one wants to be" (within the law, of course!).

By way of an historical note concerning the godliness of the founding fathers, I heard this depiction of incidents from the life of George Washington (the father of the United States of America), told on a television program one evening some years ago. It was told by a renowned expert on the life of George Washington. It was said of him that he gave his own money to found Churches in the colonies (even Churches other than his own Protestant denomination!) because he believed so strongly in the place of God in the country and in the individual home and family. He would often, as General of the Colonial Armies during the Revolutionary War in America, go off by himself for hours before battles and get down on his knees and pray for God's help and blessing upon his men and their quest for independence. He rode a great white stallion and always was at the forefront of the battle on that great horse, leading his men in battle against the British. He did not hide himself from the conflict but stood at the front, making himself an easily-identifiable target for enemy snipers and combatants, who were very much aware of the necessity of killing the leaders (especially the supreme leader!) of the enemy. In all of this, George Washington *never* once was wounded in battle by an enemy. The more amazing thing about it, however, is the fact that there are still remnants of his uniforms on display today that show bullet holes through the material! He trusted God supremely and God protected him throughout his lifetime.

The rest of the founding fathers were just as committed to God as was George Washington: Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, all the signers of the Declaration of Independence, the Continental Congress, and they had a huge hand in penning the Constitution of the United States of America. When they drafted the Constitution, they had God as their Guide and Instructor.

This brings us back to the issue of private property and how it relates to our discussion. One must have ownership in something in order to take pride (in the good sense, of course) in it and care for it as is necessary for its longevity. In the United States, many "families" consist of only a mother and several illegitimate children, usually sired by different "sperm donors" (a term used for men who are only there for the sex and vanish when a pregnancy results). The reason for this growing phenomenon is the simple fact that the government pays these women

money (welfare payments) because they have children and do not work. The Church used to be the ones helping these people until the government took that responsibility away from the Church for the simple reason that these people will vote for anyone who gives them “free money!” The Church tried to rehabilitate the people and keep families together. The government wants nothing to do with solid family structure because that weans them away from needing assistance to live. When one makes one’s own decisions, one votes for the ones who will help them the best way. By keeping these people indigent, they are helpless without government. The more children they beget and bear, the more money the government throws at them to “fix” the problem.

The problem, unfortunately, only gets much worse because the children are all brought into and raised in this “welfare system” and find it almost impossible to pull themselves out of it. They are mostly all illegitimate and, therefore, have no identity at all. They soon turn to gangs and drugs to find their “identity;” and the Evil One is always there to help them along this road to destruction!

They own nothing at all of their own; they have never earned anything from their own labours in their lives. The children drop out of school at an early age with dreams of being the “drug lord” of their block or having a career in athletics or pop music. It all revolves around having lots and lots of money for doing nothing.

One would think that when one is handed something for nothing, one would be grateful for having received it, but this is not the case. The government, as part of its programs to fix the homeless and indigence problem, has taken to building what are called “projects,” housing complexes of apartments with all new furniture, washers and dryers for their clothes, everything one could want in decent living. The “projects” soon become eyesores, covered with graffiti and smelling like sewers. The washers and dryers, the furniture and everything usable has been sold by the resident “gang/drug lord” to buy more illegal drugs and, in a short span of ten to twenty years, the “projects” have to be demolished because they have become rat-infested, trash-laden monuments to the government’s total lack of understanding. When the wrecking ball is demolishing the buildings, homeless “activists” are on television demanding that the government build them more housing because it is

their “right” to have it; and that they do not want any government supervision telling them how they should live in the free housing!

Without personal identity that can only come from a family, there is no respect for anything given to them without personal cost. If one legitimately works and sweats for something because they want it, one will respect it and care for it in an appropriate manner. When one is asked by another to watch over something as a favour or as a paid job-responsibility, the best words one can hear from the caretaker are: “I will treat it as if it were my own.” This attitude can only come from understanding the value of personal property and how it makes one a better citizen. In some places, only land-owners are allowed to vote and have any participation in government. This is because they understand the value of private property for which they and their families have worked over many years; they do not want people who have never worked for anything and own nothing to be making the laws in regard to that for which others have worked. Personal responsibility does not come upon one overnight in a sudden flash, it is learned in the solid family structure, and private property is a great part of that learning process.

The Lord Jesus spoke of this phenomenon when He uttered one of the great “I AM” statements in the Gospel according to St. John when He declared Himself to be the Good Shepherd. He said: *I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep* (Jn. 10:11ff). In this passage, notice that the hired help, to whom the sheep do not belong, leaves them to protect himself (the one thing that he does own, his own life!). Also notice that it is the Son’s relationship to His Father that is the grounds upon which the Son lays down His life for the sheep. The sheep belong to the Father, but he has given them as a possession to the Son, so they are His own possession, *i.e.*, private property. Compare this with what the Lord says in John 17:12 of those sheep: *While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy Name: those that Thou gavest me I have*

kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

As I write this, please understand that I am speaking of the general situation as we find it. There are many stories, however, that do not fit this scenario. Many people, by the Grace of God and through hard work and determination, have pulled themselves out of this downward spiral and made great successes of their lives. Many have even done it totally apart from God (as we know Him), either in another religion apart from Christianity or as agnostics or as atheists; this is due to the fact that the principles within mankind being created in the Image and Likeness of God (even if they will not acknowledge it!) are still at work in the universe, just because of the special uniqueness of man as the pinnacle of God's creation!

I mentioned earlier that there are three key elements at work in the solid family structure, responsibility being but one of them. It is now time to explore the other two.

The first and most important of these is trust. Trust and faith are synonymous in this context, just as they are in any biblically-centred context. The first thing we learn to do within the family structure is to trust one another. This can only happen properly if those at the head of the family are trustworthy. This is why it is imperative that when two people "fall in love," they fall in love with each other's mind and spirit, the place from whence trust is spawned. I am amazed at the phenomenon that occurs so often in today's world wherein two people who are engaged to be married must first establish a "pre-nuptial agreement" before they marry. This is a legal document that limits the money and property a spouse may receive should there be the death of one of them or a divorce. It separates money and property into "his and hers" so that the other cannot get their hands on it for any reason. If two people do not trust one another that much to necessitate a pre-nuptial agreement, why are they getting married in the first place!? This is the epitome of lack of trust in a marriage and it starts the marriage out on the wrong foot!

Trust is something that must be earned by an individual; it cannot be demanded apart from good reason to trust someone. When one enters a new relationship, such as courtship with a view toward marriage, both parties must be weaned away from trust in or faithfulness to anyone other

than the one whom they will marry. This highest level of trust and commitment is reserved only for one's spouse. There are, of course, lower levels of trust that we will retain, *e.g.*, one's doctor, or one's confessor, or even one's butcher who has the freshest and healthiest meats in his shop, or one's barber, etc. The highest level of trust and commitment *must* be to one's spouse or the marriage will be deeply flawed, and those flaws will be perceived by the children of such a marriage and damage them as well.

This is why it is so imperative that all ties of loyalty must be broken with the parents of the wedded couple. The Holy Scripture makes that clear when it states emphatically: *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh* (Gen. 2:24). This was the Commandment of God from the very beginning, on the very day that God made Eve from the rib of Adam in the Garden of Eden and gave them to one another. Adam, of course, had no father and mother to leave because he and Eve were the father and mother of all mankind, but the precedent was set from the very beginning of making one's fidelity to one's spouse alone. The Scripture does not specifically say that Eve, the wife, was supposed to do the very same, but it is implicit in the understanding of the passage. In many forms of the wedding ceremony, especially Protestant and even in Western Rite Orthodoxy, the bride is given away by her parents (or by someone else if the parents are deceased or not present) to the groom symbolizing the severance of the bond between the bride and her parents and of her belonging now to her husband.

The word "cleave" is a very unique word in the sense that it means two things that are opposite one another. A diamond-cutter cleaves a raw diamond, separating it into several parts separate and distinct from one another. On the other hand, one can be said to cleave to something so as to make it one with oneself, as in the biblical statement: *Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; Him shalt thou serve, and to Him shalt thou cleave, and swear by His Name* (Dt. 10:20). The cleaving of a husband and wife must be complete, both aspects of the definition must take place!

One of the worst things that can happen in a marriage is for the parents of a couple to "take sides" with either the husband or wife when they are having a dispute over something. It is especially bad for them to take the side of their own child. This leads to criticizing the "other" side

and eroding whatever trust that remains in the relationship. If parents and well-meaning friends of the couple truly want to help them resolve their differences, they will not “take sides,” but encourage the couple to rationally talk over their differences and resolve the issue peacefully and permanently. If the dispute is serious enough, a marriage counsellor may need to be engaged. When sides are taken, there can be name-calling and many other things detrimental to the relationship that is expressed in the heat of passion. Many times these things will come back to haunt the one who spoke out of turn in an effort to comfort or “be a pal,” and this can damage the secondary relationship severely.

From whence does trust come? It, like Faith, comes from knowledge, knowledge of the other person. Saint Paul writes in Romans 10:17, [...] *faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God*. It is as the Holy Fathers teach: Knowledge *must* precede Faith. One of the great problems of this modern world is the fact that truth is no longer a valued commodity. We live in a world of expediency that condones any form of deceit required to obtain a desired end. This is very true in the arena of marriage today. One person sees another who appeals to them for the basest of motives, superficial attraction, and it goes by the misnomer of “love” (when it is really no more than the *lust of the flesh*). The one (or sometimes both) of them who “wants” the other one will change his or her behaviour and pretend to be someone they are not in order to obtain what they want. If this relationship ends up at the altar, one or both will be in for a great shock the next day after the “objective” is won: they revert back to their true selves and then the nightmare, instead of the honeymoon, begins!

When Samuel the Prophet was instructed by God to remove King Saul from the throne of Israel, he was sent to the House of Jesse to select the new King. Jesse was asked to parade his sons before Samuel and he did so from the eldest to the youngest. When Samuel looked on the first of Jesse’s sons, Eliab, he said within himself, *Surely the Lord’s anointed is before Him*. The Lord, however, said to Samuel, *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart* (1 Sam. 16:6f). When the Spirit of God did not identify to Samuel the one to be chosen after seeing

seven of Jesse's sons, Samuel asked Jesse if he had any more sons whom he had not yet seen. Jesse answered that he had one more but that he was a mere boy out tending the sheep. So Jesse brought his son David to Samuel and he was identified as the one whom the Lord had chosen. Saint Paul in his preaching to the Jews in a Synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia, said of King David, *I have found David the son of Jesse, to be a man after My own Heart, who shall fulfil all My will* (Ac. 13:22).

It is the heart and the mind that tell us who a person really is; this is why the Lord Jesus said, *Where a man's treasure is, there will his heart be also* (Mt. 6:21). Long before those words, Solomon said, [...] *as he thinketh in his heart, so he is* (Prov. 23:7), speaking of the man with an *evil eye*. As the Lord Jesus also told us in the same passage, *the light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness* (Mt. 6:22f). When He speaks of the *eye* here, He is speaking of the *voũç* which is the "window" of the soul. It is part of the intelligible part of the soul which dwells within the heart of a person. If the *eye* is turned upward toward God, then it is full of light (the Uncreated Light we see as depicted by haloes in Iconography). If, however, it is turned inward on the person, then it has no light and is darkened, seeking only to consume for itself upon others: always taking and never giving. The *treasure*, then, of the latter, darkened soul is what that person can take from others.

A person that is always taking and never giving (except to get what he or she wants: one must give a piece of cheese in the trap to catch the mouse!) must disguise his or her intentions if they will succeed. This is very prevalent in many pre-marital relationships: one or the other of the couple is disguising their real self (or selves) in order to obtain a "treasure" that is desired. Let us take, for example, a couple wherein the boy desires to marry the girl but she is "turned off" by his behaviour. He, then, changes his behaviour to mask who he really is so as to make her think he is someone whom he is not. After the marriage, he reverts back to his normal self because he has attained his goal. The poor wife wakes up to find she has married a complete stranger and another marriage becomes a nightmare instead of a lifelong romance.

I know of a particular situation that illustrates this scenario perfectly. Two young people from good, Christian families were engaged to be married. The young man was the owner of his own business and had his own home; he made a nice living and seemed, on the surface, to be the ideal “catch” for his bride-to-be. She was a college graduate, working at a good job but still living at home. They planned an elaborate Church wedding and seemed to be heading for a fine life together. She was to continue working for a while until the time came for children, at which time she would cease working outside the home and become a full-time mother. They married and all seemed well. Shortly thereafter, he insisted she quit work and stay at home all day. He gave her money to run the home, every penny of which she had to account for to him with receipts. He would call her at home every so often and demand to know exactly what she was doing at any given moment. She was to dissociate herself from all her friends and have no social life at all apart from her husband. He monitored her phone calls, demanding to know whom she called and for what reason. She was not to go out of the house alone without his permission, and then only for absolutely necessary things such as grocery shopping (for which she had to account for every penny!). Her life became a nightmare of being absolutely controlled by her husband in every detail of her existence. What seemed to be a “perfect match” ended in an ugly divorce within a year of their marriage! He was a “control-freak” but he hid it perfectly from her and her family until they were married: he was like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde!

These things happen, perhaps not to the same degree of, but they happen quite frequently and are no less a nightmare for the one caught unawares in the other’s trap. All this can be avoided if we *look on the heart and not on the outward appearance* alone. This is the only way we can build trust in one another, by being ourselves and examining the other person inwardly and not just relying on the external to furnish us a foundation for the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. The internal provides us the opportunity to see if the object of our affections is a *house built upon the rock* that will withstand the winds and waves and floods of life. The external alone will prove only to be a *house build upon the sand* that will crumble at the first sign of trouble (Mt. 7:24ff).

In any relationship, especially the marriage relationship, there must be an established base of trust and faith in one another in order for there to be a relationship at all. We *must* know we can trust the other person in the relationship when trials and tribulation attack the union. Two separate individuals have become *one flesh* and the individual does not have rule over their own body; it belongs to the other person (1 Cor. 7:4, speaking of the sexual relationship); therefore, what we have pledged in the wedding ceremony cannot be held back (and used as a “bargaining chip” at any convenient time!) for any reason. This is our trust in one another. In Western Christian marriage ceremonies, the bride and groom pledge their trust one to another with the words (before God!) “I plight thee my troth,” which is older English for “I pledge to you my trust.” If a foundation of trust has not been established, how can it be pledged wholeheartedly and unreservedly before God?

The idea of pledging these things before God is not to be taken lightly, either. As Solomon, again, tells us: he who vows before God and breaks it is a *fool* (*The fool hath said in his heart, “There is no God!”* Ps. 14:1, 53:1) and that it is better to not vow than to vow and break that vow (Eccl. 5:4f). If nothing else, this should tell us how serious the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony is in its essence; and yet, the divorce rate is approaching sixty percent!

There is no substitute for trust as the foundation of a good and lasting marriage that will endure every hardship and trial that the Evil One will bring in his efforts to crush that holy relationship. We trust in God, *and* we also trust in our spouse whom God has provided to us as our best hope of reaching the Kingdom of God. The husband is the wife’s best hope of attaining to the Kingdom of God; and the wife is the husband’s best hope of the same. Trusting what (or whom) God has provided is the same as trusting God Himself! This trust must be absolute. It will not be at first, but it will build as the relationship matures; as long as we have chosen one in whom we can place our absolute trust. In the words of Job, referring to his trust in God in the midst of his trials: *Thought He slay me, yet will I trust Him.*

Once we have chosen one in whom we can place our absolute trust and have determined that this one is “the one,” then we can begin to build upon that foundation. The next level up from trust is love. Once we have someone whom we trust, then we can begin to love that person in the proper sense.

One of the questions I ask any group that I address on the issues of marriage and pre-marital counselling is this: “What is love; how does one define love?” As a follow-up question, I also ask: “How many people here believe that love is a feeling?” Most people have no idea what love really is and many (at least half the room) believe that it is a feeling. This is completely wrong! How can one commit one’s life to someone based upon a concept that they cannot even define or understand?

When a young couple comes to me for pre-marital counselling, the first question I ask them is this: “Why do you want to get married?” The answer comes back, invariably, “Because we love each other.” I smile and tell them that that is the very *worst* reason for two people to get married! After they recover from the shock, I spend the next however many months it requires to explain to them what I mean and, at the same time, get them on a surer foundation for their relationship.

If love is merely a feeling, then how can it be a basis for marriage when feelings change, not just from day to day, but from moment to moment? Rather, love is a commitment, fully and completely. Love is always giving and never taking. Love is submission one to another. Love cannot be “defined,” as such; it must be demonstrated in actions and words. Thus, we read in John 3:16, [...] *God loved the world in this manner that He gave His Only-Begotten Son...* Also, in St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, in his instruction to married couples, he says to the husbands: *Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it* (Eph. 5:25).

In John 14:15, while with His Disciples in the Upper Room, Christ tells His followers: *If you love Me, keep My Commandments*. In 1 John 5:3, St. John echoes these words when he writes: *For this is the love of God, that we keep His Commandments*. We can see from these passages that love is tied directly to giving, specifically the giving of oneself, all that we are and possess. Later on, in the Upper Room discourse to His Disciples, the Lord Jesus adds another dimension to this concept when He

says in John 14:21, *He that hath My Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me ..., and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.* The reward of love built upon trust is that the one whom we love will open themselves up to us, *I will manifest Myself to him.* The verb used here for *manifest* is the Greek εμφανίζω, which is a cognate of the root verb φαίνω, “to shed light upon, to reveal,” with the preposition εν, “with,” appended to the front for emphasis. It means, therefore, “to bring light to that which is hidden inside;” the person who is the object of one’s love begins to develop a deeper trust, so much so, that they are willing to reveal their true, inner selves. This, of course, makes them all the more vulnerable to hurt, embarrassment, and humiliation, but they are not worried about that because a strong base of trust has been developed and built-upon with true love! This why the Lord Jesus says in John 15:13, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* Laying down one’s life does not necessarily demand the literal sense (although many times it does!); we can lay our lives down in many ways. One of those ways is by making ourselves more and more vulnerable to the one in whom we place our absolute trust, our spouse. This is true love!

This has an added dimension that makes our relationship more pleasing to God and, thus, more apt to be blessed of Him to Whom we all belong. This added dimension is revealed to us in John 13:34f, where the Lord Jesus tells His disciples: *A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one to another.* In this passage, as in all the rest, St. John uses the verb form or the noun form of the, so called, “highest form” of love, that of ἀγάπη love which is characterized by self-sacrifice, regardless of the recipient’s worthiness (or lack thereof) to receive it. It is one of the two words for “love” used extensively in the New Testament: ἀγαπάω and φιλέω, the latter being more in the area of “friendship.”

We can see these two words played off against one another when the Lord Jesus confronts St. Peter after the Resurrection on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, where He elicits three affirmations of St. Peter’s faith in Christ to overcome his remorse over his three denials of the Lord outside the home of the High Priest the night of Jesus’ arrest and trial.

Saint Peter was overcome with grief over his failure to stand for Christ that evening, especially after having vowed his allegiance to his Master earlier (remember what we said about vowing a vow and not keeping it!). The Lord knew St. Peter had to experience forgiveness for him to be the man he was to become in Christian history. The Lord had already forgiven him based upon his having *wept bitterly* following his three denials. What the Lord needed from St. Peter was for him to forgive himself and put it all in the past! This is played out for us in John 21:15-19.

I will not take the time to go into great detail in explaining this interchange between the Lord and St. Peter; I will just give the pertinent facts as they pertain to this treatise. Saints Thomas, Nathaniel, James, John and Peter were at the Sea of Galilee. The Angel at the Empty Tomb had told Mary Magdalene and *the other Mary* to ... *go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goes before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him* (Mt. 28:7). As they are standing together, waiting, St. Peter announces, *I go a-fishing*. What he really said, literally was *I return to fishing*; not just *I am going fishing*. He was leaving his calling and returning to his former worldly occupation.

The disciples are fishing and they catch nothing all night. The Lord appears on the shore and asks them if they have caught anything and instructs them to cast their nets in a certain place. They do so and catch so many fish that the nets begin to strain under the load. Saint John realizes it is the Lord Jesus and tells St. Peter. Saint Peter puts on his coat because he is naked in the boat and then threw himself into the water. The nakedness of his body is indicative of the nakedness of his soul before God and his realization of his own sinfulness and shame from his three denials. This is the same reaction he had when he first met the Lord and He had directed St. Peter as to where to catch fish in Luke 5:8, ... *he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord*.

The disciples drag the fish to the shore in their boat and Jesus has a fire lit and they all eat together. It is right after they eat together, a symbol of close friendship and camaraderie, that Jesus confronts St. Peter face to face, beginning in vs. 15. It is time to acknowledge the five-hundred-pound gorilla in the room!

He says to St. Peter: *Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?* The question reads, literally: *Simon, do you sacrificially love (αγαπαω) Me more than these fish you just caught?* Remember, St. Peter had just declared to his comrades that he was *returning* to fishing. I will proceed from here with literal translations to show the contrasts drawn out in this passage. Saint Peter answers: *Yes, Lord, You know intuitively that I am your friend (φιλεω)*. Based upon this declaration, the Lord Jesus then gives St. Peter a directive, a command, *Feed My lambs*. This narrowly denotes nourishment in Christian doctrine directed specifically toward the young, most vulnerable ones of the flock, *i.e.*, new Christians.

Now the Lord says to St. Peter *a second time*: *Simon, son of Jonah, do you sacrificially love Me at all?* There is no comparison to the fish or anything else now. Saint Peter answers Him again the same way: *Yes, Lord, You know intuitively that I am your friend (φιλεω)*. Based upon this second declaration, the Lord now says to St. Peter: *Tend My sheep*. This most broadly denotes the shepherding of all the Church.

Now the Lord says to St. Peter *a third time*: *Simon, son of Jonah, are you really My friend (φιλεω)?* This deeply penetrated the heart of St. Peter and he was literally brought to tears, just as he was after his third denial, because it grieved him so much that the Lord asked if he was really His friend. Saint Peter then answers the Lord differently than as before: *Lord, You know intuitively all things, but You know by experience that I am Your friend*. Based upon his third affirmation and his tears, the Lord gives St. Peter another charge, this time encompassing both of the previous charges: *Feed My sheep*. This charge combines the narrower concept of nourishment in Christian doctrine with the broader concept of the Church in general. Then the Lord Jesus spoke of St. Peter's death in which he should glorify the Lord. In conclusion, He says to St. Peter: *Follow Me*. Saint Peter is now fully restored!

What does all this say to us about trust and love in the marriage relationship? First of all, the Lord Jesus, by St. Peter's own words, *knows all things intuitively*: He knows the heart of every person ever created. Knowing St. Peter's heart to be a good one that just needs the power of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to be fit for the tasks given him as the leader of the Holy Apostles, He *gives* to St. Peter certain commandments that are, at once, very necessary for the Church to become what it was to

become, and very delicate, requiring the utmost of trust. Saint Peter, then, demonstrated his love for Christ by honouring those commandments and fulfilling them to the utmost, even unto his death by crucifixion, upside-down! God trusted St. Peter and he responded in love; St. Peter, reciprocally, trusted God and God responded in love. The same dynamics are at work in the marriage relationship. The more we come to know the heart and mind of the one we love, the more we can trust them; the more we trust them, the more we are able to love them by *giving* on the husband's side and in *submission* on the wife's side. The two words, *giving* and *submission* are synonymous and interchangeable. This is why St. Paul says in Ephesians 5:21, *submitting yourselves to one to another in the fear of God.*

I need to make one more point concerning love (especially for those of you who are not so convinced that love is *not* a feeling, but action derived from a particular mind-set). This comes from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians where he prays specifically for their well-being in 1:9f. He spends the first eight verses of the letter with the customary introduction of himself as the writer of the Epistle, and in telling them just how much he loves them and every remembrance of his time with them. He thanks them for their help in his defence of the Holy Gospel and he yearns to be with them again. Then, in vss. 9 and 10a, he says this concerning their love for others: *And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgement; that you may approve things that are excellent.*

He is praying for their *αγαπη*, self-sacrificing love, and he asks that it should increase to the point of overflowing and spilling out onto others. When we give out of *αγαπη* love, the resources from which we give are, of course, limited, but if we put others first, then God makes those resources continue to flow, even when we think there is nothing left. The best illustration of this is that of the widow of Zarephath in 1 Kings 17:8ff. There Elijah the Prophet was directed by the Lord to go to Zarephath where he would be sustained during the famine and drought by a widow whom God had directed to feed him. She had only a few grams of flour left in the bottom of a barrel and a little oil left in a jar; she was going to make a fire and cook two small cakes for her and her son and then she and her son would go and die from the famine. As she was

gathering the wood for the fire, Elijah asked her for a drink of water and some bread. She told him of her situation and Elijah told her to make bread for him first and then for her and her son. He told her the Word of the Lord was that her flour and oil would be sustained until the end of the drought and famine. She did according to the word of Elijah and the flour and oil sustained the three of them for the remainder of the three and a half years of the drought.

Lest, however, we spend our self-sacrificing love foolishly, we must make sure that we give to the right people and in the right manner and for the right purposes. This is why St. Paul places parameters on their abundant love for which he prays. He uses the preposition *εν*, which denotes the sphere in which their love must operate so that he says, literally, that their love must *abound within the sphere of knowledge and of all judgement*.

The first word, *knowledge*, is the word for *experiential knowledge*, but with a preposition appended to the front of it: *επιγνωσις*. This word, unfortunately, remains virtually untranslated in most translations of the Holy Scriptures. It should be translated, *full knowledge* (literally, “knowledge which is ‘upon’ [the preposition *επι*] regular, experiential knowledge”) so that its import is that a full examination of the person or thing at hand is accomplished before giving oneself to them or it. Love is *not* blind here, as the expression goes; it is perceptive and very thorough-going in its research before committing itself. In the marriage relationship, one is giving their most prized and precious possession, oneself; and the Lord told us that we should never *cast our pearls before swine* (Mt. 7:6).

The second arena in which our love should operate is in *all judgement*. This is the expression, *παση αισθησει*, which means, literally, “taking all the information one has gathered (the *full-knowledge*) and making judgements based upon it.” It is like eating a fresh-caught fish: one makes sure it comes from a clean source and then one cooks it to eat. When one eats it, one, literally, swallows the good flesh and spits out the bones. The flesh will nourish a person but the bones can choke and kill a person!

This is further borne out by the fact that St. Paul then, at the beginning of vs. 10, states the purpose of this discerning attitude: *so that you may approve the excellent things*. When one undertakes any task, one usually has a definite purpose in mind, something that one wishes to accomplish. In this case, St. Paul chooses to use the preposition εἰς (literally, “into”) to express his purpose. When it is used this way, taking as its object an infinitive, it should be translated *with a view toward*, expressing purpose. The prepositions ἐν and εἰς are related and are often seen as being interchangeable by translators, but they are very different in import. If ἐν denotes a sphere of operation (picture a round ball, sealed off from everything outside of it), then εἰς denotes an arrow piercing that sphere, bringing something from outside that sphere into it. From this it is easy to see how it denotes purpose when used with the infinitive, in the way St. Paul employs it in this passage. It is worthy of note as a sidebar that prepositions, though they be very small, insignificant words, carry much of the force in the formation of Christian doctrine by the Holy Fathers in their interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

The purpose of discernment in love is to *approve the excellent things*. Picture a clerk sitting at a desk with hundreds of request forms coming to him daily. He must read each one carefully and discern the ones that merit funding because they are good and useful. He stamps them with a stamp reading APPROVED and the rest he stamps DISAPPROVED. In the human soul, the Holy Fathers call this “guarding the νοῦς” whereby a person examines every impulse that invades the soul (all enters the person through the νοῦς, the “window of the soul,” the eye of Mt. 6:22). One examines every impulse to see what its origin is, above or below; if it is from above it is allowed to pass into the person for “processing.” If it is from below, it is rejected and sent away, never to be processed, God willing. This is the equivalent of the Lord’s saying to St. Peter in Matthew 16:23, *Get thee behind me, Satan!*

The *excellent things* we are to approve are things which are not just acceptable, but of the finest and superior quality. Saint Paul uses the verb διαφέρω which literally means “to bring, carry through.” It is a compound verb φέρω, which means “bring, carry, bear” with the preposition δια, “through” appended to it. Here it is a neuter plural participle, *things which are excellent*. To understand its meaning denoting

excellence, think of a refiner's fire used to refine gold. The gold ore has impurities in it along with actual gold. The fire burns the impurities as the ore is passed through the fire and the ore emerges purer as the impurities are burned away in the fire. The fire is heated more and more and the ore is passed through it over and over again until all the impurities are burned away but the pure gold is left intact. We are left with only the pure gold and all the "bones" are discarded!

It is interesting to note that this word was found in a marriage contract in a papyrus fragment dated to AD 127: εαν δε τι διαφερωνται προς αλληλους, "whatever is mutually excellent" (*Oxyrhynchus Papyri* III, 496⁸ as cited by Moulton and Milligan 1974: 156).

So many people in the world have little to no idea of what love really is and how it is expressed, that it is no wonder the divorce rate is so high and climbing. This phenomenon of almost total ignorance of the meaning of love contributes also to the rising numbers of couple who cohabit with one another outside the bounds of Holy Matrimony. If those statistics were to be included in the divorce-rate figures, the numbers would be overwhelming! The accent for so many couples today is on the fleshly aspects of marriage. The focus *must* be on the spiritual and mental, *not* on the physical, for marriages to succeed amidst the trauma of the modern world and the raging of the Evil One against God's Holy Institution of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony.

The unenlightened mind and heart will put the focus on the physical because we live in the physical realm. When God is not at the centre of one's life, then He is ignored and one lives by what can be felt and experienced physically. Yet, God is right there, reaching out to anyone who will seek after Him (Ac. 17:27f) but, as St. Paul tells us in his Epistle to the Hebrews, *...he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him* (11:6). We must approach God and His Holy Sacraments on *His* terms, not our own; if we do this, we will experience joy and peace in the midst of trials and tribulations.

Another helpful illustration comes from the Ecumenical Movement and the World Council of Churches. The Orthodox do not belong to this movement nor to this Council (for a time the Orthodox were "observers,"

looking to see if any good may come of it) because the liberal “theologians” among the member churches pushed very hard for having their version of the Holy Eucharist together *before* they ironed out their differences. This is profoundly not Orthodox in nature! The liberals want to *begin* with the symbol (for them it is a mere symbol; for us it is an Holy Sacrament!) of unity of Faith, even while they have many differences in beliefs and practices. They think that beginning with unity, their differences will dissolve away and they will all sing “Kum By Yah” together in harmony. This will *never* happen but they have already desecrated that of which can only be partaken in unity of doctrine and Faith. This is perfectly analogous to couples wanting to have a physical relationship *without* being one in spirit, mind and heart! It will never work because there is no foundation for unity on mere external levels. This is why the Orthodox will never participate in the W.C.C., because we will not sacrifice the Body and Blood of Christ for mere show of external unity when we are worlds apart doctrinally and in practice. Just as in the Church, married couples *must* be unified in mind, heart and spirit, *before* they can be successfully united physically!

This brings us back to the third key element that must be present in the marriage relationship: responsibility. We have discussed it at length already from a negative perspective, showing how lack of responsibility is a huge detriment to any society. Taking personal responsibility for oneself and one’s actions and words is becoming a lost commodity in today’s world. The reason for this is due to the fact that science, chiefly medical science and anthropology has taken it upon itself to relieve the average person of responsibility for his or her behaviour by making them “victims” of some external cause that is out of their control. There are now, supposedly, any number of “genes” present in many people that make them “susceptible” to any number of behaviours, such as alcoholism or homosexuality, etc., so that their behaviour is no longer “their fault.” They are now victims of things beyond their control and, therefore, they are absolved of all responsibility, before society in general, and God in particular!

This has even been extended to include such things as homelessness and poverty as “valid” reasons for robbery and murder. People are looked upon as “victims of their circumstances” and not to be held responsible. Many cities in the U.S., such as San Francisco, CA, refuse to obey federal immigration laws and hand over illegal aliens when they have the ability to do so. All this is done under the pretext of being compassionate (“love” not based upon *full-knowledge*!). The problem is that many of these illegal aliens are criminals with long records of antisocial behaviour, even to the point of being guilty of multiple murders of innocent citizens who happened to be in their way of what they wanted at a given moment! If there is no fear of punishment and no responsibility, from where does self-restraint come in the human heart that is *deceitful above all things and desperately wicked* in the words of Jeremiah the Prophet (17:9)?

These things must be developed in the individual by his own family; they cannot be learned anywhere else, save the Grace of God. The first Commandment given in the Holy Scriptures to Adam and Eve was to ... *be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth* ... (Gen. 1:28): this means that men and women are to marry and raise families. We are to fill the earth with people created in the Image and Likeness of God. As parents, specifically fathers, it is our responsibility to bring up our children *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord* (Eph. 6:4). The meaning of this familiar passage hinges upon the understanding of the two words, *nurture* (Gk.: παιδεια) and *admonition* (Gk.: νοουθεσια).

The former word, παιδεια, means “instruction, training” and carries with it the idea of discipline. Thus, it refers more to the physical training of the child to observe the Commandments of the Lord. This includes both intellectual and moral training. It is coupled in a second century B.C. papyrus fragment (Moulton and Milligan 1974: 474) with the word σωφροσυνη, “good judgement” (literally, “a wise mind”).

The latter word, νοουθεσια, means, literally, “to place in the νοῦς,” which refers to the training of a child in becoming aware of the presence of God in his or her life. It is more slanted toward the “rationale” behind παιδεια. If παιδεια teaches the child to be good and moral, then νοουθεσια teaches him or her *why* they need to be good and moral.

If we look at the beginning of Ephesians 6:4, we see that St. Paul prefaces this command to parents with a negative injunction: *And you*

fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath. The way in which fathers and mothers do this is by teaching their children one thing and living their own lives as if the opposite is true. When a child questions a parent as to the difference between what he or she is taught to do and what his or her parents do, the answer usually reflects the old adage: “Do as I say, not as I do!” This introduces the idea of hypocrisy to the child and breeds anger within him in the form of, “Why must I do something he will not do?” This is addressed to the fathers specifically because the father stands in the place of God in the home and, no matter what parents do in the way of education, Church-going, etc., children will take their understanding of Who God is from their relationship with their father! A stern, unloving father will cause the child to understand God as being that way as well, no matter what he learns in Church, school, etc. A doting father who fails to discipline (παιδεῖα) his children will see them fail to understand the need for repentance and salvation. This is why the father is so important in the home.

The mother is, obviously, very important in the family also, but in a subordinate level to the father. If the father represents God, the Father, to his children; their mother represents the Church to them. As is the Church’s, the mother’s is a “reflected” glory, just as the moon has no light of its own, but reflects the light of the sun even though it appears to be a light in and of itself. The mother performs the tasks delegated to her by the father, who is ultimately responsible before God for the completion of those tasks, while he is away at work supporting the family. These tasks include educating the children and handling the “day-to-day” raising of them. As I always tell my young lady friends who are in turmoil over what to do with their lives: “If God calls you to be a godly wife and mother, do not lower yourself to become the President!” Being a godly wife and mother is the most important job in the world because they shape the lives of the next generation of leadership in the world at large, and in the Church in particular.

When I worked as a regional sales manager for a company, when we hired people, especially in the sales department (there is an old joke: How can you tell when a salesman is lying? When his lips move!) where honesty and integrity are of tantamount concern, we always chose the person we believed to be the most trustworthy and honest. He or she was

out there representing our company and products and were a reflection of us and who we are. One can teach anyone product-knowledge, but we could never teach them to be honest and trustworthy. Honesty and integrity must be ingrained in a person by his or her family!

The parents raise children to be responsible, mature adults in their proper time. These responsible, mature adults, then, are ones who trust and can be trusted, and, thus love and can be loved. This begins the whole family cycle over again and produces a godly heritage and lineage of interrelated families who will be to the visible world what the Monastic is silently and unseen. The Holy Scriptures tell us that *Children are an heritage to the Lord and the fruit of the womb is His reward* (Ps. 127:3). Our children do not belong to us: they are on loan to us from God. They are His and we are but stewards of His Grace in raising them for Him. How we perform that task will be I believe, a major issue at the fearful Judgement Seat of Christ!

I have tried to outline some of the major elements in the family dynamic which all begins for everyone the moment they are born into the world. The family into which we are born is our training ground to prepare us for the task of being trainers ourselves of the children God will bestow upon us for whom to care for Him. Many families, unfortunately, enter this cycle totally unprepared for the tasks required of them, thinking that a flawed, at best, definition of “love” will see them through all the trials they will encounter. They have no idea that the Evil One is truly “out to get them” (1 Pet. 5:8) with deceits and pitfalls they never dreamed existed. If this were not sufficient enough to put the fear of God into us, then the fact that marital collapse is happening to Priests and their families whom we assume and somewhat expect to be “exempt” from these, and at an alarming rate, this should wake us up to the dire need for pre-marital counselling. This is most especially true for Orthodox couples who are entering into an Holy Sacrament before God when they marry. To do so in an unprepared and naïve manner is asking for trouble, and the Evil One will certainly see that we get it!

I want to close with an illustrative story from my past as an Evangelical Protestant Christian. I was just finished seminary and was working as a security guard at a small company. There was a young girl there named Virginia who had become a Christian fairly recently. She

spoke openly about being a Christian and going to Church. She was still smoking cigarettes and doing certain things that were in direct contrast to her claims of being a Christian. I sat down with her one day and we talked about the difference between her words and her actions. It was good because no one else was around and I had her full attention. Whenever I would ask her about her smoking and some of the other things she was doing she would say, "It's not sin because Jesus paid for it!" and other such nonsense as that. There is no understanding of the concept of conversion in much of Protestantism. I explained to her about conversion (Lk. 22:32; Ac. 3:19) and what it meant, *and* that sin was still sin, even if "Jesus paid for it." She came to understand, I believe, because she said to me at the end of our conversation through tears of repentance, "No one ever told me any of this!"

This is why this article is sub-titled "A Plea for the Necessity of Pre-Marital Counselling," because someone needs to tell us these things and the place it needs to be done is in pre-marital counselling (when it has not already been done in the home!). A trained Priest or trained counsellor needs to get involved before an Orthodox couple commits themselves to the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony which is an Eternal Sacrament by the Lord's own words in the holy Gospels (Mt. 19:3ff), and affirmed by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:10. It is not an estate into which anyone should enter lightly. As a Protestant minister, I performed the wedding of my own half-sister, at the request of my Step-mother. I took the young couple to our apartment for dinner and some pre-marital counselling one evening (to which they came very reluctantly!). After dinner I tried to point out some of the dangers of which they should be aware. Every point I made was greeted with, "Oh, that won't happen to us; we *love* each other." After a few hours of this, I made sure they wanted to go through with it, and committed them to God and His Grace. The day of the wedding came; I married them, and the marriage lasted a whole *six hours!* I have detailed the events in my book, *How Do I Choose the Right Partner for Life?* Which has a complete Romanian manuscript and I hope one day to see published here. It is available in the U.S. through Light and Life Press in Minneapolis, MN.

May God touch just one heart, or one set of hearts, with these words that I have written so that we can do something about the climbing rate of divorce in the world today, especially in the Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church.

If there is righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character.

If there is beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home.

If there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation.

When there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.

(Chinese Proverb)

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John's Gospel Quotations, Allusions, and Parables in Farewell Discourse

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Abstract:

Of all the biblical quotations and allusions in the Fourth Gospel with Messianic emphasis in the Johannine community, many are grouped together in the first 12 chapters. Chapter 19 identified Jesus with Servant of God with allusion to Pss.22 and 69. There are six specific instances in Jn. 13-17 that demonstrate how Jesus Christ fulfilled Messianic Prophecy from the O.T. The chiasmic structure of the Old Testament quotations and allusions underline the fact that inspired Scripture is the best interpreter of inspired Scripture. The Farewell Discourse (Jn. 13-17) is composed of two explicit quotations, two allusions and two Old Testament parables, applied by Jesus concerning His mission to his Disciples in this world.

The Judeo-Christian hermeneutic allows us to know Christian life by the centrality of Scripture and how the first communities interpreted the it. Belief in Jesus was strengthened by comparison of Jesus' words with the Old Testament.

Keywords: *John's Gospel, Jesus, comparison, Scripture, fulfill*

Introduction

In the Fourth Gospel we have an empirical-ideological dialogue, as a prolongation of an historical dialogue. The Farewell Discourse (Jn. 13-17), commands the link of mutual love which now unites believers. This love that binds is not, however, mainly the fruit of a legal discipline, but it is based in the unity of the Father with the Son, which is proposed as a model (*καθώς ἡμεῖς*) in Jn. 17:22. The intercession which focuses on grounding faithful believers in revelation has a purpose: that the disciples become unified (Zumstein 2007: 173). Saint John's farewell discourse is presented as a dialogue, and it deserves to be read as dialogue to be adequately understood. The evangelist recalls the event in its dialogue form rather than as a simple address to the disciples. Saint John's narrative is a thoroughly expressed dialogue, and the disciples' misunderstandings

become the platform for a pivotal discourse by Jesus, declaring the truth about the human-divine dialogue and its scandalizing character-revelation (Anderson 2000: 214). More explicitly, the reader is also told that something had been declared ahead of time in order that when it was fulfilled it would demonstrate the authenticity of Jesus having been sent by God.

1. The First Quotation in Farewell Discourse (Jn. 13:18)

Jn. 13:2 explicitly mentions the name of Judas, the prologue to the narration under consideration, vs. 18-19 and 10b-11, which belong to the scene itself, do not mention Judas' name. This is indeed the role of the next scene to designate the traitor (vs. 21-30). The phrase "I know whom I have chosen" does not mean that the Johannine Christ would not have chosen Judas. Jn. 6:70 says quite clearly: "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!"

The act by which was established the community does not extend to all the disciples, because among them is hidden a traitor (Jn. 13:18). Christ was not mistaken in the choice of its members. Reaffirming immediately His omniscience (οἶδα), Christ dispels the objection: the presence of a potential traitor to discipleship is not the expression of an error in judgment with catastrophic consequences, but a meaningful and deliberate choice (Schuchard 1992: 87). The significance of this choice is surprisingly unveiled by quoting Scripture. Thus is affirmed and confirmed the consistency of the decision with the will of God (Moloney 1998: 342).

The quoted text is Psalm 41:10:

Joh 13:18	LXX Psalm 40:10
"I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture: 'He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.' (NIV) Οὐ περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν λέγω· ἐγὼ οἶδα τίνος ἐξελεῖσθην· ἀλλ' ἵνα ἡ γραφή πληρωθῇ· ὁ τρώγων μου τὸν ἄρτον ἐτήρεν ἐν' ἐμὲ τὴν πτέρναν αὐτοῦ	Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me. (NIV) καὶ γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς εἰρήνης μου ἐφ' ὃν ἤλπισα ὁ ἐσθίων ἄρτους μου ἐμεγάλυνεν ἐν' ἐμὲ πτερινισμόν

(NIV from English text; Bible Work 6.0 electronic source from Greek text)

I submit the following remarks:

(a) The accomplishment formula that introduces the quote uses the word “fulfill” πληρωο; the verb is used in this sense by St. John in the context of the Passion: fulfillment of Scripture and “coming hour” go together (12:38; 13:18; 19:24, 36).

(b) Christ himself is The Hermeneutist Who discerns the fulfillment of Scripture (13:18; 15:25; 17:12).

(c) The quotation from Psalm 41:10 is closer to the Masoretic text than to Septuagint (LXX: 40:10).

(d) The psalmist, ailing, asks God in this Psalm to protect him against the wicked who foment his loss, including his friend, the guest, who now takes up with him (Menken 1997: 125).

Psalm 41:10 evokes the painful experience of an intimate betrayal. The act of raising the heel against someone is a mark of contempt, even a gesture of aggression. The meaning of the images related to the expression “has lifted up his heel against me” is very rich (Evans 1982: 81). One can lift the heel against someone to trample him or shake the dust from his sandals on him, or to give him a kick from behind. We can also think about the kick of a horse (see Jacob blessing from Dan cf. Gen 49:17-18) (Menken 1997: 128).

The expression “I Myself am” (ἐγώ εἰμι; Heb., אֲנִי), without predicate and related to Christ’s being lifted up, appears also in 8:28.58. It must be understood in relation to Isa 43:10 where it is related to God. The transfer of this formula of Isaiah from God to Christ means that the Johannine Christ is wholly and fully God.

Whoever adopts this fractured behavior is he with whom the Psalmist kept the closest relationship, symbolized by the common table. The terminology adopted by St. John (“eat my bread” – Ὁ τρώγων μου τὸν ἄρτον) echoes Jn. 6, in the Eucharistic-specific term: one who received the bread of life and chewed it is precisely the one who betrays the unbounded love with which he has been filled (Kostenberg 2004: 515).

Quoting Psalm 41, Christ includes the election of Judas in the economy of revelation. Thus resituated in its theological context, the betrayal by Judas is not only an integral part of the divine plan, but it is also used in reinforcing the faith of the disciples.

The fact that Christ anticipates (πρὸ τοῦ γενέσθαι) the event that will trigger the Passion and already now (ἀπ' ἄρτι), reveals it's deeper meaning, shows that His condition as being missed by the Father isn't and will not be affected by the tragedy in the making. So, when the drama is announced (ὅτι γενέσθαι), the disciples' faith should not be shaken, but instead find greater strength (Freed 1965: 104). In the Johannine perspective, the Passion of the Cross is not a place of endangerment of faith, but His authentic fulfillment.

2. First Parable (of Vineyard) in Farewell Discourse (Jn. 15:1-15)

Now after the closure of Jesus ministry, prior to His death and resurrection, He replaces the golden vine adorning the great doors of the Temple's sanctuary to become the authentic Vine and therefore also the personification of the true Israel (Arp 2008: 74). "The Father" is the farmer, but in contrast to the work of planting that is ascribed to him in Jer. 2:21 and Ps. 79:8 (LXX), he is tending the branches that are grafted into the vine. He removes the unfruitful branches and *cleans* (καθαίρει) the branches (Derickson 1996: 43) that are bearing fruit in order that they should become more fruitful.

Jn 15:1-9	LXX	
"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful".	Hosea 10:1-2 ἄμπελος εἰκληματοῦσα Ἰσραὴλ ὁ καρπὸς αὐτῆς εἰθηνῶν κατὰ τὸ πλήθος τῶν καρπῶν αὐτοῦ ἐτλήθουνεν τὰ θυσιαστήρια κατὰ τὰ ἀγαθὰ τῆς γῆς αὐτοῦ ὠκοδόμησεν στήλας	Isaiah 5:1 ὄσω δὴ τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ ὄσμα τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ τῷ ἄμπελῶνί μου ἄμπελῶν ἐγενήθη τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ ἐν κέρατι ἐν τόπῳ τῶντι
John 15:1-2 Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή καὶ ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ γεωργὸς ἐστίν. ² πᾶν κλήμα ἐν ἐμοὶ μὴ φέρον καρπὸν αἶρει αὐτό, καὶ πᾶν τὸ καρπὸν φέρον καθαίρει αὐτὸ ἵνα καρπὸν πλείονα φέρῃ.	Psalms 79:15-16 ὁ θεὸς τῶν δυνάμεων ἐτίστρεψον δὴ ἐτίβλεψον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἴδε καὶ ἐτίσκεψαι τὴν ἄμπελον ταύτην ¹⁶ καὶ καρπίσαι αὐτήν ἣν ἐφύτευσεν ἡ δεξιὰ σου καὶ ἐπὶ υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου ὃν ἐκράταίωσας σεαυτῷ	Jeremiah 2:21 ἐγὼ δὲ ἐφύτευσά σε ἄμπελον καρποφόρον τῶσαν ἀληθινήν πῶς ἐστράφης εἰς τικρίαν ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀλλοτρία

(NIV from English text; Bible Work 6.0 electronic source from Greek text)

Psalm 79:8-16 laments the ravaging of the vine that God planted and carefully tended after delivering Israel from Egypt (Kuyper 1964: 11). In vss. 15-16 Israel is personified as υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (son of man[kind]) and petitions God: “Return to us, O God Almighty! Look down from heaven and see! Watch over this vine, ¹⁶the root your right hand has planted, the son you have raised up for yourself”.

In the Vine parable Jesus says: “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing” (15:5). Bearing “much fruit” will occur only if the disciples *continue to remain* attached to Jesus as the Vine of the new Israel. Three sequences: “believing into him”, “remaining in His word”, and the “awesome intimacy” constitute the perfect discipleship in Christ (Waetjen 2005: 331).

3. Second quotation in Farewell Discourse (Jn. 15:25)

The argument of Jn. 15:21, which highlights the closeness between Jesus and his followers and which highlights their unique role within the emergence of the world's hatred, has been a consistent reflection in vss. 22-25, a sequence devoted to the theological issue of Christological revelation, which the disciples are missing. In vss. 22-24 which culminate in a quotation from Scripture (v. 25), it is shown that it is only the coming of Christ that confronts human beings with the presence of God which, hence, sets the condition for the possibility of sin. If vs.22a emphasized the dimension of speech (ἐλάλησα) in the coming of Jesus, vs. 24a favors the concept of His works (τὰ ἔργα μὴ ἐποίησα). What is, then, the relationship between the words and works of Christ in Johannine theology? The explanation is not of a cumulative nature in that Christ, after having referred to his preaching (v. 22), now would mention his actions (v. 24). In the Gospel of John, in fact, the works are not identical to the signs (σημεῖα), but describe in its entirety the work of revelation of the Son. The works of the Son (cf. 4:34; 6:29; 14:12) are the historical expression of God's action in the person of Christ, the manifestation of His Grace and Truth, which opens to human beings the possibility of a relationship with Him (Morris 1995: 412). In this sense, vs. 24a introduces a gradation in relation to vs. 22. The syntactic construction of

vs. 24c, structured by a double “and – and” (καὶ- καὶ) is ambiguous. On the one hand, the supposed object of “seeing” (εὐράκασιν) is not clearly expressed: is it an elliptical formulation which would refer to the works of Christ mentioned in 24a. To “see” and to “hate” concern two distinct objects: first, the person of Jesus, and then God’s person (Miller 2006: 131). So is an “and” (καὶ) explanatory. The meaning would be: they saw the Son and thus God. The context argues undoubtedly for this hypothesis: it is in and through the person of the Son than the sight of God is possible. In their meeting with the Christological revelation as human beings, and therefore confronted with relationship with God that they are offered in the person of Christ, by an act of irreconcilable will they stand up against God and turn away from Him. Hence, they are sinful and their sin changes into hatred by an existential passion (Brown 1970: 557).

The development of vss. 22-25 ends in a scriptural quotation (vs. 25), which provides final clarification to the analysis of the phenomenon of hatred began in vs. 18. The introductory formula for such quotations - unusually lengthy- is elliptical. Based on similar examples in St. John’s Gospel it can be supplemented as follows: “This was done that the word of the Lord be accomplished”. In St. John, explicit references to the accomplishment of Scripture are relatively few, so that they have special burden (πληρωω as the fulfillment of Scripture is used in 12:38; 13:18; 17:12; 19:24.36).

The major problem in vs. 25a lies in the introductory “but” (ἀλλὰ). While the contents of the citation which ratified the authority of Scripture reflects what was initiated in vss. 22-24, the “but” from v.25 indicates a contrast with those previous two verses (Westermann 1998: 137). The reader can only nod his head and think than such behavior is totally incomprehensible and inadmissible.

Scripture itself becomes the hermeneutic that can illuminate the inconceivable, provide it meaning. The quotation itself is taken from a Psalm (35:19 or 69:10) (Psalm 34:19 or 68:10 LXX) referring to the fate of the just persecuted wrongly.

Jn 15:25	LXX
But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: 'They hated me without reason.'	Psalm 34:19 μὴ ἐπιχαιρεῖσάν μοι οἱ ἐχθραίνοντές μοι ἀδίκως οἱ μισοῦντές με δωρεάν καὶ διακνεύοντες σφθαλμοῖς
ἀλλ' ἵνα πληρωθῇ ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ αὐτῶν γεγραμμένος ὅτι μίσησάν με δωρεάν.	Psalm 68:10 ἐτληθῆναι ὑπὲρ τὰς τρίχας τῆς κεφαλῆς μου οἱ μισοῦντές με δωρεάν ἐκραταιώθησαν οἱ ἐχθροὶ μου οἱ ἐκδιώκοντές με ἀδίκως ἃ οὐχ ἤρπασα τότε ἀπετίγγουον

(NIV from English text; Bible Work 6.0 electronic source from Greek text)

Inserted into this Johannine context, it opens the way to multiple interpretations. The hate of which Jesus is the object has no justification, since nothing in His “works” themselves open Him to such treatment. If this is so, this hate – without legitimacy – throws uncompromising light on its authors. It unmasks human beings in full inconsistency with themselves, deprived of any lucidity (Braun 1964: 225). Their sin is described in its negative sense. If the hate mongers, unmasked in the quote remain anonymous (3rd person plural, with an unstated subject), the argumentative logic leads us to give them a face (Evans 1982: 83). Because in Jn. 2:17 καταφάγεν (it devoured) of Psalm 68(69):10 was changed to the future καταφάγεταί με (it will devour) in order to adjust the quotation to the objective of the author, in same manner the aorist \square μίσησάν (they hated) of 15:25 was substituted in place of the substantive present participle, οἱ μισοῦντες (the ones hating), of Psalm 68 (69):10 in order to accommodate this context (Waetjen 2005: 357).

The reference to Scripture, given by the expression “in their law” (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ αὐτῶν), is of no doubt: they are the custodians of the Torah who are frequently designated in other terms, (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι – “the Jews”) specifically the Jewish authorities that oppose Jesus as it will be demonstrated from Jn. 16:1-4. The concept of “law” (ἵνα πληρωθῇ ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ αὐτῶν γεγραμμένος) does not describe the Pentateuch, but the Jewish Scriptures as a whole. A similar example is found in Psalm 10:34 where it is subsumed under the term “Law.” The term “their Law” has no negative overtones, even if the pronoun “them” (αὐτῶν) supposes a distance between the Johannine Christ and Jewish heritage (Barrett 1970: 217). The authority of the Jewish Scriptures is fully recognized, it is precisely the irreplaceable substance that helps us to understand the incomprehensible. The text does not stigmatize the Jewish people by a

final affirmation; he, on the contrary, invites the reader to interpret in new dimensions, its own reality (Hengel 1981: 45).

4. Second Parable (pregnant women) in Farewell Discourse (Jn. 16:19-22)

The sadness associated with the death of Christ and, thus, His absence will be overcome in the Easter declaration: the Crucified is alive. From this sadness joy flows (Braun 1964: 256).

This transformation of sorrow into joy is illustrated in the parable of the woman in childbirth (vs. 21). The image reveals a universal experience, recognizable to everyone. The pregnant woman when her labor begins is gripped by the sorrows of childbirth. But, as soon as the birth is accomplished, the joy provided by the presence of the newborn baby makes her forget the suffering she endured. It is not a return to the previous state. The life of the pregnant woman has acquired an additional dimension: she has given life to a new human being (Zumstein 2007: 147). The crux of the image lies in the fact that in order to achieve the joy of the birth, the woman in labor must experience the pain of childbirth. The last dimension does not occur without the first.

Jn 16:21	LXX Isa 13:8
A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world.	Terror will seize them, pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other, their faces aflame.
ἡ γυνή ὅταν τίκτη λύπην ἔχει, ὅτι ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα αὐτῆς· ὅταν δὲ γεννήσῃ τὸ παιδίον, οὐκέτι μνημονεύει τῆς θλίψεως διὰ τὴν χαρὰν ὅτι ἐγεννήθη ἄνθρωπος εἰς τὸν κόσμον.	καὶ παραχθήσονται οἱ τρέφεις καὶ ὠδίνες αὐτοὺς ἔξουσιν ὡς γυναικὸς πικρούσης καὶ συμφοράσουσιν ἕτερος πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον καὶ ἐκστήσονται καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν ὡς φλόξ μεταβαλοῦσιν

(NIV from English text; Bible Work 6.0 electronic source from Greek text)

The selected language to display this image is surprising: usually, concerning a parturient woman, we are not told that “she has sorrow” (λύπην) or that she remembers her “distress” (τῆς θλίψεως), but we talk about birth pangs (ὠδίνας). This shift in terminology is intended: it invites

us to read the parable of the woman in childbirth as illustrating the condition of believing (Moloney 1998: 369). This is not the future hope promised to believers – parousia – that mobilizes our attention, but the experience that indwells this life.

The parable of the woman in labor has often been interpreted through an Old Testament lens, which frequently uses the metaphor of the woman in labor pains and childbirth. There are two texts that are closest to our passage: Isa. 26:17 which evokes the expectation of divine deliverance and Isa. 66:7ff that announces the restoration of Jerusalem. In both texts, the metaphor of birth preceded by pain connotes the experience of the rescue of God's eschatological people as "a passage from sadness to happiness" (Kostenberg 2004: 587).

Based on the developments of this metaphor in Jewish apocalyptic literature, scholars interpret the pattern of the birth pangs (1 Hen. 62:4, 4; Ezra 4:42; reflected also in Mk. 13:17-23; Rev 12:2-6) as reference to the troubled times that immediately precede the end. In this case, the additional meaning consists in reading the passage as portraying going from sadness to joy with the awaiting of the parousia in the background (Morris 1995: 416). For Christians, this metaphor of sorrow turned to joy through the suffering of the Cross, was assumed for the whole of humanity by Jesus Christ. However, we will carefully observe that, on the one hand, the metaphor is quite understandable on its own, but on the other hand, that in this intertextual relationship, we have to deal with an allusion - rather a quotation or a reference- whose identification depends on the knowledge of the reader who will interpret the entire Johannine passage.

John 16:22b describes the joy that comes over the disciples after they receive this new information. In place of "you will see Me," as in Mt. 28:10, Christ the Savior affirms: "I will see you again" (*πάλιν δὲ ὄψομαι ὑμᾶς*) changing the subjects of view, from the disciples to Him. In other words, the "new view" is not the act of the disciples, but based solely on the initiative of Christ (Miller 2006: 134).

5. Zechariah's Allusion to scattered sheep in Farewell Discourse (Jn. 16:32)

The allusion to Jesus' arrest and the flight of the disciples is in accord with the Synoptic tradition. Mt. 26:31 and Mk. 14:27 cite Zech. 13:7, quoting *Smite the Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered*. The book of Zechariah has left an indelible impression on the Gospel of St. John, providing the scriptural *testimonia* adopted by the early Christian community (Waetjen 2005: 359). The structure of Zech. 9-14 equates the pierced One of Zech. 12:10 with the smitten Shepherd of Zech. 13:7-9. In the general structure of the book these two texts correspond to the Shepherd rejected by his people in Zech. 11:4-17. In the context of the Passion, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the text of Zech. 9:9 is explicitly quoted in Jn. 12:15.

In Jn. 16:32, Jesus announces the scattering of the disciples implicitly referring to Zech. 13:7 by using the word *σκορπισθήτε*.

Jn 16:32	LXX Zech 13:7
"But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.	"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me!" declares the LORD Almighty. "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones
Ἰδοὺ ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ ἐλήλυθεν ἵνα σκορπισθῆτε ἕκαστος εἰς τὰ ἴδια καὶ ἐμὲ μόνον ἀφήτε· καὶ οὐκ εἰμὶ μόνος, ὅτι ὁ πατήρ μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐστίν.	ρομφαία ἐξεγέρθητι ἐπὶ τοῖς ποιμένας μου καὶ ἐπ' ἄνδρα ποιίτην μου λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ πατάξατε τοὺς ποιμένας καὶ ἐσκοπίσατε τὰ πρόβατα καὶ ἐτάξω τὴν χεῖρά μου ἐπὶ τοὺς ποιμένας

(NIV from English text; Bible Work 6.0 electronic source from Greek text)

The word "scatter" (*διασκοπιζω*), previously used in Jn. 10:12 in the discourse on the Good Shepherd, is used in Mk. 14:27 and Mt. 26:31 in passage which announce the abandonment of Christ by the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, using the allusion on Zech. 13:7: "I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered (*διασκορπισθήσονται*)". So, the disciples' faith is not evidenced as genuine by their behavior at the onset of the Passion. The affirmation has a double meaning. On the one hand, the author has moved this well-known pattern of the synoptic

tradition into another context: the announcement of the betrayal by His disciples is no longer applicable on the way to Gethsemane (as in Mk. and Mt.), but after the last supper (Westermann 1998: 139). On the other hand, this announcement is not followed by any achievement in the narrative itself: in Jn. 18:8-9, because at the scene of the arrest, the disciples do not flee, nor abandon their Master, because they are explicitly dismissed by Him.

The scattering of the disciples is the result that everyone was to go from Jesus “unto his own” (εἰς τὰ ἴδια), each returns to the world that was his before his encounter with the Revealer. The expression has a theological significance, because the disciples abandoned their fellowship and go back to the “world”. They live apart from God, as part of this “cosmos”. The followers of Jesus claim to believe (Jn. 16:30: πιστεύομεν) but their faith doesn't stand the test of reality (Zumstein 2007: 155-156).

6. Judah befallen - Allusion at Scripture (Jn. 17:12)

John 17:12 describes the time of the historical presence of Christ as a period during which the disciples were entrusted to be “kept in the name” of Jesus, that is to say, in fidelity to the revelation. This protection has proven effective: none of them has been lost (οὐδεὶς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀπώλετο). The verb ἀπωλλύμι (lose) describes an eschatological destruction. The form ἀπώλετο (got lost) is surprising, because it presents a prediction that finds its fulfillment in 18:9. The only exception – Judas, the son of perdition – is according to Scripture (ἵνα ἡ γραφή πληρωθῆ), which is the plan of God. “Son of Perdition” is a Semitism (Barrett 1970: 221) which means a person belonging to the sphere of destruction and aimed at eschatological damnation. In St. John's Gospel, Judas is described as the instrument of Satan (13:2, 27), like a devil (6:70). The allusion of Judas as being a traitor in Jn. 13:18, uses the same formula (Brown 1970: 592).

Passion is the theme that frames the episode of the washing of the disciples' feet is an hermeneutic horizon. Compared to the first mention of treason (Jn. 13:2) which depicted the enslavement of Judas to the devil, and the second (Jn. 13:10b-11), that the traitor of salvation was yet

uncleansed, this third occurrence of the pattern clarifies the scope of this betrayal to both Christ and to the disciples.

Conclusions

Scripture is for Christianity a hermeneutic document, which allows us to understand the meaning of the terrestrial end of Jesus Christ. The oldest confession of faith known uses this reference (1 Cor. 15:4). Without denying the correctness of this scriptural practice, however, St. John the Evangelist lets understand us that Scripture *per se* is not the basis of the faith, but experience in Holy Spirit, in the unity of Christians as followers of Jesus, The Risen Christ. These six samples of intertextuality reveal the Jewish background also in the Farewell Discourse, re-interpreted by the faithful in St. John's community, at the end of first century A.D.

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The Role of Emotion in the Personal Encountering of Truth in Religion and Science

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Abstract:

The experience of otherness always involves some emotion, especially in encountering the Divine in Its disclosure, expressed in sacred texts as Revelation and theologically interpreted, or experienced in a mystical state, be it ritual celebration. It is thoroughly human for mankind to experience joy in social relationships. It is of great emotional and spiritual satisfaction to make scientific discoveries, especially those useful to humanity at large.

Relationship with God of the human person and nature brings joy and induces deep spiritual emotions in us which create a catalyst for knowledge and action.

Emotion is linked with confidence in the act of changing the dynamic world in light of the transcendent vision grasped which offers itself in order to be observed and acted upon.

A non-static ontology, allowing for relational dynamics and the compassion of people who are in communion together in their complex psychological and neurological perspectives, allows one the possibility of discovering new truth and values.

Keywords: *cognition, discovery, emotion, experience, mystery, person, religion, relation, science, truth*

Emotion is part of the human being, along with intellect and will. If the modern world of recent past generations laid an emphasis on intellect, the present post-modern world stresses emotion as the driving force of a person's life, similar to reason during the Age of Reason. Coming out of the Middle Ages, the Enlightenment installed the supremacy of rationality, yet today, only 200 years later, we unilaterally and ideologically witness the primacy of emotion. An ontological, personalist vision obviously confirms the fact of the synthesis between emotion and intellect, man being a much more complex being than just the sum of his

parts, which creates fracturing and fragmentation but also exhibits the person's unity.

Obviously, emotions are part of our life.

For the religious man, for the Christian, any of the things that have happened or will happen in human history with its unpredictability or, from God's perspective, guided turns, there is nothing more important than the ontological and personal salvaging event in his or her communion and experiential encounter with Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Irrespective of our elaborate conceptuality embedded in linguistic, mathematical, logical, technical or informational formulae, these will not reach the level required to experience Christ ontologically. It will not reach to the level and function required to carry out the cosmic phenomenon of life for man in his magnificent and overwhelming complexity. Our encounter with Christ is an ontological one; it takes place within the condition of human existence, in the cosmic creation of the Logos, *i.e.*, in God's creation through Logos (Jn. 1:1-3), when reading the Bible in prayer and meditation in the contemplation of nature in the Liturgy and the Sacraments.

For the man of science, to discover a scientific truth is an exceptional accomplishment, a peak of his professional success which involves a high degree of emotion as can be seen in visual mass media, for instance.

However, both in religion and science, what is being discovered has lain there since the beginning of time waiting to be discovered, the real and the objective. There comes a time, however, when the religious man and the scientist together have this subjective experience: the former from God, directly, as the Bible or Church Tradition speaks of the saints in whose communion the truth lies or whose communion with God is God's truth for the entire human community. The latter has the revelation of a truth of nature, of divine creation for what is generically called "fish scales" falling from Saul's eyes (Acts 9:18).

1. The person as intelligence, love, and action

Emotional intelligence which is theologically and religiously revisited and redefined at present is a rehashing of the primacy of feeling as theorized in Protestant Pietism by Schleiermacher. In this sense, D. Goleman says man's emotional sphere and feelings such as anger, happiness, love, surprise, disgust, sadness "were intelligently guided in world evolution" (Goleman 2007: 31-34). He confirms, however, the real fact that emotion as feeling is related to intelligence, not only the intelligence of the active and creative subject, but also absolute intelligent alterity, theme and order and harmonious development of the cosmic, human, and vital performance. This also involved other members of the community which imposed a rational structure by rules that coordinated action and social progress beyond the emotional side of the relationship. Moreover, the relationship with the *fascinans* and *mysterium tremendum* Divine is equally sacred fear and ecstatic love, mystical experience triggered in the human subject by the relational dimension of his being with a substantial and active Intelligence-Love that creates empathy with its effects on the brain, of the intelligence that changes man in a positive manner. This is achieved through an establishment of the sphere of the good, the beautiful and the truth with a real ontological status.

Religiously, theologically speaking, fear as emotional feeling towards Divine, communitarian, and ecclesial alterity is actually the feeling of appurtenance to the Divine and the community installed at His call and initiative which converges in love as the normal relation in the structuring of personality through empathy and real and symbolic communion. Thus, the temple as the sign of the holy relationship with the Absolute implies creative intelligence that obeys the Divine project and the being's participation in emotional commitment, in love with the real environment of sacredness that grants a genuine anthropological status.

This perspective is confirmed by G. Kaufman: that is the fact that within the tradition "and self-communication – not taken in some abstract or idealized sense, as something going up to heaven, but rather in the concrete empirical sense of God giving Himself in and through the actual historical events in which men and women live and move" (Kaufman 1995: 354). Actually this is the religious reality described in the Bible and Christian history, beyond theological and metaphysical systems that have

their contextual and cultural reason but remain abstract without the experience of real communion with God, rendered in a theological-religious language as a “cosmic person” (Kaufman 1995: 355). An hermeneutical reconstruction, however, that considers the text in the context of the rediscovery of its civilisation, the founding experience that is symbolically and religiously repeated in the future history of the celebrating and confessing community to this day and in the future; this renders consecrated metanarratives viable and credible so as to outline and structure society, permanently integrate the ones that come into the traditional sphere of life and even the dynamics of historic becoming.

The sacred text realistically renders Christ’s coming to man, down from the heavens and His polymorphic theophany which involves the personal dimension of the Divine rescue of man. This encounter includes the dimension of emotion that involves man who is totally surprised by this unexpected, unusual event. The New and Old Testaments are full of examples in this sense: Moses (Ex 3:6), Elijah (1 Kgs 19:13), St. Mary “deeply troubled” (Lk 1:29) and St. Paul (Acts 9:3). Moreover, God transmitted His divine message in the context of this encounter, be it explicitly or codified, a message that is then passed to the community that fulfils the divine will communicated to the person asked to give instruction. Hence the Exodus, the building of Solomon’s temple, the spreading of the Gospel to other nations. Obviously, these momentous events involve the relationship between two levels of existence that are able to communicate: a transmitter and a receiver that understand each other. This implies the informational, cognitive dimension of dialogue, and, lastly, especially on the human side, the sacred emotion. The experience of the encounter, that of love for the One that interpolates from the plane of transcendence is discovered as being a Person Who cares for man as a Parent, in His caring and loving nature.

These events include fundamentally deep emotional experiences and they are related to the True Being in the ontological sense of the term or to God Himself in His mystery, in theological terms. These experiences are both phenomenological and epistemological; this is because, in the realistic vision of the Being, no separation between religion, ontology, metaphysics and the inner and existential experience of the person occurs; the person is called to receive and mediate on the human level. This gap

came along with modernity, its extreme rational stream eliminating the complexity and mystery of human existence that is ontologically related to God and this gap is continued by our secularist and cultural postmodernity (Pouivet 2013: 197-198). Pouivet also asserts that there is a *connaissance révélée* with legitimate epistemology in a double sense; therefore: a) the one who believes in the revealed truth cannot be condemned because revelation would not be epistemologically justified and b) revealed truths are known for being acquired as any other process of knowledge pertaining to an epistemological field (Pouivet 2013: 99, 104). On the one hand, in this sense the moment of St. Paul's conversion to Christ and calling as an Apostle takes place, starting with his illumination on the road to Damascus when he instantly receives the truth of Christ's resurrection and universal redemption by His sacrifice on Golgotha. On the other hand, however, this is followed by a re-interpretation of his intellectually acquired understanding of Holy Scripture from a Christian perspective, Christological and Ecclesial. Therefore, there is the reception of the text of Scripture as truth through intellectual, epistemological acquisition doubled by the experience of the encounter with the Divine Person Who reveals Himself and confirms the biblical and ecclesial truth as knowledge which is "a guaranteed justified true belief" (Moreland and Craig 2003: 73). Furthermore, as Plantinga asserts, the revealed truth is a relational one, that is to God's Gospel, to the vision of Christ as expressed in Stephen's martyrdom, in the light of the Holy Spirit having His proper basic essence provided with internal and external rationality. It is a free, specific experience, a gift from God, unique and immediate (Plantinga 2000: 256-259).

This unique experience is a basis for perpetual memory and committed action in witnessing the truth received from God, developed afterwards in a coherent discourse based on the "hyper lucid consciousness of mystical visions" rooted in the "archetype of transcendental integration" (D'Aquili and Newberg 1999: 143). This calling and vision is the ground of faith and of confessing religious truth. As Swinburne underlines,

although normally more central beliefs come to be changed under the pressure of many experiences on the edge of the network, the central beliefs of some people may be so strong that they interpret all experience in the light of their existing

system of beliefs, so that the latter is virtually unalterable by experience (Swinburne 2007: 270).

These kind of experiences related in the Scripture are present in the history of the Church, especially in lives of the Saints. In this perspective classical theology with patristic roots perpetuated by Orthodox theology always witnessed a permanent balance between rationality, religious feeling, *i.e.*, sacred emotion and will, and creativity. Saint Maximus the Confessor is an illustrative example in this sense because for him the phenomenality of existence in the complexity of its manifestations – *logoi* – is articulated in the co-natural and co-eternal Logos to the Father and Holy Spirit that expresses being in Himself, and doctrine and love in the Divine Economy (Pelikan 1974: 9). In other words, reason and emotion in their distinctiveness band together and are the grounds of the subject in its voluntary, creative action. What is valid, reflected on and experienced is transferred, extrapolated at the transcendent, divine level to a larger extent as this is the ultimate, active background of human manifestations similar in nature that cannot exist without any reference to the superior level that they provoke or trigger.

The theologian D. Stăniloae claimed that, based on biblical Revelation, God is love (1 Jn. 4:8) and man discovering Him as Father, Word and Spirit, means that the core of the being is love, that the relation between Divine Persons is love which includes feelings and emotions. This divine love is extended to the world and the human community as the Church where the infinite and absolute love of God is experienced in Grace by humans. He asserts that the Trinity is the „structure of supreme love” (Stăniloae 1978: 282) and from the ontology of love based on these Three Persons, humankind experiences the communion of love with God in history and in the Church of Jesus Christ. This link between being and love is stressed today in a theological or philosophical reflection. It is called “inner and outer transcendence” by O. Davies which means the relationship between the self and otherness, thinking that these together form a

unity which is the transcendental analytic of the self as a self of compassion. Internal to that unity is the possibility of its own intensification. This shows itself as an expectation of hope, or an opening towards the possibility of an encounter with a Personal Other Who is both finite – as persons are finite – but also infinite (Davies 2001: 37).

At the same time, the personal dimension of this encounter is underlined more and more, this assertion fitting with the personalist theology of the Church Fathers, especially the Cappadocians. There is a circle, a spiral including being, love and person. The person opens in love to the other person and this loving opening is felt very intensively in the mystical experience. A famous case in the Orthodox Tradition is Saint Symeon the New Theologian who lived in the 11th century. His intense and deep spiritual experience allowed him to see the Uncreated Divine Energy as light, a cognitive and lived experience with the living God in Christ, the visible face of the Trinity in His Incarnation as Revelation, a concept *sine qua non* to Christianity (Alfeyev 2010: 264, 268). As W. Alston asserts, spiritual experiences like these “have to do with God’s purposes and intentions” (Alston 1991: 49) beyond our ability of grasping and understanding their reality. In such situations there is an experience with “cognitive significance” or a “trustworthiness of mystical perception” of God, the real basis for a paradigm of the emotion indicating and shaping the human being in relation with God (Wynn 2005: 11, 137).

2. The scientist’s emotion in his research and in the act of the contemplation of nature

Not only the religious man with his theology, but also every human person is structured in this sense, *i.e.*, to deal with the divine. The human being is related to the cosmos, to life, and there are people who have committed themselves to discover and interpret the physical world. As far as the scientist’s feeling standing before the micro and macrocosm is concerned, there are relevant instances in the history of science on the topic, with its entire ideological dimension in political totalitarian systems or democratic ones. God gave a shape to the world as He was the first Agent but also included men in this plan and process as co-creators.

Dumitru Stăniloae wrote that, beyond its spiritual, religious dimension which is intrinsic to man,

the world is also a reality capable of satisfy the needs of the human body, hence the incentive to the research of its resources to satisfy these needs, to search out other hidden resources able to satisfy new needs. But for this purpose, the world can become transparent in all that is wonderful in the eyes of God, its unseen

richness. It is He who showed His power and imagination for the purpose of finding new resources for increasing needs and their adjustment so that science and technology could be developed. All these emphasize God's great wisdom Who put in His creation so many energies and means for man's needs (Stăniloae 1987: 118-119).

Recalling the biblical background of various concerns for the sciences of man and the scientist's relation to his cultural and religious background, e.g., Einstein and Hebrew mysticism, Plank and Heisenberg and Plato's philosophy, Weizsäcker and Christian theology or Capra and Asian monism (Petraru 2002: 180-181), the faithful servant of scientific tradition lives within his sphere and context of thought and experience. This means that besides thought and experience, the scientist participates with all his being in the research of the laws of existence and, beyond the neutrality pretended by his field, he can get emotionally involved in his fascination with the universe, the system of rules and harmony, colours and the wide spectra of nature and life. Thus, he posits himself in the dimension of wonder and poetic contemplation as one faithful to the desire to know, he is conscious about "the correspondence of the mind with *what is*" (Haught 2007: 180, 181). Taking into account these considerations, F. Lenoir suggests a synthesis between the strict rigour of the sciences and the openness of man's consciousness of the sense of his existence in the world and before God by expressing the correspondence between the two sides of research: the experimental mechanical and the human. Bottom-up scientific research starts with the physical, biological world, the conscience analysed by today's neurosciences; and the top-down approach begins with the religious, theological, spiritual axiom of God's revelation, His presence with man since the beginning of time to eternity (Laurentin 2013: 73). Thus, as Godfrey-Smith claims, scientific theories refer to the pre-existing structure of the world, reflect its spirit, and may be ideologised. Scientific results are destined to serve the entire community of man in the spirit of humanism, public, communitarian good, beyond globalist, ultraliberal, utopian, populist tendencies (Godfrey-Smith 2012: 234). Moreover, as J. Hick asserts, that "critical realism" (Hick 2012: 220) is required in the sense of stating objective reality that imposes itself upon us beyond our human will and freedom: a world we discover at a certain moment, a world we seek to understand according to our subjective thinking. However, we should keep in mind

that we are not the first who came to this world, that those before us had similar concerns, that they reached valid conclusions in various fields of activity of the spirit, leaving the path open for the freedom of adjustment and interpretation, creativity with emotion and inherent and specific knowledge.

The complexity and beauty of the world invites people, as J. Eccles said, “to review the sense of wonder and mystery in our human existence” (Templeton and Herrman 1989: 191). This sense is a divine gift. God shapes the world being the first Agent, but also includes people in this plan and the human process of knowledge with the feelings and emotions that accompany multiple human adventures in the journey of life. Thus, we are given the wonderful chance and quality of being in the world God created and redeemed in Christ, the divine Logos, co-creators with God and in God with the freedom of assuming this unique and sublime condition.

In conclusion, the theologian shares his knowledge with the scientist and a double conversion is required to accept and bear the truth of the other who comes, in the first case, from God Who is revealed today in the biblical metanarrative or Christian hagiographic. This is accomplished by receiving information through signs and miracles, a theological constant in the sphere of human existence and entering into the Divine mind by rapacious reading of as much as one’s finite mind allows them, the Creator’s mind being enciphered in the cosmos, life and creation that bear the mark of the Divine.

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Jesus Christ, Holder and Giver of the Holy Spirit in Saint Athanasius the Great

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Abstract:

In the current exegesis it has been determined that Jesus, the Son of God, can be established as the subject of a causal sentence of John 3:34b and Christians who believe in Him as the recipients of the Spirit given by Him in wholeness. In the patristic literature, the one who strongly emphasized Christ in the act of giving the Spirit, meaning the one who showed Christ as Holder and Giver of the Holy Spirit while emphasizing the indissoluble link between Christ and the Holy Spirit, is St. Athanasius the Great. He also fought against the adoptionist belief of the anointing of Christ with the Holy Spirit as represented by the Aryans. Saint Athanasius' deep understanding of the co-affiliation of the Word and the Holy Spirit's action makes him treat jointly Christology and Pneumatology, and see them indissolubly linked.

Keywords: *Christ, Holy Spirit, Holder, Giver, Word, the Son of God, anointment, sealing, sanctification, man.*

In a previous study we have talked about the interior and indissoluble link between the presence and work of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the economy of salvation (Cristescu 2014). The approach in this issue, however, cannot be restricted to the limits of that study. It is therefore appropriate to extend it herein. Before we do this, however, it is necessary to make a journey into current exegesis to understand its new guidelines, especially regarding the biblical place of Jn. 3:34b.

This has led commentators to ask themselves who is the subject of the causal sentence: οὐ γὰρ ἐκ μέτρου δίδωσιν τὸ πνεῦμα? In a unanimous consensus they stated that God is the subject and the sentence shows Christ as the bearer of the Holy Spirit receiving the Holy Spirit in its inexhaustible fullness from the Father. Another possibility of understanding this is not mentioned by these commentators and, of

course, neither discussed (Schnelle 1998: 77). But also at the ancient commentators Chr. Schoettgen, J. Wettstein, and P. Billerbeck it can be found regarding Jn. 3:34, a reference to a sentence according to which the Spirit of prophecy was given to the prophets of Israel “by measure” (Wettstein 1962: 857).

Some commentators have seen this sentence as a conception widespread in early Christianity and concluded that this sentence would be the basis of the words of Jn. 3:34. The words οὐ γὰρ ἐκ μέτρου δίδωσιν τὸ πνεῦμα are understood to mean that unlike the prophets, Jesus can be characterized as One who possesses the Spirit “without measure.” For this reason in His words and deeds, He is incomparably superior to them. For such an interpretation is quoted R. Schnackenburg: “To the latter, as a preacher of God’s word as no one before him, God gives the Spirit in an undivided wholeness” (Schnackenburg 1992: 329). But in this interpretation Jesus is only bearer of the Spirit and not the subject of the causal sentence in Jn. 3:34.

Considering the text from Jn. 3:34, H. Chr. Kammler could yet prove with philological and objective arguments the interpretation already represented by Origen (Origenes 1903: 523) and St. Cyril of Alexandria (Saint Cyril of Alexandria 1886: 289A-C) as appropriate, according to which, Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, can be established as the subject of the causal sentence and Christians who believe in Him as recipients of the Spirit given by Him in wholeness. Kammler first asks himself whether the interpretation of the current commenters according to which the Evangelist John represents Jesus Christ as the bearer of the καθεξοχεν Spirit is appropriate (Kammler 1996: 170).

The understanding is determined by the fact of establishing the subject of the verb δίδωσιν and the person seen as the recipient of the Holy Spirit. Two possibilities are mentioned: if God is the subject, the dative of the object is Jesus Christ, sent by God. Then Jn. 3:34b has to be translated “God gives the Holy Spirit without measure to the one sent by Him.”

On the contrary, if Jesus Christ is the subject of the verb δίδωσιν, the dative of the object understood from the context can be seen in those who receive His confession, meaning believers. John 3:34b has to be translated as follows: “The One sent by God gives the Spirit without

measure to those who receive His confession” (Kammler 1996: 171). In order to prove that this understanding is the proper one, Kammler refers to Origen and St. Cyril of Alexandria.

He also refers to W. Thüssing who says regarding the place of Jn. 3:34: “Viewed from a purely grammatical point of view, Jesus is the subject of δίδωσιν, as He is the one of λαλεί. If accepting (n.n. statement) that Jesus Himself is the subject of the sentence provides a meaning according to the Gospel theology, it must be preferred” (Thüssing 1970: 154). Kammler brings philological arguments that contradict the thesis that Jesus was given the Holy Spirit by God in unique wholeness.

In St. John's Gospel, shows Kammler, Jesus is the One and Only, Who as preexisting Son came down from heaven being God, the One Who makes the Father accessible. All verbs in the context of vs. 34b, which clearly refer to the existence and work of the Son of God incarnate, are used in the present tense, while two verbs that have as subject the Father and Father-Son relationships are used in the aorist and perfect tenses. “The subject of the main clause of vs. 34a is Jesus Christ sent by God, Who was [is] subject of verses 34a.c. and 32a” (Kammler 1996: 173).

The wording of vs. 34, shows Kammler, receives first Christological dimensions from vss. 31a. c. and 32a, where it is said that Jesus Christ sent by God speaks the words of God.

It is observed that in vs. 34 it is not something undetermined that Jesus speaks ῥήματα τοῦ Θεοῦ. On the contrary, here it is the definite article τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ Θεοῦ; with this St. John expresses the absolute and unsurpassable character of the revelation of Christ. While about the Old Testament prophets one might say that they communicated ῥήματα τοῦ Θεοῦ about Jesus Christ, μονογενῆς Θεός it is said that in a unique and particular way He spoke ῥήματα τοῦ Θεοῦ and thus disclosed the Father (Kammler 1996: 176-177).

Thus

Jesus Christ is truly the eternally loved pre-existent Son, Who has from eternity the fullness of divine power (vs. 35); He is the Revealer of the Father sent from heaven, Who is above all ἐπάνω πάντων (vs. 31 ac, 34) He is the one Who testifies to what, as preexisting, He has seen and heard (vs. 32); He is the One and Only Who speaks the words of God and can give the Spirit in its entirety (vs. 34a,

b). In short: He is the Son, One and the same with the Father (Kammler 1996: 180).

Kammler observes that many interpreters find in the two texts, Jn. 1:32-34, concerning the Epiphany, and 3:34b, an affirmation of the fact that Jesus was to be characterized as the Son of God and the eschatological-messianic bearer of the Holy Spirit, which, unlike the Old Testament prophets, is given with the Spirit that remains over Him and only on the basis of this devotion that became part of Him, He may give the Spirit to others.

Against this interpretation Kammler shows that if we took this interpretation to its logical conclusion, it would necessarily result in the thesis that

by His receiving the Holy Spirit (that took place during His Baptism), Jesus would be established as the Son of God If this interpretation were right regarding the relevant texts, then one could hardly avoid the conclusion that they would stand diametrically opposed to the basic claims of Johannine Christology.

On the contrary, for Kammler, these basic statements of Johannine Christology “clearly and unequivocally emphasize that the Man named in the Gospel as Jesus is identical in person (*personidentisch*) with the One and Only Son of God, Who lives with His heavenly Father in eternal communion and mutual love and is actually God Himself.”

If those interpretations of the texts from St. John were accepted, shows Kammler, those texts would be in full contradiction with all pneumatological statements of the Fourth Gospel. On the contrary, “they agree in principle”. Regarding the text of Jn. 1:32-34 where the Epiphany is in view, Kammler shows that the aim of the Evangelist, essentially theological, by its inclusion is “to exclude the possibility that the Epiphany can be understood in the sense of an adoptionist Christology ‘as a Christological foundational event’” (Theobald 1990: 132).

Kammler says that

Such an understanding simply cannot be in accord with the fundamental facts of Johannine Christology: for this view understands the Epiphany as an event that has to do with Him as a personal being, so that once He receives the Holy Spirit He is what previously He was not: Messianic bearer of the Spirit, who will baptize others with the Holy Spirit. To exclude from the beginning such a misapprehension, the Evangelist lets the Baptist emphasize that the event

depicted in verse 32 was valid *only* for *him* as a *sign of recognition and identification* (Kammler 1996: 156).

Such a correct understanding of the Epiphany is found in St. John Chrysostom, who says:

So why is the day of the Baptism of the Lord called Apparition, and not the day of his birth? Because the Lord was not known by all when He was born, but when He was baptized. For the crowd did not know Him and did not know Who He was, listen to St. John the Baptist, who says: ‘*Among you stands the One you do not know*’ (Jn. 1:26) [...]. What is the reason of Christ's baptism according to John? To make Him known to the crowds [...] John said, ‘*And I knew him not.*’ If you did not know Him, how did you find out, John? ‘*The One Who sent me to baptize with water, says John, told me*’ (Jn. 1:33). What did he say? ‘*Upon the One you will see the Spirit descending like a dove, and remaining over Him, that is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit*’ (Jn. 1:33). As one can see, however, the Holy Spirit did not come down then for the first time over Christ but it came to show the One designated, to make Him known to all by His flight as if He showed him with His finger. This is why Christ came to baptism (St. John Chrysostom 2002: 36, 39, 40).

“This divine sign” shows Kammler, “allowed the Baptist, to identify Him [...] as Giver of the Holy Spirit and to proclaim Him as the pre-existent Son of God (v. 30; cf. v. 15, 34)” (Kammler 1996: 156-157). [1]

There is therefore a clear proof in the Gospel of St. John of Christ's affirmation as Holder and Giver of the Spirit, which excludes any adoptionist thinking. Adoptionism had its roots in Gnosticism. According to St. Hippolytus of Rome, in the adoptionist way that Theodotus the Tanner gave it, Jesus is depicted as an ordinary man who has received in Christ, the Divine Spirit,

Jesus is a man, who upon the Father's advice, was born by the Virgin Mary; He lived like ordinary people and became a worshiper of God; later, during His baptism in Jordan, he received Christ, who came down from heaven as a dove; this is why His powers were not activated before, until the Spirit, Whom he calls Christ came down and found Him. Some do not want Him to become God by the descent of the Spirit, but others after the resurrection of the dead (St. Hippolytus of Rome 1916: 222).

In the 3rd century Artemon presented adoptionist ideas. As can be seen in The Shepherd of Hermas, the “Son of God” is shown as God's

chosen servant in whom the Spirit of God lives and Who due to His faith is made partaker of the privileges of the Holy Spirit.

The Christology of the early Church stood strongly against such a concept, combating it. In this opposition stands its justification and permanent validity:

Classical Christology has its justification and permanent validity in that it clearly prevents classifying Jesus as a simple man among the prophets, among the religious geniuses [...] and states that by Jesus, God turned to us in a unique way that cannot be overcome, that He gave Himself without being represented by something else (Rahner 1972: 54).

In the patristic literature the one who strongly emphasized Christ in the act of the giving the Spirit, meaning the One Who shows Christ as Holder and Giver of the Holy Spirit while emphasizing the indissoluble link between Christ and the Holy Spirit is St. Athanasius the Great. He also fought against the adoptionist understanding of the anointing of Christ with the Holy Spirit represented by the Aryans, who spoke of an improvement of the Word by this anointing with the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, shows St. Athanasius, this has not been made to improve the Word,

but for our sanctification, and to share His anointing and to allow us to be told: 'Do you not know that you are the Church of God and that the Holy Spirit dwells in you?' (1 Cor. 3:16). For when the Lord washed in Jordan as a man, we washed in Him and by Him. And when He received the Holy Spirit, we would receive the Holy Spirit from Him (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 88C).

To argue further against the adoptionist concept of the Aryans, St. Athanasius makes a comparison between the anointing of Christ with the Holy Spirit and the anointing of kings, like that of David or the priests, such as Aaron (Ex. 29:7). When in the flesh and baptized in the Jordan, the Holy Spirit descending upon Him, Christ was not anointed as Aaron and David

and as all the others with oil, but different from all that were made partakers of Him, with the oil of joy, which he himself interprets as the Holy Spirit. For the prophet says, 'the Spirit of the Lord upon me, because he has anointed me' (Isa. 61:1). And the apostle said, 'As God anointed Him through the Holy Spirit' (Ac. 10:38) (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108C).

Compared to the kings of Israel such as David, Hezekiah, Josiah, and others “who became kings when anointed, not being kings before” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108C), the Savior, although He is God and “reigns over the kingdom of the Father and is the Giver of the Holy Spirit” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108C), is said to be anointed. “By saying that he is anointed as man with the Holy Spirit” He gives us, “once with the ascension and resurrection, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and familiarity with Him” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108C). Referring to the words of Jn. 17:18f “For them I sanctify Myself, for them to be sanctified in truth”, St. Athanasius shows that He is not the one who is sanctified, but “He is the Sanctifier. For He is not sanctified by another, but he sanctifies Himself, in order to be sanctified in truth. And the One who sanctifies Himself is the Lord of the sanctifying work. How does this happen? Who does this if not the One Who says: ‘I being the Word of the Father, I give myself, made man, the Holy Spirit and I sanctify Myself made man, so as through Me, the truth [And Your word is the truth]’ (Jn. 17:17), all to be sanctified” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108C). By the fact that Christ sanctifies Himself, shows Him to be Master and the active Subject of sanctification.

Aryans took as a starting point Phil. 2:9 and Ps. 44:7, saying that the Son would have a changeable nature. For when it is said that the Son “for this” was ascended and received the grace and “for this” He was anointed, He received a reward for a decision of the will. If he acted with will, it is with changing nature (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 88B). Over time the Son would have received the ascension and growth of grace as a reward for a virtuous transformation. On the contrary, shows St. Athanasius the Great, the Son is and remains the same and unchanged as the Father, because He is born from the Father and His nature is His own. Compared to this quality of Christ as Son, the lineage of people is a gift and not characteristic to their own nature (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 88B).

If said about the Son of God, the pre-existence of the Son would be canceled. The place of Phil. 2:9 does not show an improvement because it would be received as a reward: the name of “Son” and “God”: “So one cannot say that as a man He became God. But as God He became man so that we receive deification” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 92C).

For the Son is consubstantial with the Father and one cannot say that this necessitates the ascension: “When they say that ‘He raised Him’ they do not mean the raising of the Word. For He was eternal and co-equal to the Father. Ascension is of the humanity” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 96 C).

If not God, He would become God and if not a King, He would be made king, your word would have some shadow of truth. But if He is God and if the throne of His Kingdom is eternal where could God advance? Or what was the One who sat on the throne of the Father missing? (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108C).

For St. Athanasius, the ascension and anointing of the human nature of Christ is important not only for Him but for all people. Therefore he stresses that Christ ascended to heaven for us (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 97A). “From Him,” says St. Athanasius, “we started to take the anointing and the seal” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108C). This is also valid for Ps. 44:8, where by anointing with the oil of happiness it is meant the anointing with the Holy Spirit, thus referring to the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him at Jordan. In the interpretation of Ps. 44:8, St. Athanasius emphasizes two important aspects: first, that the Word as God Himself is the Giver of the Holy Spirit and that the Word is not anointed with the Holy Spirit: “And if, as the Lord himself said, the Spirit is His and He takes from Him and sends Him; no, the word as Word and wisdom is anointed by the Spirit given by Him” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108C).

The second aspect emphasized by St. Athanasius is that the anointing is of the human nature of Christ being made by Him and for all men and passing by Him to them. So the word is not anointed “but His body, which is anointed in Him and by Him as the Lord's sanctification made as to the One who became man to belong through him to everyone. For the Spirit does not say, speak of Himself, but the word is given to those worthy (Jn. 16:3)” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108C).

Christ being the same and unchanged over time is “The One Who gives and receives Him, giving Him as the Word of God and receiving Him as a man” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 112C). This way does not cancel the quality of Giver, or Recipient. As the word of God, He gives the Holy Spirit as his own and sanctifies all after the incarnation through the Holy Spirit (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 112C). Therefore the

expression of Ps. 44:8 “for that” just as in Phil. 2:9 does not mean a reward of virtue or of the acts of the Word,

but the reason of His descent to us and His anointing for us by the Holy Spirit. For he did not say ‘For this He anointed You, to become God or King, or Son or Word. For you were these before descending and you are eternal [...] but strongly because you are God and King, this is why you were anointed. Because no one can unite God with the Holy Spirit, but you, Father, we have been made from the beginning. For yours is the Spirit (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 113B).

When in front of those who claimed taking out the demons with the Holy Spirit was by Beelzebub (Mt. 12:24), Christ says that any blasphemy against the Son of the Man will be forgiven, but not blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. He considers the Holy Spirit to be above Him as regards His human nature. But in front of the disciples, “by showing them His deity and His glory, He has not appeared to be less than the Spirit, but equal to Him, giving them the Holy Spirit and saying, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’ (Jn. 20:22); and ‘I send Him’ (Jn. 16:7; 13:14)” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 116B).

In the second speech against the Aryans St. Athanasius refers to Ac. 2:36: “this Jesus, Whom you have crucified, was made both Lord and Christ.” For St. Athanasius, the Father has not made the Word a simple man, but made him a man to be made “Lord and King of all” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 176C), to rule over all, and to bless all by anointing “the Word, Lord made man by nature and as a servant, was made Lord of all and Christ, to bless all in the Spirit” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 176C).

This statement is related to the interpretation of Ps. 44:8. St. Athanasius shows here that the nature of the Word hasn’t changed when “made”. This can be understood from reading Ps. 44:8 that the Word has bestowed upon us the Spirit (Ac. 2:17):

Giving the Spirit with power is not owned by the creature or creation, but it is the gift of God. For creatures are sanctified by the Holy Spirit. But the Son is not sanctified by the Holy Spirit, but He himself gives Him to all, showing that He is no creature, but the true Son of the Father. However it is said about the One giving the Holy Spirit that He was made. For the Lord has become what we are according to His humanity. But He gives it, because He is the Word of God. For He was always and still is, and, as He is Son, so he is Lord and King of all, being in all things like the Father and having all of the Father, as He Himself said (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 184B).

Compared to the tropics so named because of their “figurative” interpretation of the Scripture which stated that the Holy Spirit stands in a relationship of origination with the Son, St. Athanasius comes in *Epistle I to Serapion* with an argument from the Scripture: “In the Holy Scriptures the Holy Spirit is not called Son, in order not to be considered brother or son of the Son, the Father not to be understood as grandparent. But the Son was called Son of the Father. And the Spirit, the Spirit of the Father” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 569B). The tropics meditate wrongly concerning the Spirit, they meditate wrongly about the Son. Because “if they meditated correctly about the Word, they would have meditated correctly about the Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and belongs to the Son and is given by the latter to His disciples and to all who believe in Him” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 569B).

St. Athanasius uses images that appear in the Scripture about the spring and river and about the light and brilliance that he used in sermons against the Aryans on the relationship of the Son with the Father and extends them to the third person. According to Jer. 2:13 the Father is called the river: “I, the river of living waters have been abandoned” and Baruch 3:12: “You have abandoned the fountain of wisdom.” According to Ps. 64:10 in relation to the river, the Son is called the river “the river of God is full of water.” According to 1 Cor. 12:13, the Holy Spirit is the water we drink, “We all drank from one Spirit.” According to 1 Cor. 10:4 if we drink the Spirit we drink Christ Himself: “All [...] drink from the spiritual rock that followed them. And the rock was Christ” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 573B – 576A).

According to 1 Jn. 1:5, the Father is called light: “God is light”. According to the Heb. 1:3 in the relationship with the light, the Son is called brightness “who is the brightness of glory and seal of His hypostasis.” That we are enlightened by the Spirit in the Son can be seen in Eph. 1:17f: “To give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, for his full knowledge and to enlighten your heart’s eyes.” We are enlightened by the Spirit; Christ is the one who shines in Him. “It was, he says, the true light that enlightens every man that comes into the world” (Jn. 1:9).

The Holy Spirit is called by St. Athanasius in several places of his writings anointing and seal (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 584C-585B), as for example in the *First epistle to Serapion*. The union of these two

titles already is in the *First speech against the Aryans* (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 109B) and is repeated in the *Third epistle to Serapion* (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 628B/C). St. Basil the Great (St. Basil the Great 1857: 185 C) and St. Gregory of Nyssa (St. Gregory of Nyssa 1863: 540 C) use the term “seal” for the Son. Likewise St. Athanasius uses the expression “seal” for the Son in the work *In illud: omnia mihi tradita sunt a Patre* (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 217B).

As regards naming the Spirit as anointing and seal, St. Athanasius brings first as evidence 1 Jn. 2:27, where the expression “His anointing teaches you all” is rendered by “His Spirit” meaning thereby the anointing. The second scripture is Isa. 61:1: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because he anointed Me.” This reference is understood in the three sermons against the Aryans as Christ’s anointing with the Holy Spirit (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 109A). Here St. Athanasius shows that the Spirit is the anointing. The third passage is Eph. 1:13: “Believing in Him you were sealed.” And again: “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit, in Whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30).

Regarding these scriptures from Ephesians, St. Athanasius shows that creatures are sealed and anointed and taught in the Spirit:

But if the Spirit is the anointing and seal in which the Word anoints and seals all, what similarity is between anointing and seal and those that are anointed and sealed? So here we can see that it is not one of all. Because the seal is not one of the sealed, or the anointing is of the anointed ones. But this is the Word that anoints and seals (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 584C-585B).

The statement that anointing and sealing are specific to the Word is based according to St. Athanasius on the Holy Scripture. According to 2 Cor. 2:15 “anointing has in itself the good fragrance of the One who anoints” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 584C-585B). “Therefore about those who communicate it is said that ‘We are the good fragrance of Christ’ (2 Cor. 2:15)” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 584C-585B).

This shows how unjust is the assertion of the modern exegete I. De la Potterie, who states that “the patristic and theological tradition considers the hypostatic union a consecration of humanity of Jesus by divinity, but this view is not found in the neo testamentary authors” (De la Potter 1958: 250). This statement is taken over by H. Mühlen in his theological works (Mühlen 1963: 181).

First, both at St. Athanasius the Great and all Eastern Fathers, the anointing and sealing specific to the Word as active subject of the humanity assumed by Him as God the Word, Himself as a man, joined hypostatically with the assumed humanity, as seen in the place cited above in *First Word against the Aryans*, 46 (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108B), referring to Jn. 17:18f. But what St. Athanasius says and with him all Eastern Fathers is that this anointing and sealing of His human nature is made by Christ as Holder and Giver of the Holy Spirit, the anointing meaning His offering as Word of the Father, to Himself made man, of the Holy Spirit, thus sanctifying Himself, in order for all of us to be sanctified in truth (Jn. 17:18f) (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 108B). This quality of Christ as Holder and Giver of the Holy Spirit is not stated by I. De la Potterie nor H. Mühlen, the Holy Spirit being seen more as an external person of the Son and the anointing with the Holy Spirit as an external work of Christ, understood by I. De la Potterie as a prophetic (De la Potterie 1958: 231) one and the anointing stated by him as taking place during Christ's ascension being seen only as a metaphor (De la Potterie 1958: 231). The Holy Spirit when spoken of by St. Matthew as Pneuma without article is seen by I. De la Potterie "as an impersonal divine force" (De la Potterie 1958: 231).

Compared to De la Potterie who states that in the New Testament there is "no doctrine of double anointment of Christ during his earthly life, the first at the Incarnation and the second one in the Jordan" (De la Potterie 1958: 231), St. Athanasius sees on scriptural basis an inextricable link between the anointing of Christ as God and Son of the Father upon him as a man, shown in the doctrine about the hypostatic union and its consequences, such as the deification of human nature in the person of Christ and His anointing as Holder and Giver of the Holy Spirit upon Him, Himself as man, a relation where Christ and the Holy Spirit are shown as active subjects in communion.

Therefore St. Athanasius links anointing and sealing showing them as specific to the Word, as proper to Christ is the Holy Spirit that he possesses and gives Him to Himself as man and through Him to all men. Thus for St. Athanasius the "seal has the form of Christ, and those who communicate are sealed, taking its shape. For the Apostle says, 'My little children, I create you once again, until Christ will take shape in you' (Gal.

4:19)” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 584C-585B), St. Athanasius concludes this truth showing the sealing action “sealed so, we become partakers of the divine nature, as St. Peter said (2 Pet. 1:4). So all creatures are participating in the Holy Word” (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 584C-585B).

According to 1 Cor. 3:16f, we all participate through the Holy Spirit in the Word: “Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?” This would be impossible if the Spirit were not God, but He belongs to creatures. Then we would be alienated from God and none of us would have any participation in God:

But now, because we are told that we are partakers of Christ and partakers of God, it is shown that the anointing and sealing of us does not have to do with the nature of those created, but with the Son, the Spirit who unites us with the Spirit that is in Him with the Father (St. Athanasius the Great 1886: 585C).

The profound connection between Christ and the Holy Spirit emphasized by St. Athanasius drew admiration of modern Western theologians. One of them, Dietrich Ritschl has rendered this link of St. Athanasius as follows:

This profound understanding of co-ownership of the action of the Word and the Holy Spirit is for Athanasius impossible to develop a separate pneumatology. Western criticism leading to an error of pneumatology in the theology of Athanasius is actually based on a misapprehension. He wanted to separate the deification from the Incarnation; Athanasius could not separate or treat separately [...] Christology and pneumatology. Athanasius cannot be taken as a basis underlying the main issues of Western theology. [...] Athanasius did not know a Christ devoid of the Spirit, meaning a Christ incarnated about Whom we can talk without the Holy Spirit and Whom we could follow in worship without Him; and vice versa, he does not know any Spirit without Christ, whom we could receive without the One who became incarnated for men (Ritschl 1964: 53-54).

Notes

[1] Unfortunately for this theologian who has the merit of being the first commentator who asserts and protects the quality of the active subject of Christ in the act of giving the Spirit, as shown by St. John the Evangelist in chapter 3:34, and who quotes from Church Fathers such as St. Cyril of Alexandria, recognizing his theological precision in the exegesis, saying “The ontological difference that exists between Jesus Christ and the prophets of the Old Testament [...] was made precisely in the theological understanding of Cyril of Alexandria” (Commentarius in Ioannis Evangelium, PG

73:289B)” it is enough to make a statement that has no argument either in Scripture or in Tradition, meaning the *filioque*.

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Principles and Practices of Diakonia in the Romanian Orthodox Church

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Abstract:

The Primitive Christian life revolved around three key activities: diakonia (social service), marturia (the profession of faith) and leitourgia (public work). Accordingly, diakonia would become primarily missionary work, *i.e.*, a salvation ministry with personal dedication, while carefully avoiding becoming social activism. Perhaps it was this concern for the mystical and celebratory dimension of the diaconate that caused the deacon to become, relatively early, the servant of the bishop and coordinator of leitourgia, the liaison between the altar (the hierarchy) and the faithful (the laos). While the essence of Christian ministry is to preach the Gospel of forgiveness, resurrection and eternal life, such preaching is valid, credible and effective only as long as it is not isolated from the Gospel of love. The Gospel of love recognises that Christians, as disciples of Christ, by their acts of compassion and sharing in the physical sufferings of others, wherever these may occur, must act to alleviate that suffering.

In this study, both from an historical and phenomenological perspective, I will try to point out that the main force behind social diakonia is the will to follow Christ or being Christ-centred. Christ advocates service to his disciples, practises humility with dignity and obeys the Father to his own death, being moved by love. This love must become the driving force of any form of diakonia, which is why Eastern theology has favoured the term philanthropy, as the present paper will show.

Keywords: *Diakonia, Romanian Orthodox Church, Philanthropy, Spirituality, Parish Life*

1. Defining the context of the issues at stake: Church and State

The emergence of the modern Romanian state founded on the secular Enlightenment principles led, in the latter half of the 19th century, to a “split” in the social sphere, which originally had been rooted in Christian principles and values. In the traditional Romanian society, prior to 1859, the year of the unification of the Romanian principalities of

Moldavia and Walachia, the Latin identity and the Christian faith, in Byzantine form, constituted the foundational values that shaped community relations. The two identity values were fostered and disseminated by two categories of intellectuals: teachers and clergy. Following the unification of 1859 and its formation, the modern Romanian state did not abolish these ideals, rather it embraced a series of roles based on secular values, encapsulated in the well-known motto of the French Revolution: liberty, equality, fraternity.

Whereas the Orthodox religious ideal is salvation, *theosis*, deification, the secular ideal is the good citizen, respecting the laws and organising principles of the state that focus on legal constraints and human rights. Under these circumstances, the Romanian society accepted the perpetuation of a typical concept of Byzantine culture, *symphonia*, which advocated the cooperation of civil authority with the ecclesiastical authority and was applied in tacit fashion in the Romanian territories after the Fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453. In other words, the Church continued to play a role, albeit a less important one, in social life, in conjunction with the State. The State deprived the Church of its assets by transferring them to secular ownership, diminished its social influence by confiscating its right to draft official civil status documents and eroded its credibility by upholding lay Enlightenment ideals that replaced the traditional Christian values. A tacit partnership ensued from 1863 to 1947, as the State supported some Church initiatives as moral reparation for confiscated assets. With the advent of Communism, the situation worsened: a ban was imposed on the social involvement of the Church, which was condemned to quasi-clandestine ministry, including places of worship, being forced to be highly cautious in its public discourse in order to avoid violating communist values or contributing to the “indoctrination” of the “emancipated” people. Church history, literature, poetry, art and social diakonia could be pursued individually, using private resources, cautiously and at great risk, in order not to offend the pride of the “perfect” communist state and to elude the censorship of the secret policy apparatus. The message of the Church was the Gospel ideal of salvation, which depended not only on faith in God and belief in Jesus Christ, but also on social service, the mystery of the brother, which the Church found it could no longer put into practice.

2. Christ – the purpose of social diakonia

The foremost concern of any member of the Church must be the salvation of the soul: “For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for My sake and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?” (Mk. 8:35-37). Saint John Chrysostom (350-407) recommends: “Therefore, let us not seek wealth; let us not avoid poverty. However, above all these, let each one take care of his soul and make it pursue the economy of the future life as well as cause it to depart from the present life to the next.” (St. John Chrysostom 2005: 49). Man was created by God to work for his own salvation, in whose absence earthly life is devoid of value and meaning. As highlighted by the biblical quote, salvation involves more than faith in “the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (Mt. 16:16): it entails the act of human engagement and solidarity of service in favour of all those in need, as if they were Christ Himself.

The main inertia of social diakonia is therefore the will to follow Christ or being Christ-centred. Christ advocates service to his disciples, practises humility with dignity and obeys the Father to his own death, being moved by love. This love must become the driving force of any form of diakonia, which is why Eastern theology has favoured the term philanthropy (For a detailed linguistic and historic analysis of the term “philanthropy”, see Constantelos 1968: 3 *et seq.*), as the present paper will show.

3. Christ is a “Philanthropist”

Jesus Christ, “Lord” and “Saviour” is the “Philanthropist” and “Deacon” *par excellence* [“The genuine nature of diakonia has been revealed to humankind through the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God. Christ voluntarily assumes the role of the first servant, thereby overturning human values and showing the way to true greatness, which is not the way of the rulers of this world, but the way of the Cross, which He Himself suffers.”] (Meimaris 2012: 205-206). The Church teaches that subjective, individual salvation is a process and pursuit that unfolds gradually and is accomplished by the joint work

of God and man, *i.e.*, the divine grace of God is necessary, while man must contribute with his faith and good works. Hence, the prerequisites of subjective salvation in Orthodox theology are Divine Grace, and man's faith and good works. Two fundamental scriptural texts underpin this perspective: "If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5) and "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? (...) In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, 'You have faith; I have deeds. Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.' You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? (...) his [Abraham's] faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. (...) As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead" (Jas 2:14, 17-20, 22, 26).

Christ's coming marked the advent of an unmediated relationship between God and mankind, built on love and empathy. He came into the world to bring the simplicity of existence, mutual recognition, spiritual and physical well-being and the return of all those saved to a life in communion with their Creator. The healings performed by Christ were the result of forgiveness out of love, which He first offered to the souls of those cured. "Forgiveness breaks the chain of causality, for the one who forgives you takes upon himself the consequences of your actions. Therefore, forgiveness always involves a sacrifice" (Hammarskjöld 2001: 197). Christ's life was indeed the ultimate sacrifice as He took upon himself the sins of the world and healed human nature from within, bringing it to *theosis*.

Man generally views well-being in his earthly life primarily in terms of material welfare and spiritual wellness. For a theologian, well-being is primarily a state of mind. It begins with a certain discipline that one must acquire and exercise: first one must prioritize his wishes, and then set a transcendent ideal to follow steadfastly. Finally, as one aims for this ideal, one must relate to one's fellows, because spiritual progress is only achieved in relating to other people. In the Eastern Christian experience, beginning with the example of the first Christian congregations (Ac. 2), welfare cannot be accepted as an individual

fulfilment but as communal achievement wherein man disciplines his own desires and selflessness and is aware of sacrifice. Providing help to one's neighbour becomes, for the practising Christian, his contribution to the establishment of God's kingdom on earth as a visible and attainable ideal. Giving presupposes forgiveness, *i.e.*, a positive spiritual state.

4. Philanthropy – the founding principle of diakonia

Theological discourse has retained the term “philanthropy” to refer to the attitude of a Christian towards his/her neighbour in dealing with welfare, poverty and illness. The extent of one's commitment to one's neighbour is determined by the fraternity of all in God and not by social standing, ethnicity or religion, which is why the term “social assistance” has not been used in this context throughout the centuries. Social services constitute a more recent formula, one might say a secular one, requiring professionalism in addressing social issues and targeting groups rather than the inner motivation of social action [Theologians define secularism as meaning the irreconcilable separation between the religious and the lay society. According to Alexander Schmemmann, secularism is the medieval reaction of society against Christian clericalism, its most conspicuous form in the life of man being the lack of public and private prayer. Other theologians have described secularism as the individualistic behaviour of man, as from a belief that death does not exist or as if God does not exist (*etsi deus non daretur*), to use Hugo Grotius' formula] (For a classical discussion of this issue from a Christian Orthodox perspective, cf. Schmemmann 1973: 98-99 and 117 *et seq.* and Popa 2000: 21). One could argue that the term is less generous and so philanthropy takes precedence. Philanthropy means care for the person seen as an eternal being of immeasurable value and not simply the concern for man's social needs or for making the social system be more equitable for man as a physical entity. Philanthropy may be and has been practised in all the political and social systems as it is a question of vocation and of person-to-person communication even under atheistic ruling.

Christianity seeks to harmonise man's material and spiritual needs, which it has always viewed as complementary realities. The early Christian Church viewed philanthropy as a duty of eternal life, rich in moral meanings. The first types of organisations through which the

Church worked to protect the disadvantaged were the church communities with communal property, church communities organised colleges, corporations and associations, as allowed by law, and communities without communal property which had a network of religious societies and social care establishments. The oldest such religious societies grouped widows, virgins and deaconesses, whose goal was to help people in need. From the earliest times, the social care institutions set up by the Church have helped poor families, orphaned or abandoned children and the elderly sick, providing care, schooling and religious education, aiming for their moral and social integration without notoriety.

During the first Christian centuries, under the patronage of Roman Emperors, from Constantine the Great (4th cent. AD) to Justinian (6th cent. AD), several types of institutions providing social care were established, including nursing homes for abandoned children up to seven years old, orphanages, shelters for young women raised by poor families or in orphanages, asylums for elderly and deprived widows and groups of Christian volunteers who provided medical services to the sick. During the Middle Ages, monasteries preserved, further organised and promoted the spiritual model that combines spiritual contemplation and practical action for the benefit of the disadvantaged.

5. Philanthropy and its theological reasoning

For Christians, philanthropy means following Christ and is a natural duty. God “loves people” (Plămădeală 1986: 14) and man is called to imitate God’s “philanthropy”. The word “philanthropy” is derived from the Greek “*philanthropos*”, “*philia*” meaning “love”, “affection”, while “*anthropos*” means “mankind”. Love for people was initially attributed to God alone. Dimitrios Constantelos noted that in the first three Christian centuries the term “*agape*” would ordinarily describe human relations. From the third century onwards, the term “philanthropy” would increasingly be used to refer to humans equally. The same author argues that “philanthropic” would tend to replace “agape”, and later to designate charitable actions. In substituting “*agape*”, “philanthropy” also acquired its content. Philanthropy is, by definition, an attribute of Christ (Constantelos 1968: 67 *et seq.*).

The shift from *agape* to philanthropy was the result of the clarification of the doctrine of man in keeping with the new Christian theology of the early centuries. Philanthropy gained ground as a concrete and expanded expression of *agape*. Man's historical condition became a Christian focus. The Saviour constantly referred to God's concrete acts of love towards people: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because he has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free" (Lk. 4:18). In each man we love Christ for the sake of Christ and by loving our neighbour we love the body of Christ – the Church. Philanthropy emerges then as a condition of man's existence as a person in the Church. It is the condition for any relationship with Christ: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (Jn. 13:35).

Church philanthropy as organised care for the disadvantaged is motivated by the fact that the person was created in the image of God. The theological base of social assistance resides in man's dignity, which is not highlighted by science: it is the work of a rational and personal reality, i.e. a partner in the universal rationality from which it derives. Human dignity also derives from God's personal care, as He was willing to become flesh and restore man to his original communion. Equally important is man's Trinitarian makeup, namely his communal dimension, as a person seeking and capable of relating (Moltmann 1991: 111).

Christian communion is founded on love (I Jn. 4:8). Love for one another has nothing to do with *eros*, as it encourages empathy and sharing in the suffering of one's neighbour. Love is the second greatest biblical commandment. The neighbour is designated in the Christian scripture as an unknown person who becomes the Samaritan from whom no sympathy could have been expected for the one who "fell into the hands of robbers" (Lk. 10:29ff). The notion of neighbour does not exclude one's relatives or friends, but also includes strangers, one's enemies and those who have left this world:

And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous (Mt. 5:40–45).

According to the same text, one's obligations toward one's neighbour include respect for life and forbidding murder, the protection of one's neighbour's health and property against greed, the responsibility for one's neighbour's freedom, the responsibility for his or her salvation, empathising with the joys and trials of one's neighbour, regardless of their social standing and also irrespective of the way they actually react to Christian love.

The first step that the loving religious community makes is to urge all its members to join in solidarity with those in need and provide instant aid, *i.e.*, *diakonia*. There follows a process of aid and education aimed at overcoming deprivation and providing health care, shelter and food. There will also be religion-themed visits, activities that foster better knowledge of faith, inclusion in social life and raising the awareness of an individual's responsibility.

6. Man, the aim of God's philanthropy

Since the moment of the creation of the visible and the invisible world, God has manifested love (philanthropy) for the creature endowed with the gift of speaking, as He chose man as *the crown of His creation*, bestowing upon him glory and special dignity, and affording him the opportunity to progress towards deification. Love for people is defined in the New Testament by several terms, the most common being *agape*, which in time appears to have been replaced by philanthropy, while another term is *diakonia*. The latter carries several meanings: serving at the table: "Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honour. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him." (Jn. 12:2), serving the community: "He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer." (Ac. 19:22) The term *charity* occurs in the same context, defining love for one's neighbour (Vicovan 2001: 22). Yet however we may seek to define love, its foundation is the Incarnation of Christ, as He is its origin, His whole life being service out of love: "For even the Son of Man

did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” (Mk. 10:45).

An example of the Saviour’s service in the world is the depiction of His washing of the disciples’ feet, during the Last Supper, when Christ the Saviour offers a perfect proof of humility and love, foreshadowing His ultimate sacrifice for humanity: “When He had finished washing their feet, He put on his clothes and returned to His place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” He asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you” (Jn. 13:12-15).

A further facet of ministry is highlighted in the Parable of the last judgment, as the Lord Christ proclaims service as the sole criterion for salvation: “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’” (Mt 25:40-45). Philanthropy becomes a condition for our existence within the Church (Plămădeală 1986: 5).

While the essence of Christian ministry is to preach the Gospel of forgiveness, resurrection and eternal life, such preaching is valid, credible and effective only as long as it is not isolated from the Gospel of love, which recognises that Christians as disciples of Christ, by their acts of compassion and sharing in the physical sufferings of others, wherever these may occur, must act to alleviate that suffering (Bria 1996: 128).

7. Apostolic preaching and liturgical diakonia

An examination of the *Acts of the Apostles* might lead to the conclusion that preaching and teaching took priority over the serving at tables (Ritter 2012: 153). This was the necessitating the appointment of deacons. Still, other texts indicate that no one was saved merely by serving at the table: deacons were highly educated, needed to be worthy to teach and be good communicators. The Archdeacon Stephen did not die because he served or did not serve at tables, but rather because he proclaimed the word of God steadfastly and competently, relying on his knowledge of the Scriptures.

Essentially, early Christian life revolved around three key activities: *diakonia* (social service), *marturia* (the profession of faith) and *leitourgia* (public work) (Ritter 2012: 154). Accordingly, diakonia would become primarily missionary work; for as long as it lacks the philanthropic purpose and does not lead to conversion, it fails as simple social activism. Perhaps it was this concern for the mystical and celebratory dimension of the diaconate that caused the deacon to become, relatively early, the servant of the bishop and coordinator of *leitourgia*, the liaison between the altar (the *hierarchy*) and the faithful (the *laos*). He brought to the altar the spirit of the believers' faith and could also teach them. Consequently, the liturgical status of deacon would emerge early, as deacons would fill very important administrative or educational roles (e.g. deacon Athanasius the Great, at the First Ecumenical Council).

8. Diakonia within the Church and outside the Church

Early Christians argued that outside the Church there is and there can be no salvation (*extra ecclesiam nulla salus* - "outside the Church there is no salvation" and "He can no longer have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his mother" [*Cugetări duhovnicești* 2009: 17] according to St. Cyprian of Carthage). Should diakonia therefore be confined only to the Church and its members? If yes, what are the criteria and arguments to exclude the others? What do we mean by Church? One potential answer is provided by Theodoros Meimaris: "The world is invited to become the Church and to participate in the new way of life." (Meimaris 2012: 207).

The Church is viewed on the one hand as “the mystical body of Christ” and on the other as “the people of God”, as God and man attempt to grow nearer and know each other. As an institution that is organised by and assembles all people, the Church calls everyone to salvation. Its identity and authority are encapsulated by four fundamental characteristics, *i.e.*, being One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. As such, the Church shows care for every Christian, through constant and continuous prayer to God, through social service, through the communion created among people around the Christ risen from the dead. A Christian receives sanctifying grace through the Sacraments. The Church includes the Christian throughout the services celebrated at the key junctures of his life, helping him to reach the stature of Christ.

Liturgical worship affirms the unity and solidarity of the body and soul and their shared calling to glorify God. That is why the Church is mindful of the inability of human nature in general, not only of its individual members, it heals spiritual sufferings and attends to wherever and whoever it is called to serve, following the example of the good Samaritan (Lk. 10: 30-35).

9. Philanthropy in the early Church or about planned social services

In the first three Christian centuries, many Christians participating in the Eucharistic assembly used to bring as offerings not only the bread and wine required for the religious service, but also their wealth which they were willing to share with others (Ac. 2:41ff). After the persecution ended, beginning with the 4th century AD, such acts of diaconal ministry to one’s neighbour, linked to the celebration of the Eucharist, became organised and constant.

Beginning at *Pentecost*, as the divine philanthropy became the philanthropy of the Church, the inspiration was agape, the pattern that the Church would use for several centuries. Alms were gathered and pursued through offerings, collections and agape meals, deacons and deaconesses distributing charity, with the help of the other members of the community. The recipients of alms, *i.e.*, of the Church’s social services, included widows, orphans, the disabled, the elderly, prisoners, the sick, the poor and strangers, and any such donation was preceded by the celebration of the Eucharist (Vizitiu 2002: 97). The gifts brought to the church were

meant to reduce the gap between surplus and shortage and thereby restore the original equality. As the Apostle Paul taught “your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality” (2 Cor. 8:14).

10. Models of diakonia in the undivided Church: St. Basil the Great (330-379) and St. John Chrysostom (350-407)

With the dawn of Christianity, religious undercurrents would shape social assistance. From the earliest days of its work, the church cared for “the daily bread” and for the other needs of those in distress, always rooted in the evangelical command of love for one’s neighbour. Consequently, helping the poor and the oppressed became a primary concern of the Church, in parallel to the preaching of the message of the Gospel. Indeed, social service, pursued in individual and communal fashion in the early stages of the ecclesial organisation, would subsequently crystallise into social institutions or establishments.

In the history of Christian theology, the 4th century is remembered as the *golden century*, *i.e.*, the era of the most prolific theological research, which laid the foundations of theological discourse and doctrines of the Trinity of the Divinity and the relationship between the human and divine nature in the Person of Jesus Christ. From the social standpoint, it was a time when most people lived on the edge of subsistence, due to military campaigns, tribal wars, political instability, harsh living conditions and subsistence agriculture which was completely dependent on slave labour. Amid these circumstances, some would accumulate huge amounts of debt, inevitably leading even to expropriation, a situation that the rich would abuse to increase their wealth substantially.

The foremost representatives of the Church during the *golden century*, considering their philanthropic activities, were Sts. Basil the Great and John Chrysostom. St. Basil the Great discovered his own *call* to ministry through philanthropy. As bishop, he boosted philanthropic actions: on the one hand, by instructing his *chorepiscopi* (rural bishops) to set up permanent philanthropic establishments and by calling on political leaders to demonstrate love and generosity towards those in need, and on the other hand, by establishing a philanthropic network popularly known

as the *Basiliad* [St Gregory the Theologian considered the Basiliad to be a “wonder of the world in Asia Minor”] (Müller 2012: 161 and 179), in the vicinity of Caesarea, which included a church, hospitals, poorhouse, care homes for the elderly, shelters for foreigners and orphanages. Judging by the scale of the activity, by the number of buildings and institutions, Caesarea was said to genuinely be a different city compared to the old one (Vicovan 2001: 83).

St. Basil’s charitable work was driven by spiritual engagement, both from those who made donations and the beneficiaries; he regarded suffering, disease and infirmities as consequences of sin, hence the need to tackle such problems primarily by religious, rather than solely medical means. The Cappadocian bishop granted a secondary role to doctors, as they could only treat certain diseases and could not make the patient aware of the meaning of life and suffering and lead to a change in his life. Although the model and inspiration was Christ, St. Basil stressed that the sick, strangers, the destitute and the marginalised needed to be treated as if they were Christ, provided that they were themselves “striving towards life according to His Gospel” (Müller 2012: 180).

Another prominent figure of the *golden age* was St. John Chrysostom. Referring to the calling of philanthropy and charity, he states:

For I am now ashamed of speaking of almsgiving, because that having often spoken on this subject, I have effected nothing worth the exhortation. For some increase indeed has there been, but not so much as I wished. For I see you sowing, but not with a liberal hand. Wherefore I fear too lest ye also ‘reap sparingly’. For in proof that we do sow sparingly, let us inquire, if it seem good, which are more numerous in the city, poor or rich; and which they, who are neither poor nor rich, but have a middle place. As, for instance, a tenth part is of rich, and a tenth of the poor that have nothing at all, and the rest of the middle sort. Let us distribute then among the poor the whole multitude of the city, and you will see the disgrace how great it is. For the very rich indeed are but few, but those that come next to them are many; again, the poor are much fewer than these. Nevertheless, although there are so many that are able to feed the hungry, many go to sleep in their hunger, not because those that have are not able with ease to succour them, but because of their great barbarity and inhumanity. For if both the wealthy, and those next to them, were to distribute among themselves to those who are in need of bread and raiment, scarcely would one poor person fall to the share of fifty men or even an hundred. Yet nevertheless, though in such great abundance of persons to assist them, they are wailing every day. And that

you may learn the inhumanity of the others, when the church is possessed of a revenue of one of the lowest among the wealthy, and not of the very rich, consider how many widows it succours every day, how many virgins; for indeed the list of them has already reached unto the number of three thousand. Together with these, she succours them that dwell in the prison, the sick in the caravanserai, the healthy, those that are absent from their home, those that are maimed in their bodies, those that wait upon the altar; and with respect to food and raiment, them that casually come every day; and her substance is in no respect diminished. So that, if ten men only were thus willing to spend there would be no poor (St. John Chrysostom 2007: 407).

St. John also advocated direct charity, without the intervention of the Church or other institutions, rooted in the concept of the family as a “little church” (Bara 2012: 196).

Saint John uses a compelling argument when he states that the rich have an obligation to help the poor because their wealth is from God, as He granted it to them for this particular purpose: to use their gift of making money and use it for the benefit of those who lack this talent, thus building a society based on solidarity (Bara 2012: 202)

11. Social diakonia in the Romanian Orthodox Church

The precepts of patristic philanthropy embodied by Sts Basil the Great and John Chrysostom now serve as examples for all Christendom. The two hierarchs exchanged letters with the bishops Bretanion and Teotim I of Tomis (present-day Constanța in Romania) on topics in theology, canonical organization and church life.

The Church in the territory of present-day Romania has apostolic origins [In addition to archaeological evidence and historical records, the book of the Acts shows that the Apostle Andrew preached the Gospel in Scythia Minor, on the coast of Pontus Euxinus, presently known as the Black Sea, where he established Christian communities. Andrew is known in Romania as the “Apostle to the Romanians”] and has adapted over time to the political organisation of the Principalities (Moldavia, Wallachia and Transylvania), which were under the Byzantine influence and jurisdiction from the first Christian centuries until 1885. Its Byzantine model of organisation also impacted social assistance (Pătuleanu 2012: 227). The earliest instances of diakonia in this area were, as in all other countries, the simple charitable and philanthropic actions benefiting those

in need and driven by purely religious motives. Such activities of the Church aimed to provide occasional help to the marginalised and often powerless. One could speak of a Christian spirit of human solidarity from the very beginning, a spirit that underpinned the development of the modern social welfare services (Pătuleanu 2012: 227-235). What is now Romania has always been a paradoxical socio-economic and geo-cultural space: a poor people in a rich country. As the riches of the land drew many even before the pre-Christian era, the history of the land has been shaped by migrations, wars, earthquakes, floods, fires, prolonged droughts, whose victims have often been innocent people. Poverty has never been truly eradicated in the area, for various reasons, yet various institutions have constantly worked to aid the poor, the suffering, the orphans, and the elderly by establishing shelters, homes for strangers, orphanages, hospices, and hospitals. The Orthodox Church was the originator of these activities, which were then taken over by the modern state (Vicovan 2012: 271 *et seq.*).

Since 1990, the Romanian Orthodox Church has been able to resume its traditional social activities, which have expanded and diversified, benefiting an increasingly higher number of people and addressing social issues caused by the socio-economic transformations undergone by the country. The post-revolutionary era in Romania brought to the fore a reality which neither theologians nor sociologists had foreseen: the strength and vitality of Christianity which, despite having been subject to oppression during decades of Communism, had not surrendered but instead, paradoxically had strengthened in its intensity and work. The need for social diakonia increased in the context of freedom and democracy, as the free-market thought has caused ever-increasing gaps between the wealthy class (also linked to high-level corruption) and the destitute class (still influenced by the socialist view that they are entitled to receive, without giving anything in return). In this respect, a contemporary theologian argues that “the need for social assistance in Romania after 1990 is imposed not only by the evangelical commandments, but also by the secularism in religious life and by the immorality of political and social life.” (Pătuleanu 2012: 216).

The Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church decided, on the 27th of May 1997, to establish a network of social assistance facilities as

part of ecclesiastical bodies and to approve the Internal Regulations of the social services system of the Romanian Orthodox Church, which instituted an organised and coherent framework for the social-charitable activity. In agreement with the objectives of the social services network [Fulfilling the mission of the Church. Providing primary social and medical specialized services, community support, establishing social and medical care centres, designing and implementing social practices, partnerships with professional public services, raising awareness about social issues etc. (Art. 3).], the Church-based infrastructure was overhauled to meet the requirements of specialised activities and the diverse actions in the religious community, which range from simple after-school activities to providing welfare programs and projects benefitting the elderly, aid for disadvantaged people, youth courses and camps on topics such as of ecology, Bible study, family violence and many more.

The Statutes governing the organisation and functioning of the Romanian Orthodox Church adopted, in 2008, specifically refers to the importance of social work as part of religious assistance which is the responsibility of the Church. Article 137 states:

The social services system of the Romanian Orthodox Church is integrated and operated by its administrative-organisational units or by social and philanthropic organisations under its patronage. The Romanian Orthodox Church, through its component units at central and local level (parish, monastery, deanery, vicariate, diocese, metropolitanate and patriarchate) and through the non-governmental organisations overseen by competent ecclesiastical authorities, provides social services accredited in accordance with the legislation in force.

The document outlines the existing organisational structure of the Church institutions and non-governmental organisations that perform social services, which must be accredited to be in line with the general national and European policies in the field.

The document also sets out the Church-run training system for social services professionals, which includes the Social Theology departments of the Faculties of Theology. The target groups are “individuals, groups and communities in distress, without discrimination” (art. 137, para. 4). The document also provides for partnerships between ecclesiastical component units and the “specialised agencies of the state, local government or non-governmental organizations” (para. 5).

12. The principles of lay social services and Church's social diakonia

The formal social work of the Church in contemporary Romania, an imperative and a vocation at one and the same time, is carried out in line with the legislation in force, yet there is also social diakonia advocated and practiced at the parish or community level or privately by individuals. According to Adrian Lemeni, the general principles underlying the Romanian social security system include: social solidarity, subsidiarity, universality, respect for human dignity, individual approach, partnership, engagement of beneficiaries, transparency, non-discrimination, effectiveness, efficiency, respect for the right to self-determination, awareness, the unique nature of the right to social services, proximity, complementary and integrated approach, competition and competitiveness, equality of opportunity, privacy, fairness, focus, the right to choose the social services provider (Lemeni 2012: 413-414). Given the partnership between the State and the Church, these principles are observed in inter-institutional relations, as the State acknowledges that all denominations in Romania play a role in the spiritual, educational, social, charitable, cultural and social areas and act as factors of social peace. The Romanian Orthodox Church, representing 86% of the population, carries out a complex diakonia, ranging from accredited social services to pastoral philanthropy.

The Romanian Patriarchate includes 14,574 places of worship, of which: 63 cathedrals (24 diocesan cathedrals and 23 cathedral churches); 10,580 parish churches, 2,072 filial churches, 433 monastic churches, 208 cemetery church, 12 charity churches, 48 isolated chapels, 298 parish chapels, 171 cemetery chapels, 74 parish chapels, 182 monastic chapels, 403 churches and chapels in state-run institutions (89 in military and home affairs establishments, 37 in prisons, 166 in hospitals, 50 in schools, 61 in social care establishments). The component units of the Church (Patriarchate, dioceses, deaneries, monasteries, hermitages) employ 841 management staff and 12,855 ordained persons, few of which are deacons.

These figures indicate that the Romanian Orthodox Church has developed a complex organisational system which, at least theoretically, has the financial and human resources to address social problems. Each parish can support a social centre, each member of the hierarchy or an

ordinary Christian can become a “deacon” [There is an initiative to establish educational and philanthropic centres in every parish, with a potentially important role in providing the kind of education that the children cannot receive at home (as there are countless children whose parents now work abroad) or in school, as the quality of education has declined due to underfunding. The activity of such centres could focus on: religious education in the spirit of Christian tolerance, general knowledge, rules of conduct and civic education, development of communication skills, health education and hygiene, environmental education, art education, information technology, physical education, after-school programs] (Pestroiu 2012: 399 *et seq.*). The 14,574 places of worship can become strategic hubs in coordinating social work and serve as starting points for the implementation of a national strategy for the philanthropy of the Church. The secular organizations under the spiritual patronage of the church present a large-scale volunteering potential [Notable national organization include the Romanian Association of Christian Orthodox Students (Asociația Studenților Creștin-Ortodocși România, ASCOR), the League of Christian Orthodox Youth of Romania (Liga Tinerilor Creștini Ortodocși Români, LTCOR), the National Society of Romanian Orthodox Women (Societatea Națională a Femeilor Ortodoxe Române, SNFOR), the Christian Medical Association “Cristiana” and the “PRO-VITA” Association for the born and the unborn children, alongside a multitude of NGOs active in dioceses, deaneries and parishes]. What is needed is for the energy of volunteers to be supported by coherent funding programs that could come from central and local civil authorities. As regards the specialised institutions, the Romanian Orthodox Church has created, established or organised, since 1990, a system of establishments providing social services, which currently consists of 785 institutions. At the level of the organisational components of the Church (diocesan centres, deaneries and parishes), the map of social-charitable establishments includes: 158 soup kitchens and bakeries, 51 pharmacies and clinics providing medical services, 85 day care centres for children, 14 day care centres for the elderly, 44 residential centres, 29 community centres, 35 family centres, 38 social kindergartens and after-school centres, 14 shelters, 94 information, counselling and resource centres, 1 adult education institution, 21 emergency centres (for the homeless,

victims of domestic violence and of human trafficking), 21 campsites, 63 educational centres and 117 other institutions with various profiles. The dioceses are currently implementing 576 social projects and programs, of which 36 with external funding, 53 publicly funded, 430 self-funded and 57 with shared funding. The establishments and the social programs and projects provided services to 87,474 beneficiaries as follows: 39,006 children in social centres of the Church, mainly children from families lacking resources or whose parents work abroad; 3,892 people with disabilities, speech, vision and hearing impaired, with drug or other types of addiction, people living with HIV/AIDS; 22,429 elderly people in Church-run welfare establishments, social temporary and homeless shelters, lonely, homebound, abandoned elderly with serious health problems; 19,857 unemployed persons, adults in distress, victims of trafficking, victims of domestic violence, released prisoners, victims of natural disasters; 2,290 from other categories (Data from the 2014 Report of the Romanian Patriarchy, to be published. Further information is available at www.patriarhia.ro).

Philanthropy carried out by the Church is not always reflected in figures and statistics, but also in the active presence in every place and region of the country, through constant action aimed at educating and raising awareness of the need to engage every member of the community in social work. Nevertheless, the Church is able to establish, fund and offer patronage to social services institutions, private NGOs that are subject to accreditation by the state and are open to free market competition. Such institutions drawing on the century-old experience of the Church can offer an opportunity to expand the social services from a Christian Orthodox perspective, while adhering to the requirements of European legislation.

The European Union, whose regulations already apply in the new member states, has ruled that social assistance is an independent concept manifested in the activity of governmental and local institutions, aimed at promoting justice and social solidarity. Such institutions are served by professionals known as social workers and care staff. Yet the risk of such an approach is the emergence of class of professionals in social services but lacking spiritual motivation, albeit highly capable in terms of knowledge and application of social theory and the legislation in the field,

able to secure funding from various national and foreign institutions. Effectiveness in philanthropy is often sought by circumventing the concept of love of neighbour, by treating persons as figures.

The purpose of this approach is not the salvation of souls, but to report an ever greater number of meals or donations offered to the poor and sick. It is in this area that the religious system can complement and enrich social service through spiritual and emotional focus and empathy.

13. Diakonia and parish life

From the perspective of the Church, philanthropy is most effectively applied in the parish, the community of helpers and the helped, where everyone has the chance to act as the instrument of God's benevolent love. Through ordination and appointment to the parish, the Priest stands out as a model of philanthropy, alongside the family. The new conditions of liberty reinstated the ability of church institutions to help the poor, no longer leaving this duty to private organizations or public persons who may use them to boost their own image. Philanthropy is, in a sense, the heart of the parish, expressed in liturgical glorification and mutual help. It should not be devolved to an NGO that may provide sporadic and inconsistent help, limited to providing food twice a year or during election campaigns. We would not want to exclude from such work the public social institutions, such as military garrisons, prisons, hospitals, university campuses, where Priests are appointed as chaplains. They are not appointed to a parish, but they organise the community as a parish, *i.e.*, a community of those who believe, share in the liturgy and are joined by common demands of the spiritual life. As noted by a prominent Romanian theologian, "The social mission of the Church in schools, the army, hospitals and prisons needs dedication, love, compassion, fortitude. The Priest's ministry is not an invention of the Church or society, it is a divine commandment." (Plămădeală 1996: 205).

The solution, or rather the basic structure, is still the parish, where the priest is called to be a philanthropist, a model of love of one's neighbour, the first servant and carer of the poor and the sick, the one who in giving bread or medicine also offers teaching, as Jesus Christ did. Only He, the Son of God, being in the world, promised "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the

one who does the will of my Father Who is in heaven... Therefore (...) whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Mt 7:21 and 5:19).

Conclusions

Social diakonia in the Orthodox world is rooted in the liturgy [“Christian diakonia has its source in the eucharistic and liturgical life of the church”] (Limouris 1994: 70). In pastoral work, we have found greater sensitivity and availability among the practicing members of the Christian communities than among non-practicing Christians. The liturgical life of the community sustains and strengthens the members’ interest to serve those in need, and vice versa. As the current Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church once remarked “Liturgy without philanthropy quickly turns into self-centred ritual, just as philanthropy without Liturgy becomes propaganda for publicity, self-glorification rather than praise of the Love of the Holy Trinity.” (Daniel, Metropolitan of Moldavia and Bukovina, Foreword to the doctoral thesis of Fr. Mihai Vizitiu, 2012: 5 apud Pătuleanu 2012: 215).

No less important is the role of responsibility in the salvation of one’s own soul as an impetus for fostering and pursuing actions with a diaconal focus. The doctrine on the Judgment (both private and universal) plays a quite important role in living *vita evangelica*. The Christian feels at once blessed with hope and filled with responsibility to act in order to aid the other; indeed, the other may become, on one’s departure from this life, the accuser or the advocate before the Judge Christ, depending on the empathy and generosity demonstrated during life, as shown in chapters 24 and 25 of the Gospel of St. Matthew. The Christian is convinced that his life does not end with his own passing out of this world, hence the concern to prepare for the after-life, by focusing on the quality of his or her relationship with God and with others, in whom one sees Christ’s image.

In the Romanian Orthodox Church social diakonia is mostly unseen, unknown and unpublicised. Although society experiences profound transformations in the field of communication, as information crosses the Earth in seconds, Orthodoxy preserves the ideal of mystery, the secret of good works and humility regarding engagement in social work, in

keeping with the Gospel principles: “But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing” (Mt. 6:3) or “So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’” (Lk. 17:10).

The Fathers of the Church argued that the authenticity and validity of the Orthodox faith are dependent on genuine diakonia, which is driven by love. Diakonia accordingly becomes a confession of apostolic faith, applied to everyday life through the participation in the liturgical life, whose goal is the salvation of the soul of every believer. Orthodoxy does not encourage prosperity, wealth, enrichment, nor does it idealise poverty and social suffering. There is no amoral wealth, and there is no talk about wealth or poverty *per se*, but instead there are references to rich people and poor people. Assets are valid and contribute to salvation depending on how they are utilised, as long as they become instruments of salvation or of abuse in relation to God’s justice.

The Romanian Orthodox Church has an integrated social services system, with institutions accredited in accordance with European legislation, yet its focus is not limited to training and employing “professionals”. Rather, it strives to engage all the members of the Church in the act of charity. The phenomenon of secularisation has become unexpectedly pervasive in the Romanian post-revolutionary society, the immediate effects being the increasingly lay turn of society, the banishing of religious references to the private space, the marginalisation of the Church as a public institution and the discrediting of the Christian message. Social stratification, the fragmentation of social services and the channelling of public funds based on political criteria have caused social assistance in Romania to have a double reality: there is a visible and publicised face, with funding from the state budget, coordinated by a directorate in each county (Directorate General for Social Assistance and Child Protection) and another, unseen face, underfinanced, sporadically supported by the absolutely selfless generosity of parish communities and private individuals, oftentimes lacking an institutional set-up and being known only to the two main stakeholders: the benefactor and the beneficiary. Recent years have seen efforts to build State-Church partnerships, whereby the State provides the logistics and funding from

the public budget, while the Church contributes local organisations, its own logistics and volunteering potential that it can leverage and mobilise.

Beyond these realities, the agenda of the Romanian Orthodox Church is not fully aligned with the political and social agenda of the secular and secularised state, let alone that of the European Union, which makes the future of social diakonia in the Church become an act of “madness” of faith, nevertheless an act of courage to confess the perennial values of the Gospel.

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Between Asuras and *Māyā*: The Hindu Aetiology of Suffering¹

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Abstract:

Hinduism is a generic term for a variety of schools, sects and practices that share common sources, beliefs, and concepts, but also encompasses divergent doctrines and ways of life in a single religious, philosophical, and social system. Inside this multifaceted tradition different and contradictory religious aetiologies of human suffering can be identified. In the Vedas, suffering is caused by an external agent (i.e. a personal activity of gods or asuras, which men can appease by rituals, rites, sacrifices, amulets, etc.) or as a godly punishment for man's desires and anger. In Upanishads, suffering is related to karma, dharma, and samsara, as a natural consequence of the transgressions from this life or from past ones; the individual is the cause of his own suffering, by his karma. Seen in the wider picture of Vedanta, suffering has no substance, being part of the illusory empirical world that deserves no attention; assumed or self-provoked, empirical suffering suggests detachment from this world and turns attention to the reality of Brahman. We consider that these aetiologies of suffering influence Hindus' attitudes towards bodily pain and medical action, which can range from accepting treatment and pain relief as gifts from the gods (obvious especially in traditional medicine's mix of religion and magic) to ascetics' total indifference to bodily suffering.

Keywords: *Hinduism, suffering, karma, Upanishads*

Suffering is a universal experience which all religions of the world try to explain, make sense of it and try to remove it. The third largest

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religion of the world, with about 900 million practitioners, Hinduism, developed an atypical approach to the problem of suffering. This took place because a variety of schools, sects and practices that share common sources, beliefs, and concepts, but also encompasses divergent doctrines and ways of life in a single religious, philosophical, and social system are included under the generic “umbrella” term of Hinduism. As Bowker notes, “It is the essence of Hinduism that there are many different ways of looking at a single object, none of which will give the whole view, but each of which is entirely valid in its own right” (Bowker 1970: 193). Considering these, we can characterize Hinduism in three words: diversity, complexity and dynamism. Consequently, the Hindu approach to suffering is also diverse, complex and dynamic (Anantharaman 2001: 100). As Gächer underlines,

For characteristic of the Hindu is the capacity to hold many, often contradictory, beliefs in his head, either simultaneously or as circumstances require. Neither myths, nor philosophies, nor theologies, can free one from the actual experience of evil and suffering, but they do offer rational and emotional help to cope with life (Gächer 1998: 402).

In the present article we are trying to delineate the main Hindu perspectives on the aetiology of suffering, with special reference to illness and morbidity as physical sufferings. Purposely we took no notice of the natural causes of diseases and ailments, but to the spiritual ones, starting with demonic intervention in human life and ending with the lack of reality attributed to suffering in Advaita Vedānta.

1. The “supernatural” sources of suffering

Ancient Indian medicine considered two categories of causes of morbidity: the natural and the metaphysical. In the first category are the accidents, the worms and insects, the life regime, etc. In the second category are divine agency, demonic forces, the breach of taboos, sorcery, witchcraft, evil eye, etc. (Crawford 2003: 32).

We are interested here in the first two sources of illness from the second category: the divine agency and the demonic forces. But first we consider it necessary to state some specifics. Primarily, in Hinduism gods are ambivalent and it “is difficult to understand how far they themselves embody evil and play the part of evil”, as Gächer notices. “They can be

good and bad, harmless and evil. The one thing that distinguishes the gods from humans and demons is their power, certainly not their benevolence” Secondly, there is no clear line between gods and demons. They are similar in their nature, but different in their function. In their fight with one another, as the same author underlines, “it is not always clear which of the two possible bearers of evil is or will play the role of the evil one” (Gächer 1998: 398, 400-401). Thirdly, gods on a particular spiritual path can be demons on another. The gods which personify evil and destruction also represent the opposite qualities (Daniélou 1985: 140; Bowker 1970: 205-206). These things being said, we will insist unilaterally on the demonic origin of suffering, being more accustomed to attribute evil to the demonic forces, than to divine beings.

1.1. The demonic aetiology of illness

Among the Aryans, disease was considered a manifestation of the will or power of supernatural beings, as a punishment for human sins or transgressions, or just as a mere caprice of a malevolent deity or evil spirit (Jayne 1925: 145). The deities who were made responsible for this were the asuras, a category of gods that included *daityas* (titans, demons and giants, descendants of Diti and Kaśyapa, who warred against the gods) (Dowson 2000: 79), *dānavas* (giants descendants from Danu and Kaśyapa) (Dowson 2000: 83) and other descendants of Kaśyapa, but it did not include the *rākṣasas*, descendants of Pulastya, although asuras and *rākṣasas* are frequently used interchangeably to designate the demonic forces.

The word *asura*, a term with Indo-Iranian origin, and its variants *asurya* and *āsura* occurs 88 times in *Ṛgveda*, 71 times in the singular number, four times in dual, ten times in plural, three times as a first member of a compound, and three times as feminine *asuryā* (Bhargava 1983: 119). It occurs nineteen times as an abstract noun and the abstract form *asuratva*, 24 times. As mentioned in *Brāhmaṇas* and in the *Purāṇas*, the word derives from *asu*, meaning “breath” or “spirit”, with the suffix *ra*. Another etymology is derived from the root *as*, which means „to be”, denoting that asuras are forms of existence. Rāmāyaṇa derives it from “to wine” (*surā*), the sons of Diti who refused it (*a-sura*)

(1.45.). Another root might be *as*, meaning „to frighten away”, representing the fearful aspect of deities (Daniélou 1985: 140). As Bhargava considers, “[...] the original meaning of the word appears to have been ‘spirited’ or ‘courageous’ from which developed the allied idea of ‘powerful’ or ‘mighty’”. With the meaning ‘powerful’ or ‘mighty’ it was initially used as an adjective, applied to the prominent deities (Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, etc.), kings, priests or inanimate objects. As an abstract noun it meant “mightiness,” as Ahura of the Zoroastrians (Bhargava 1983: 119-120; cf. Dowson 2000: 28).

Concerning their genealogy, the asuras are also Prajāpati’s offspring, being the older brothers of the gods (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.3.1.). *Taittirīya* and *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* state that the asuras sprang to existence from the breath (*asu*) of Prajāpati or from his abdomen. The *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* states that Prajāpati created “gods, men, fathers, *gandharvas*, and *apsarases*” from water. Asuras, *rākṣasas* (Night-Wanderers), and *piśācas* sprang from drops which were spilt. The same Prajāpatic genealogy is present in Manu, in *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (where they are born from Brahma’s groin), and *Vāyu Purāṇa*, where they are also sons of Prajāpati’s groin. *Danavas* and *daityas*, considered in the category of asuras, were the sons of Kasyapa-prajāpati, born from two of his wives: Danu and Ditī. Elsewhere they are the offspring of the thirteen daughters of Dakṣa (Daniélou 1985: 140-143; Dowson 2000: 29; Williams 2003: 66).

The later mythology depicts asuras as originally good, but for reasons at which can only be guessed (see for few suppositions Daniélou 1985: 141), towards the end of the Ṛgvedic period, asura’s meaning radically changed. It became a noun with the meaning of demon (e.g. “godless asuras”) or enemy of gods. The gods ceased to be called *asura*. Indra, Agni and Sūrya are *asurahan* (asura-slayers) (Bhargava 1983: 122-123).

Now *asura* is applied to demons like Vṛitra, Vala, Arbuda, Śuṣṇa and Śambara (Bhargava 1983: 124-124). As John Dowson considers, “In this sense a different derivation has been found for it: the source is no longer *asu*, ‘breath’, but the initial *a* is taken as the negative prefix, and *a-sura* signifies ‘not a god’” (Dowson 2000: 29). Those spirits opposed to

gods where “non-gods” (*a-suras*). The asuras, *atrin* (eater) *daityas*, *dānavas*, *rākṣasas* (injurer), and *piśācas* (monsters), living in their mansions or fortresses in heavens or underworld, became the eternal enemies of the gods, a perspective that hallmarked the folk belief of the people of India (Jayne 1925: 147-148).

Originally just, good, charitable, possessors of many virtues, they became proud, vain, envious, cruel, seekers of pleasure, etc., characteristics that lead to a conflict with the gods, who remained bearers of their original attributes (Daniélou 1985: 141, 308). The theomachy is complicated and the *Brāhmaṇas* record many contests between good (gods) and evil (asuras), but in the end, the asuras ruled the world until gods, guided by Viṣṇu, killed them and captured the world (Dowson 2000: 28-29; Williams 2003: 22-24; Jones and Ryan 2007: 123; Daniélou 1985: 140). The “fallen” gods assimilated gradually the gods, demons, spirits, and ghosts of the non-Vedic populations of the Indian Subcontinent, reaching to name all the opponents of the Aryan gods, all the genii, and other descendants of the non-Aryan sage Kaśyapa (Daniélou 1985: 141-142). As Williams underlines, “Hindu theomachy never completely solved the problems involved in personifying the *devas* and the asuras and gave mixed messages about the sources of evil and the purposes for good” (Williams 2003: 22-24).

Consequently, as Patrick Olivelle suggests in a note of his translation, calling asuras demons is misleading because they are divine beings, children of the same creator (*The Early Upaniṣads* 1989: 489). Therefore, the difference between gods (*sura*) and anti-gods (*a-sura*) is not one of kind, but of degree. They represent “all that draws man away from the path of realization. They are those powerful instincts and attachments which keep man within the power of Natura (*prakṛti*), prevent his progress and obscure his intellect” (Daniélou 1985: 139).

With reference to morbidity, *Atharvaveda* mentions asuras as ones who trammel the cure, but not always as the main source of disease (Zysc 1985: 77). There are two texts that clearly express this attribute:

The Asuras dig low down this great wound-healer; that is the remedy of flux; that has made the disease (*rōga*) disappear (2.3.3.)

The Asuras dug thee in; the gods cast thee up again, a remedy for the *vāṭikṛita* likewise a remedy for what is bruised.” (6.109.3).

Assuredly, asuras' names are frequently mentioned in relation with disease and morbidity.

Among the “supernatural” maleficent sources of illness and suffering, there are also *pretas* or *peys*, malevolent restless ghosts of sinful people. These vengeful, demanding, angry and greedy spirits provoke “bad” deaths and bring misfortune and suffering. They can possess women and children, making them crazy; can bring headaches, fits, intestinal pain, fever, etc. (Gächer 1998: 399).

The asuras and evil spirits are not the only evil sources of disease and suffering. The curse of an enemy, the evil eye, magic practices, etc. are also means to produce suffering (Jayne 1925: 152).

The demonic aetiology made healing a religious ritual, centred on identifying and removing the demon, frequently invoking gods. Hymns of *Atharvaveda*, which abound in healing charms and spells, are a classic example for the Aryan perception of disease and healing, anchored in magico-religious ideology (Crawford 2003: 32). There are gods with different competencies in healing different diseases, as the *Aśvins*, *Indra* or *Rudra* and his sons, but we cannot identify a doctor-god in the Vedas (Filliozat 1964: 86-91).

1.2. The “divine” source of suffering

The Vedas personify the forces and aspects of nature as gods. The consequence is that suffering can be understood as a result of a personal activity of the gods. Therefore, an appropriate relationship with particular deities can bring no or lesser suffering (Bowker 1970: 200). It seems that most frequently this appropriate relationship with gods is made through the proper ritual. Alongside their role to protect humans, the Vedic deities are also very “sensitive”, being easily offended if people do not pay them proper attention in ritual. As a consequence, they become angry and express their dissatisfaction by punishing with misfortune and suffering. As Gächer pins down,

This suffering can serve as a way of restraining and reprimanding those bad people who make mistakes when performing religious rituals or go against the rules of purity or the social rules of family and caste; they will be afflicted with disaster, especially in the form of a contagious illness, epidemics, etc. Not only individuals, but entire groups may be thus afflicted, if, for example, the yearly festivals are not held at the right time or are performed in a sloppy way. The

deities need not always be benevolent, let alone friendly. Their veneration is not just an intermezzo, something that can be left out. Thus disaster, suffering and evil can be controlled (Gächer 1998: 400).

The vengeful gods are especially feminine deities, who bring and spread blindness, smallpox, chicken pox, cholera, plague, and measles. Dyāmavva and Durgavva, for example, are responsible for epidemics. Yellamma is responsible for eczema, swellings, ulcers, mumps, venereal diseases, and leprosy (Gächer 1998: 400).

Another dimension of morbidity sent by gods is the punitive one for moral transgressions. As Crawford and Filliozat note,

[...] a link is early formed between behaviour ('sin') and disease conceived as the punitive visitation of the gods (Crawford 2003: 32).

All the causes of disorders are, therefore, related or allied; they belong to the domain of the sin, to the violation of the norm and they affect, for most of the time, the healthy being like an impurity wiped off on him. That is why efforts are often made to treat them by the ritual of wiping off or of effacement as also by means of prayers (Filliozat 1964: 97).

The most representative god who sanctions sins through disease is Varuṇa, a god with healing attributes among Vedic deities, the most prominent "gracious healer", but who also punishes with disease the violators of moral law, as the guardian of *ṛita* (*Atharvaveda* IV.16.7) (Crawford 2003: 32; Filliozat 1964: 91ff). Bowker assimilates the Vedic god Varuṇa with later karma, as a personified form of it. Varuṇa's duty, as a foundation and guarantee of natural and moral law, was to punish human transgressions. When the concept of karma became more popular, the importance of Varuṇa fell away and ended up as the god of death. What Varuṇa's attributes suggest is that

the gods could not be made an excuse for irresponsible behaviour or for the occurrence of suffering. Furthermore, the existence of suffering was not seen as being brought to bear on men entirely from the outside; it was recognised that much evil and suffering is a result of internal desire and anger, or in other words, of men who have lost control of themselves [...] (Bowker 1970: 201-202).

There are also gods such as Śiva, Rudra, and Kālī, who personify the evil and the destructive tendencies in the universe. Śiva represents "the tendency of all things to move towards dissolution and destruction." This attribute of Śiva is personified in Bhairava, "the terrible destroyer".

“He is the one who wields the thunderbolt, he is armed with innumerable arrows, and he drives in his chariot like a destroying wind razing the earth as he goes”. Another destructive aspect of Śiva is goddess Kālī, the power of time (Bowker 1970: 204). There is also Nirṛti (or Alakṣmī), the goddess representing misery, disease and death, who was born from the ocean and was the embodiment of all sins. She is the sister of Lakṣmī, the wife of Sin (Adharma), daughter-in-law of Varuṇa and mother of evil-omens (*nairṛta*), demons (*rākṣasas*), Death (Mr̥tyu), Fear (Bhaya) and Terror (Mahābhaya) (Daniélou 1985: 121, 138). According to *Mahābhārata*, “She is the embodiment of all sins... the one who has dominion over gambling, women, sleep, poverty, disease and all other kinds of trouble. She is the wife of lawlessness (*adharmā*), the son of Varuṇa. Her sons are death, fear and terror” (*Mahābhārata* 1.67.52, apud Bowker 1970: 203-204).

The gods which personify suffering represent the view that apparent suffering is not evil or afflictive in advance. Basically, suffering is a part of the universe of being and it may be very beneficial as a foundation for better things or as a source of dissatisfaction with the worldly objects, which leads to *mokṣa*. Although the *sarṁsāra* belief is not very well developed in the Vedas, such concepts as *karma* and *māyā* are already present. And suffering is ultimately assimilated with the illusion of this world (Bowker 1970: 207), as we will discuss hereinafter.

2. The Upaniṣadic aetiology of suffering

Upaniṣads are Vedānta, the end or consumption of the Vedas, and emerged as a reaction to the Vedic ritualism. We can consider that Upaniṣads express in a completely abstract discourse the same idea as the Vedas do in mythological terms. It is a more profound interpretation of the same truth that the Vedas depicted. This development of perspective applies also to the view of suffering (Bowker 1970: 209). In the teachings of Upaniṣads, two explanations of the origin of suffering arise: *karma* and *māyā*.

2.1. The karmic origin of suffering

We do not intend to speculate here on multiple theorisations about karma and its evolution, especially considering that it is already a familiar concept to the Western world. In short, “the actions or karmas of individuals in their current births shape their lives in their next births” (Jones and Ryan 2007: 228). Applying this to suffering, the suffering experienced now is the natural consequence of bad personal deeds, words or thoughts from past lives or from the current life. Thus suffering is a kind of “self-acquired” state. This perspective connects morality with suffering. The individual acquires, in this existence or in the future ones, the fruits of his own deeds and thoughts (Bowker 1970: 215).

As Gächer notes, „It is the fault neither of God, of people, nor of a demon; it is all part of the eternal cycle of life, death, and rebirth; everything will eventually be rectified and equalized. Such an understanding of karma partly explains the spread of evil and the guilt of the individual [...]” (Gächer 1998: 400; cf. Clooney 1989: 532). Understanding that present suffering is the consequence of personal previous actions excludes randomization of happiness and suffering in this world and gives a satisfying answer to questions like “why me?” or “is it fair?”. Additionally, experiencing current suffering has a purifying effect over future lives. It satisfies the debt and consumes the negative energy (Whitman 2007: 609). Consequently, assuming suffering in this life gives hope for better rebirths.

The moral quality of facts is given by reporting them to *dharma*, the eternal law. The Dharma-śāstra texts mention lists of sins and transgressions, next to their consequences over present or future existences (Glücklich 2003: 56). It concludes that suffering is a consequence of transgressing *dharma*. It does not work as a punishment, but as a consequence. It does not imply a judge-god, but it does not exclude the existence of gods. According to Clooney,

The activity of Brahman is, in fact, unchanging and everywhere uniform, but this uniform causality interacts differently with each set of local conditions, each person as constituted by his or her deeds; it is like the rain that falls uniformly on all things and with the same potency, but interacting with each so that each may grow according to its own inner capacity. Brahman “catagorises” the deeds of each into good and bad results (Clooney 1989: 532).

The doctrine of karma was integrated in the Ayurveda, the Hindu traditional medical system. According to *Caraka Saṁhitā*,

Deeds in previous lives are known as ‘Daiva’ (divine) and those from the present life as ‘Paurusha’ (pertaining to man). These in an unbalanced manner cause diseases and, similarly, divert them. (Sharirasthana, II.44).

And

Past karmas are called ‘Daiva’ (karmas) and are observed as the cause of diseases in time. There is no great karma (action) in which the fruit is not enjoyed (reaped). Diseases caused by *karmaja* (karmic factors) neutralise therapeutic measures and subside only on the destruction of deeds (which have caused them). (Sharirasthana I.116-117).

As Crawford comments,

This means that if somebody has a congenital infirmity due to bad karma in a previous incarnation (*daiva*), and if he does something medically good about it (*puruṣakara*), he can offset the severity of the ailment, and have a happy life. The opposite is also true. The formula, therefore, for happiness is to match noble *karman* performed in a previous life (*daiva*) with noble *karman* (*puruṣakara*) done here and now. On the other hand, if both actions are base, unhappiness will follow in kind; and if both are moderate, life will be moderate (Crawford 2003:51).

The conclusion is that Ayurvedic medicine slightly changes the significance of karma, moving the accent from an implacable destiny acquired in past lives to the role of actual deeds and intensions. Accordingly, keeping healthy and seeking medical help became legitimate (Crawford 2003: 52-54).

2.2. Suffering in the context of *māyā*

Beyond the karmic aetiology, which stipulates that everything that exists in this world, from demons to gods, suffers because lives inside *saṁsāra*, suffering was included and interpreted in the wider philosophical context of Vedānta. Based on Upaniṣads, the Vedāntine philosophy speculates that the universe is basically undifferentiated. It is perceived as a diverse reality because of illusion (*māyā*) and ignorance (*avidyā*). The main cause of rebirths and suffering is *avidyā*, the ignorance of the true nature of the reality and of the existence in the inauthentic, unreal and painful universe, where the true Self is tied down

and imprisoned (Klostermaier 1984: 246). The real Self (ātman) is pure existence (*sat*), pure consciousness (*cit*), and pure bliss (*ānanda*), immortal and free, but man cannot see this because of his ignorance. He is not the real subject of suffering. As *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* states, the real Self „is ungraspable, for he cannot be grasped. He is undecaying, for he is not subject to decay. He has nothing clinging to him, for he does not cling to anything. He is not bound; yet he neither trembles in fear nor suffers injury.” (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 4.5.15)

In this context, “suffering belongs to the world of *māyā* and *sarṁsāra*, and that by seeing the relativity of suffering an individual is able to progress on the way of *mokṣa*” Accordingly, although the experience of suffering is real enough, it is only relative. It differs from the ultimate reality and results from the attachment to the transient, phenomenal world. Only to the man who lives in illusion, “the world [...] appears to consist of conflicting opposites, of evil and good, of pain and pleasure, of suffering and healing” (Bowker 1970: 197, 212-214).

In essence, what creates suffering is attachment to this illusory world, understood as over involvement in this delusory life. Ignorance makes humans unable to see the true reality and their true Self. Unable to see reality, they attach to the illusion of the world. This attachment caters rebirth, perpetuating the “terrible bondage” of *sarṁsāra*. Rebirth means abiding suffering (Whitman 2007: 609).

But once man removes the veil of *māyā* and *avidyā* through knowledge, he attains *mokṣa*, liberation from *sarṁsāra* and implicitly from suffering. As *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* points out, „When he perceives this immense, all-pervading self, as bodiless within bodies, as stable within unstable beings a wise man ceases to grieve.” (2:22) Also *Mahābhārata*:

In this respect it is said that they (who) are possessed of wisdom, beholding that the world of life is overwhelmed with sorrow both bodily and mentally, and with happiness that is sure to end in misery, never suffer themselves to be stupefied... Happiness and misery, prosperity and adversity, gain and loss, death and life, in their turn, wait upon all creatures. For this reason the wise man of tranquil self would neither be elated with joy nor be depressed with sorrow (apud Bowker 1970: 224).

Until reaching this state of knowledge (*jñāna*), suffering will always be present in human life. As Whitman notices, “Hindu tradition holds that

as we are in human form on earth, we are bound by the laws of our world and will experience physical pain. Pain is truly felt in our current physical bodies; it is not illusory in the sense of not really being felt. But while the body may be in pain, the Self or soul is not affected or harmed.” (Whitman 2007: 609)

Quoting Bowker,

The attitudes toward suffering and the proper response to it in this setting are: first, that suffering is brought about primarily through a mistaken view of the self and the world. Our common perception of self is dualistic. We therefore attribute a level of reality to the self as we know it that in its true nature it does not have. Suffering affects only the false self; therefore, we are ultimately mistaken when we attribute reality to the nature of suffering. As long as we perpetuate the false sense of self, then we will suffer, or appear to suffer. Of course, to the false self this suffering is real enough, and it is here that some positive good can be seen in suffering. Suffering can produce the thought that what we take as the real self is in fact not the real self, and can thus occasion movement toward insight into the real self. In this sense, suffering can act as a catalyst to precipitate the movement toward spiritual liberation (Taylor and Watson 1989: 18).

The consequence of this logic is that suffering, be it physical, psychological or existential, is not real. The immediate attitude is to cultivate greater and greater detachment, as opposed to the attachment which creates suffering. As *Bhagavadgītā* later stated,

You grieve for those beyond grief, and you speak words of insight; but learned men do not grieve for the dead or the living. Never have I not existed, nor you, nor these kings; and never in the future shall we cease to exist (2.11-12).

Contacts with matter make us feel heat and cold, pleasure and pain. Arjuna, you must learn to endure fleeting things—they come and go! When these cannot torment a man, when suffering and joy are equal for him and he has courage, he is fit for immortality (2.14).

The immediate conclusion is that the proper response to suffering is detachment and seeing it in a relative perspective. This is not an intellectual manifesto or an escapist attitude, but a proper standpoint in the light of knowledge of the true reality and Self (Bowker 1970: 229; Taylor and Watson 1989: 18-19; Whitman 2007: 609).

Conclusions

Considering the above and applying them in the field of medical practice, we have three situations. According to the Vedas, illness is caused by an exterior agent (demon or deity) and the solution is to remove the suffering through religious or cvasireligious meanings (exorcisms, spells, incantations, etc.). Sometimes this approach attends on medical treatment, sometimes it is the only cure and replaces any qualified medical intervention. In *karmamārga*, the path of karma, illness is caused by an inside agent (bad karma accumulated in prior or actual lives) over which, at least in theory, there is no control. In this context, the medical aid removes the symptoms, but not the source. Although Ayurveda somehow harmonized the fatalistic view of karma with the active call for medical treatment, there still prevails the belief, especially in desperate passes, (1) that the fate is already prescribed by past life deeds and (2) that any interference in the prescribed destiny make things worse, producing more bad karma, which finally will determine the quality of the next life. Sharing this belief, many Hindu devotees manifest a reserve towards alleviating suffering. Finally, according to *jnanamārga*, illness is just an illusion, without real existence. Although this perspective is not at everybody's hand, it encourages an ascetic indifference toward illness and curing it.

Considering these, healthcare professionals should be aware that devout Hindu patients sometimes share different values concerning illness and medical aid and be attentive in exploiting beliefs in the patients' best interest without trenching their religious convictions.

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The Confession of Sins as a Re-Establishment of Man's Communion with God in the Teachings of Saint John Chrysostom

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Abstract:

Although St. John Chrysostom did not exhaustively describe the Sacrament of Confession and has not listed all its conditions either, what he did clearly elucidate were those elements that solidify the authority of the Priest to hear confessions and absolve sins. The great Archbishop of Constantinople emphasizes not only the responsibility of the Priest to give counsel, but also to prescribe an appropriate canon. In his vision, just as worldly leaders have the power to judge and decide in reference to his vassals, Priests judge, decide, forgive, and set canons, which means that they have power and responsibility for the souls of believers over whom they have jurisdiction. This decision of theirs is received by God, Who Himself forgives and consecrates, using Priests as His instruments.

True repentance must be made in secret before the Bishop or Priest who administers the redeeming grace. It must be accompanied by good works such as humility, repentance, fasting, alms and prayer. It must be sincere, complete and ongoing, just as sin is repetitive.

***Keywords:** confession, sins, penance, St. John Chrysostom, communion, remission, priest.*

Introduction

In the 4th century we witness in the East a development in penitential discipline and in the rites of reintegration of sinners back into the Church. This took place in parallel with the development of the stages of the catechumenate within the Church marking their gradual return to

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the Church. The public discipline and the penitential ritual were not intended to burden or discourage penitents. The emphasis in the Eastern Church was on spiritual direction, on the healing function of the Church's servants and privacy as the way of taking responsibility for one's own sins which contributed to the Church's passing from ecclesial repentance to private confession, without losing its ecclesial meaning.

Even though we don't have any written account of a ritual up until the 4th century, only hints concerning the development of the penitential institution, such an institution existed in all the churches. Informal correction, a general confession, and community intercession made those guilty of mild sins to experience Divine Mercy within the community gathered there for the celebration of the Liturgy. Others, whose sins were more severe, had to demonstrate their repentance in an outward, public manner, for a long period of time, in order to give proof of the depth and honesty of their repentance. Also, the intent of those wanting to convert to Christianity had to be tested in the same manner. Ceremonial reconciliation followed, having as a model the initiation of catechumens.

All the members of the community shared responsibility for the penitents; as for catechumens, the leaders of the community had greater responsibility. The whole community had the task of correcting and interceding, watching over and sustaining the penitents in their effort to renew their Christian life, and also that of receiving joyfully, as brothers and sisters, those who had shown genuine repentance.

Saint John Chrysostom (349-407) is the most important representative of the catechetical school of Antioch, the greatest artist with words of his time and the most brilliant preacher that the Church of the first centuries has produced (Coman 1999: 136). The spiritual depth of his writings and also the wealth of authentic Christian teaching make his work a pearl of patristic literature. That is why he remains one of the greatest and most often quoted writers of the Christian church. The corpus and the shape of his writings are still today of peeked interest, not just historically and culturally, but socially and morally as well.

1. Public and private penitence

The name of ‘father of repentance’ which the eastern tradition has given to St. John Chrysostom is owed to the recurrence of the topic of confession of sins in his works, insisting unceasingly upon private confession (κατ’ ἰδίαν) before the Priest (St. John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio*, PG 48, 644C). Of great importance for the end of the 4th century is the observation of the Byzantine historian, Socrates, concerning the existence in the capital of the Eastern Roman empire of a Priest who was a confessor – πρεσβύτερον ἐπί της μετανοίας (PG 67, 613-616), a notation which proves the existence of the practice of individual confession. This information is very valuable, even though the stages of the passage from a public form of penitence to an individual one are not fully clear to us now.

Saint John Chrysostom followed Nectarios (†398) to the Patriarchal Throne of Constantinople, and during his tenure led a reform having direct consequences upon the passage from a public to an individual form of confession. Socrates, in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* (PG 67, 613 AC) and after him Sozomen, in a work entitled *Historia Ecclesiastica* (PG 67, 1457B) as well, presents the scandal that arose within the Church of Constantinople in the time of Patriarch Nectarios. An important lady confessed before her spiritual father (Felea 1939: 163-164) who recommended prayer, fasting and good works to her. Following that, the woman publicly confessed having a love relationship with a Deacon, causing a scandal in the Byzantine capital. The population was scandalized, the guilty Deacon was relieved of his position, but the Priests were sworn to secrecy. Consequently, taking the advice of a Priest originally from Alexandria, named Evdemon, patriarch Nectarios abrogated the office of Confessor. The matter of the scrutiny of their consciences and of approaching the Holy Communion was in the hands of the believers themselves.

Information from Socrates regarding the reform that had taken place during Patriarch Nectarios was hidden. How could the patriarch have a change of the rite of Confession with such far-reaching consequences? Theologians ask themselves this question: Has patriarch Nectarios eliminated confession? And all of them provide a negative answer. What

is certain is that neither repentance as a sacrament prior to Holy Eucharist, nor Priests as Confessors disappeared. We can eventually conclude that public confession was abolished by Nectarios, but at the same time we share the conviction that this Patriarch never touched individual and private Confession. We reach this conclusion if we read only a few passages from the works of his successor to the Patriarchal Throne, St. John Chrysostom, who preached intensively about repentance, as a preparative stage for receiving the Holy Eucharist, without suggesting the fact that he had undergone a restoration of Confession after the reform of Nectarios. In other words, his predecessor hadn't abolished repentance as a doctrine, but only its disciplinary aspect. From that time forward, public penitence had been abolished, penitential discipline becoming milder in the form of private confession. It would seem that Nectarios' reform facilitated the passage from the public form of Confession to the eastern practice we know today. (Porneală 2009: 38).

Public penitence didn't survive for long following the actions of Patriarch Nectarios of Constantinople, who abolished the service and the functions of the Priest with regard to penitence (around 391). Saint John Chrysostom provides us with the proof that in Antioch, before this event, those guilty of foul deeds would obey penitential discipline. With the vigour characteristic of him, St. John protested fiercely against the evil represented by swearing and perjury. He would eventually threaten these hardened sinners with the penitence ordained for reprobates, adulterers and murderers: "And if I see you persisting, I will forbid you in the future to set foot on this sacred threshold, and partake of the Immortal Mysteries; as we do fornicators and adulterers, and persons charged with murder" (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilia in Matthæum* 17, PG 57: 264). In this reference to the exclusion from church and participation to sacraments, we can hint the lowest degree, of the ones who cry outside the doors of the church. Therefore, Saint John the Chrysostom threatens the incorrigible sinners with the discipline of gradual penitence. In this reference to their exclusion from the Church and participation in the Sacraments, we can see them in the lowest degree, the ones who cry outside the doors of the Church. Therefore, St. John Chrysostom threatens the incorrigible sinners with the discipline of gradual penitence. In order to complete a trio, he could have mentioned apostates, but the period of

persecution being in the past, the reference would have been less significant. Regardless, this severe penitential discipline wasn't the one usually used for those guilty of swearing and perjury. And since we are convinced that St. John Chrysostom considered these sins as being at least as severe, we reach the conclusion that these were confessed and absolved sacramentally in a discipline other than public penitence.

2. There is no sin that can conquer the generosity of the Master

With Chrysostom, no capital sin can be placed outside the mercy that the Lord has for His earthly Church. This mercy is unlimited. The older practice of the Church, derived from *The Shepherd of Hermas*, allowed for only one instance of repentance in life. The teaching of St. John Chrysostom found mercy for the sinner who relapsed, without limiting Divine Mercy, rather insisting upon the therapeutic needs of the sinner: "there is no malady which prevaieth over His goodness" (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilia in Joannem* 62, PG 59: 341).

In order to encourage the sinner, he talks about Divine Mercy and supports this idea by invoking the richness of forgiveness which opens the gates of Heaven. No matter how multitudinous the sins, man has to firmly condemn them and confess them, for this is the beginning of redemption. It does not matter how much he sinned or that he is in danger of falling again, generosity or Divine Grace compensates for the multitude of human errors. In the view of St. John, there is no such sin that can conquer the generosity of the Master. Even if someone is reprobate or adulterous, homosexual, a prostitute, abductor, greedy, drunk, even if he is an idolater, the power of Grace and the love of God for people is so great that He makes them all disappear and shows the one who proves himself worthy by true repentance that he will become brighter than the rays of the sun. Thus, understanding the overwhelming gift of God's love for mankind, Chrysostom launches the exhortation toward the abandoning of misdeeds and replacing them with good works, reminding us of the advice of the Prophet David who said: "beware of the evil and do the good" (St. John Chrysostom, *In Catechesis Primam et Secundam Illuminatos*, PG 49: 224).

3. The role of the priest in absolving the sinner

The great Archbishop John places great importance on the priestly prerogatives (Coman 1940: 148-168) and the role of the Priest in absolving the sinner. The treatise *On the Priesthood* (St. John Chrysostom, *De Sacerdotio*, PG 48: 623-692), which St. John wrote in Antioch, is a hymn in the honour of the Priest, the one who has the right to forgive sins. When he recommends with great assertiveness the practice of confession, we must understand that he guides sinners to address their Priests. In more than one passage he emphasizes the dignity of the Priest as administrator of repentance, the following excerpt being a classic:

For they who inhabit the earth and make their abode there are entrusted with the administration of things which are in Heaven, and have received an authority which God has not given to Angels or Archangels. For it has not been said to them, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven" (Mt. 18:18). They who rule on earth have indeed authority to bind, but only the body: whereas this binding lays hold of the soul and penetrates the heavens; and what Priests do here below God ratifies above, and the Master confirms the pronouncements of his servants. For indeed what is it but all manner of heavenly authority which He has given them when He says, "Whose sins ye remit they are remitted, and whose sins ye retain they are retained?" (Jn. 20, 23). ... but he who has received from God an authority as much greater as Heaven is more precious than earth, and souls more precious than bodies, seems to some to have received so small an honor that they are actually able to imagine that one of those who have been entrusted with these things will despise the gift. Away with such madness! For transparent madness it is to despise so great a dignity, without which it is not possible to obtain either our own salvation, or the good things which have been promised to us.... These verily are they who are entrusted with the pangs of spiritual travail and the birth which comes through Baptism: by their means we put on Christ, and are buried with the Son of God, and become members of that blessed Head. For not only at the time of regeneration, but afterwards also, they have authority to forgive sins (St. John Chrysostom, *De Sacerdotio*, PG 48: 643, 645).

As the Lord Jesus Christ gave the power to forgive and loose people from their sins to the Priests, confession is made only in front of them. The grace of God is not transmitted "magically or mechanically, but sacramentally" (Vlachos 2005: 45). The great hierarch justifies the necessity of man to present himself before a confessor (Bryant 1986: 568-

570). In his vision, there are two reasons, yea three, why our judgement isn't enough: 1.): even though we think ourselves guilty of nothing, we still need a divinely-inspired inquirer, who can examine us as to our sins; 2.): we don't clearly remember many of the things we do but they stay hidden inside our mind; and 3.): many of the things other people do seem right to us, when in fact they might not be right, our seeing them in that manner stemming from tainted judgement (St. John Chrysostom, *Epistolae Primae Corinthios* 11, PG 61: 87-94).

The mission of the spiritual father is a three-fold one: a.) to advise, b.) to encourage (*παραίνεσις*), and c.) to criticise (*έλεγχος*). He uses a therapy based on words (communication, contact and dialogue) and three models: a.) the human body; b.) the doctor and c.) the parents (the mother and the father as *αμφιθυμία*). The model of birth (*τοκετός*) is sometimes used excessively, uniting the Divine factor and the human in a process of spiritual birth by a spiritual father.

The spiritual paternity is not interpreted by Chrysostom only in the narrow sense of granting forgiveness (*άφεσις*), but in the larger sense of spiritual counselling and care-giving. The spiritual father is not a judge but a 'womb' offered freely for the process of repentance of those who have sinned and want to reform themselves in Christ. For Chrysostom, spiritual paternity is an instrument in the service of repentance and redemption for his spiritual sons (Burnish 1982: 558-564).

Such a spiritual act cannot be accomplished outside the Church as a divine-human organism, for only the Church was granted the authority of bringing man to God, and offering him forgiveness. This is why Christians who care for the redemption of their souls are obliged to run to the Church as they would run to a hospital. The Lord has taken upon Himself all the burden and decrepitude in order to give people rest. The Church by continuing the work of Christ, through the inheritance of the apostolic gift, through the power of binding and loosing, calls those burdened with sins in order to give them rest. Only the Church is capable of giving help and comfort to those burdened by sins:

Have you sinned? Come to Church and erase your sin. Every time you fall while walking you get up. Similarly, every time you sin, repent. Do not despair; do not become indifferent, so that you do not lose hope in the heavenly riches that are in store for us. Even if you sin late in life when you have grown old, repent and come to the Church. The Church is a hospital not a court. It bestows forgiveness;

it does not demand accountability for the sin. Say to God: “Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee” (Ps. 50:6), and He will forgive you. Show Him that you repent, and He will have mercy on you. If we do our part, God will do His part (St. John Chrysostom, *De Pœnitentia*, PG 49: 285-286).

Echoes of these exhortations from the *Homilies on Repentance* can be found in other homilies of St. John:

Unless you tell the amount of debt you have, you shall not experience the abundance of Grace. “I’m not forcing you”, he says, “to come in the middle of a theatre and be surrounded by many witnesses. Tell me your sin, privately, so that I can heal your wound and free you from your pain” (St. John Chrysostom, *Ad Homilias de Lazaro* 4, 4, PG 48: 1012).

Saint John also insists upon the canons which the spiritual father has to give to those who have sinned. The juridical moment of ‘satisfaction’ is missing from the understanding of the Sacrament of Confession in Chrysostom. In his conception, the canon is not a punishment, but a medicine, and the spiritual father looks for the best remedy available for the ailing one. The purpose of the canon is to exhort the penitent to avoid the surroundings which could lead him back to sin.

Of special interest for our theme are the *Homilies on Repentance* (edited in PG 49: 277-350), which are in fact nine exhortations written by Chrysostom with the purpose of strengthening the faith of his believers, or to call them back to faith, using the Pauline model of spiritual birth (τοκετός), which can be understood as the entrance of a believer into the ecclesiastical corpus. This spiritual birth involves both ‘pedagogy’ and ‘therapy’. The Holy Father uses both the paternal and the medical model.

Homilies on Repentance seem to be not only theological texts with a kerugmatik moral character, but also pedagogical lessons, through which some psycho-therapeutic principles are established, just as they were conceived by the author, so that the spiritual sons can be modelled “after the appearance of Christ” and to help them grow in virtue, by means of an appropriate spiritual knowledge.

Therefore, the restoration “in Christ” of a believer implies: conversion (μετάνοιας), birth (κατήχησις) and rebirth (βάπτισμα). Saint John sees this spiritual relationship between the father and his spiritual sons in the light of the experience of St. Paul and the entire Christian tradition, as spiritual birth (τοκετός). Also, in these homilies we meet some sort of “sacred marriage” (ιερός γάμος) between the spiritual father

and his spiritual sons, after the model of the revelation of God in the entire history of the Divine economy (Tsitsigkos 2014: 92-93).

4. Saint John Chrysostom, canonical discipline and its prescriptions

The great Archbishop, St. John Chrysostom, insists upon the therapeutic calling of the Church, convinced that this was not a court, but a hospital (St. John Chrysostom, *Vita Phocae* 1, PG 50: 699) [1], where the human being is healed of sin, death and suffering. Saint John talks about repentance as if it were a hospital procedure which cleanses sins, a heavenly gift, a wonderful power, Grace being far superior to a legalistic approach. That is why Christ doesn't humiliate the reprobate, doesn't chase away the adulterer, doesn't turn His back to the drunkard, doesn't turn from the idolater, doesn't reject the blasphemer, but seeks to change them all. Repentance is like an furnace where sin is burned away (St. John Chrysostom, *De Pœnitentia*, PG 49: 317).

For Chrysostom ἔξομολόγησις has the sense of a confession. Even though he knows the canonical discipline and respects it, he does not always follow its prescriptions. His critics complain about his laxity in allowing a repeated repentance, citing it even when it offers healing even to the ones who repented a thousand times. Sometimes he is even more radical in the advice he gives to those not obeying the canonical discipline, suggesting that only a few days of repentance before approaching Holy Communion are enough, having as the primary condition the exposing of one's sins before God. As a Bishop who perceived himself more as a doctor than as a judge, Chrysostom knew only to loose. This means that the requirements of the canonical discipline were a difficult interpretation for many clerics, because the situation had changed a great deal compared to the time when regulations about the duration of repentance had been established. Chrysostom didn't want to keep those he shepherd far from the Holy Eucharist, but didn't want them to approach it in a state of unworthiness either. Instead of threatening, he preached repentance and penitential deeds under the blessing of a spiritual father.

The great Archbishop of Constantinople answers questions such as: How are we healed by the power of the divine-human Doctor in His

Church, which is a spiritual hospital? How do we get in contact with the transforming energies of the Holy Trinity, in order to be set free from sin and death, to be healed spiritually and grow into the Likeness with the Divine Image? Convincingly, he shows that repentance in that act of “opening” the inner cell, meaning those attitudes and destructive and poisonous deeds that smother the freedom and the joy of the Christian and set an obstacle in front of his or her open relationship with God. Though harsh and severe with vice and sin, he is concessive and even comforting with the weak. These people he guides with great affection, showing them how to approach the Judgement Seat Christ in order for them to confess their sins:

He who wants to get better faster and to heal the wounds of his soul faster, approach the Doctor broken-heartedly, banishing from himself all worldly thoughts! Shed fervent tears, show great assiduity, confess the right faith and trust the medicine of the Doctor and he shall soon be healed! Have you seen that the generosity of the Doctor resembles the love of any parent? Does He ask anything difficult or burdening from us? No! He asks for a broken heart, humble spirit, confession of sins, great assiduity, and He gives us not only healing of our wounds and cleansing of sins, but also justifies him who prior to that was saddled with thousands and thousands of burdens and sins (St. John Chrysostom, *Sermo Admonitorium sub initium sanctæ Quadragesimæ* 20, 3, PG 53: 169).

5. Saint John doesn't force anyone to publicly confess but considers private confession of utter importance

The paradigmatic Archbishop John doesn't force anyone to publicly confess his sins but considers private confession of utter importance. We notice that even from his time the general rule, still valid today in the Orthodox Church, that confession must be made in an intimate manner, was applied, and that in its process all sins, large or small, hidden or visible, must be acknowledged, just as the same great Hierarch said:

For tell me not of acts of fornication only, nor of adulteries, nor of these things that are manifest, and acknowledged amongst all men: but lay together also thy secret crafts, and thy false accusations, and thine evil speakings, and thy vain-gloryings, and thine envy, and all such things. For neither will these bring a trifling punishment (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilia in Matthæum* 41, PG 57: 450).

The guilt for sin hovers upon each person:

For who is clear from covetousness? Nay, tell me not of the quantity, but since even in a small amount we shall pay the same penalty, consider this and repent. Who is rid of all insolence? Yet this casts into hell. Who hath not secretly spoken evil of his neighbor? Yet this deprives one of the Kingdom. Who hath not been self-willed? Yet this man is more unclean than all. Who hath not looked with unchaste eyes? Yet this is a complete adulterer. Who hath not been “angry with his brother without a cause”? Yet such an one is “in danger of the council”. Who hath not sworn? Yet this thing is of the evil one. Who hath not forsworn himself? but this man is something more than of the evil one. Who hath not served mammon? but this man is fallen away from the genuine service of Christ. I have also other things greater than these to mention: but even these are enough, and able, if a man be not made of stone, nor utterly past feeling, to bring him to compunction (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilia in Matthæum* 41, PG 57: 450).

6. Real and active Confession is accompanied by sincere repentance and change of the mind

Without the breakage of the heart, confession denotes a lack of culpability for the breaking of the Godly law. Real and active confession is accompanied by sincere repentance and change of mind; only this confession brings about the fruit of redemption. In order to teach that, it is necessary that the one who wishes to confess, come before his or her spiritual father and to open his heart in order to discover his unknown and hidden depths, without embarrassment and reserve, seeking reconciliation with God, in order to heal his soul and receive absolution. Sincere repentance, with regret and tears for the sins committed, brings about the forgiveness of sins and the redemption of the soul. That is why St. John says:

Do not however despair on this account. For what if the wounds be severe? yet are they not curable; such is our Physician: only let us feel our wounds. Although we be arrived at the very extreme of wickedness, many are the ways of safety which He maps out for us. Thus, if thou forbear to be angry with thy neighbour, thine own sins shall be forgiven ... And though we owe ten thousand talents, if we fall down before God and bear no malice, all things are forgiven us. Although we have wandered away to that place whither the sheep strayed from his keeper, even thence He recovers us again: only let us be willing, beloved. For God is merciful. Wherefore both in the case of him that owed ten thousand talents, He was content with His falling down before Him; and in the case of him who had devoured his

father's goods, with his return only; and in the case of the sheep, with its willingness to be borne. Considering therefore the greatness of His Mercy, let us here make Him propitious unto us, and "let us come before His face by a full confession", (Ps. 45:2) that we may not depart hence without excuse, and have to endure the extreme punishment (St. John Chrysostom, *Epistolæ Primæ Corinthios* 23, PG 61: 192).

Only following a sincere confession does the penitent receive the forgiveness of sins:

If in this life we cleanse ourselves through confession of sins and we receive forgiveness from the Lord, we go on the other side without sins and with great boldness before God. For he who has not cleansed his sins in this life, shall not find any comfort on the other side. "For in hell, says the Scripture, who shall confess to thee? (Ps. 6, 5)" (St. John Chrysostom, *Sermo Admonitorius sub initium sanctæ Quadragesimæ* 3, 2, PG 53: 49).

Confession is made in the Church, where the Christian goes in order to be heard by the Priest, who acting in the Name of God, offers forgiveness of sins:

Are you a sinner? Do not despair. Come to the Church with repentance. Have you sinned? Say to God: "I have sinned". You find it so difficult to confess your sin? But if you do not accuse yourself first, the devil will eventually accuse you. Therefore, before he has a chance to do so, strip him of his power; because, truly, his role is to accuse us. Erase your sin before he has a chance to blame you. For you have an accuser who will not remain silent. Have you sinned? I ask nothing else from you except this: enter the Church and say to God with repentance, "I have sinned". Because it is written: "confess your sins first, so that you may be justified" (Isa. 43:26). Confess your sin so that you may erase it. This does not require any effort, or many words, or large sums of money, or any other such thing. It only takes three words: "I have sinned" (St. John Chrysostom, *De Pœnitentia* 1, PG 49: 282).

The terms 'confession' (ἔξομολόγησις) and 'acknowledgement' (ὁμολογία) do not only succeed in and of themselves, but they show the same intense process of changing one's way of thinking, intentions, disposition and full spiritual direction.

7. Models of true repentance in the Holy Scriptures

Examples illustrative of repentance are those of the Ninevites, the repentance of Manasseh, the Judean King, the publican and the prodigal son. The chrism of the repentant reprobate, the tears of St. Peter and the repentance of the thief on the cross are also among the most eloquent examples of true repentance, and also of love for God for man. Saint John cannot but wonder at the gesture of repentance to the thief on the cross, whose confession is given as an example:

have you seen complete repentance on the cross? Have you seen how with his words he cleaned his sins? Have you seen how he fulfilled that command that says: “declare thou, that thou mayest be justified”. (Is. 43:26). Nobody made him do it. Nobody blamed him. Nobody attacked him! He blamed himself. That is why he didn’t have anyone else to blame him. He went ahead of everyone and condemned himself, deposed himself (St. John Chrysostom, *In Duas Sequentes de Cruce et Latrone Homilias 2, 2*, PG 49: 409).

True repentance is the change of mind by one’s own actions, a change of moral life, a change for the better, a complete renouncement of the former life and sin, a desire to practice virtues, a perfect union of one’s own will with the Will of God. That is why repentance is the moral rebirth of man and the starting point of a new and virtuous life. A true fulfilment of God’s commandments cannot be achieved but for the sake of Christ. Discovering the Kingdom of Heaven (‘Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near’- Mt. 4:17) inside of man with the help of God and His Priests is the only impulse that can lead us towards a virtuous life of repentance.

8. Repentance is authentic through its fruit

The period of Lent is an extra reason for man to confess honestly:

How will we defend ourselves if we don’t show our Master our wounds as fast as we can, in order to receive from Him their healing? If we don’t do this now when it’s Lent, when our thoughts are so quiet, when the feasts have been chased away, when will we be able to think about the things we have done? That is why I ask you, as always, to be aware of yourselves, to vigil; to spend all our life doing this, so that through our efforts we might escape the dreadful torment and be outside of the flames of hell. And especially now, with more diligence, this must be done, now when, due to the time of Lent, you are reached out to more and more often

(St. John Chrysostom, *Sermo Admonitorius sub initium sanctæ Quadragesimæ* 20, 4, PG 53: 171).

Confession is sincere only if it is accompanied by the unwavering desire to not repeat sins ever again. Contrarily, man returns to his sins, just like the Apostle says, like “a dog returns to his own vomit and a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire” (2 Pt. 2:22). The decision and the effort of not committing the same sins must be unwavering and constant:

for, a bird that, after being caught in a chain, escaped, or a stag, who after falling into toils, managed to escape, won't let themselves be caught again easily; because for anyone, adventure is the mother of precaution. We, though, after being caught more times, fall into the same chains and we, who are adorned with discernment, don't follow the precaution and alertness of animals (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilia XXI de statuis* 15, PG 49: 157).

We are advised by the great Archbishop to, after we have cleansed ourselves of sins, keep these sins before our eyes. God, out of His love for humans, forgives sin, but the believer, for the safety of his soul, must have before his eyes the sin. He who is sad for past sins is determined not to repeat them. That is why David has said “my sin is forever before me” (Ps. 50:4). “He had before his eyes his past sins, so that he wouldn't fall into future ones” (St. John Chrysostom, *De Pœnitentia*, PG 49: 317).

Repentance is authentic through its fruit (Stăniloae 1986: 11). The advice of St. John the Baptist:

“Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance”. (Mat.3:8) resounds permanently in the preaching of St. John Chrysostom: For if thou change from inhumanity to almsgiving, thou hast stretched forth the hand that was withered. If thou withdraw from theatres and go to the church, thou hast cured the lame foot. If thou draw back thine eyes from an harlot, and from beauty not thine own, thou hast opened them when they were blind. If instead of satanical songs, thou hast learnt spiritual psalms, being dumb, thou hast spoken. These are the greatest miracles, these wonderful signs. If we go on working these signs, we shall ourselves be a great and admirable sort of person through these, and shall win over all the wicked unto virtue, and shall enjoy the life to come (St. John Chrysostom, *Homilia in Matthæum* 32, PG 57: 385).

Conclusions

The source of the Godly word of St. John Chrysostom was in his holy life and his devotion which made his life an offering pleasant to God and in the spiritual interests of the people he led. Chrysostom was a saint with the gift of preaching and united within himself the word with the deed managing through his sincere love to heal even the most hardened hearts of sinners (Irineu Slătineanu 1996: 4-5). He understands the danger of losing our souls, which must guide us to care for redemption. He who doesn't take care for redemption of his soul is threatened by two things: death and being abandoned by Grace. In both cases the harm is huge because the consequence is the death of the soul

Our rush to return and repent as fast as we can is dictated by the danger of not being able to return to God. A bad habit is capable of making us incapable of repentance and this should terrify us. The habit which results from a repetition of sin becomes in the heart of man a "normal" state, becoming so powerful that nobody is able to resist it: its power overwhelms even natural law. Therefore, when a vice rules inside us, we give ourselves to it, becoming its slaves. Free will has definitely lost its power. Man has abandoned free will and that is why the power of his will proves to be weak and incapable to fight vice, each attempt at regaining lost freedom proves vain. The fight makes this weakness even more visible. The person who is conquered by the passions, behaves and fulfils everything like a slave, like a subordinate.

Saint John Chrysostom states that repentance is of great use for redemption, but it must be cultivated permanently. It makes the soul of the Christian straighter, more loving towards his kin, rebuilding thus a new society in which altruism, honesty, honour, faith and love prevail, to the happiness of all its members. Repentance is absolutely necessary as a foundation of individual and social life (Nicolae 1966: 92) for we all are and form a single body, Head Christ.

By way of a conclusion to the teachings of St. John Chrysostom about repentance and confession of sins, we see that they are still valid today, more than 1600 years following his departure. This is due to the fact that in the world evil and good, wound and cure are eternal (Morozanu 1958: 496). From here comes the necessity to fight evil, wounds and disease, which are not God's creations, but accidents and

products of man's freedom. Just as the presence of doctors is necessary today, as back then, so is the presence of spiritual doctors, meaning Priests, spiritual fathers. "Doctors, says St. John, when facing severe diseases, use comfort and prayer to make them receive the medicine they need, in order to be cured" (St. John Chrysostom, *Homiliae XXI de statuis* 3, 5, PG 49: 54). The forgiveness of sins can only be achieved in the Church, through its Hierarchs, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Notes:

[1] "οὐκ ευθύνας ἀπαιτῶ ἀμαρτημάτων, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀσθενοῦσι φάρμακα κατασκευάζω". See also and Hierotheos, Metropolitan of Nafpaktos, *The illness and cure of the soul in the Orthodox Tradition*, trans. Effie Mavromichali, Levadia, Birth of the Theotokos Monastery, 1997, p. 86.

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Saint Jean Chrysostome et la catéchèse

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Résumé:

Notre étude essaie de préciser les caractéristiques de la catéchèse chez Saint Jean Chrysostome. Il donne une importance particulière à l'éducation chrétienne en insistant sur les moyens et les méthodes d'éducation (le jeûne, la prière, la catéchèse – la description, l'explication, etc.). Saint Jean Chrysostome reste un modèle, toujours valable, pour l'éducation chrétienne.

Keywords: *Jean Chrysostome, catéchèse, éducation, formation religieuse*

Dans les pays de tradition chrétienne, y compris le nôtre, *la catéchèse*, à côté de la célébration du baptême, du mariage et des funérailles religieuses, constitue l'un des organes témoins de l'ancienne alliance entre la religion et la société. Elle est un moyen d'intégration sociale et culturelle, un instrument de moralisation. Grâce à l'engagement d'un grand nombre d'éducateurs laïcs (professeurs de religion ~300.000) et des prêtres, la catéchèse des enfants et des jeunes résiste aux vagues successives de la sécularisation.

Le IV^e siècle c'est l'époque des grands hommes de l'Eglise, l'âge d'or de l'Eglise. L'une des plus grandes gloires de ce IV^e siècle est saint Athanase le Grand, le champion de l'orthodoxie contre le déisme d'Arius. À côté de celui-ci, paraissent, chez les Grecs, saint Grégoire de Nazianze, saint Basile et son frère, saint Grégoire de Nysse, saint Jean Chrysostome et, chez les Latins, saint Ambroise, saint Augustin, saint Jérôme.

Nommer saint Jean Chrysostome, c'est nommer l'éloquence chrétienne, le modèle de l'éloquence universellement appréciée, le modèle du courage et d'héroïsme. Dès le sixième siècle, il est, pour cette raison, appelé *Chrysostome* ou *Bouche d'or*. Ses contemporains disaient: "Il vaudrait mieux que le soleil soit détaché du firmament que de voir la

bouche de Jean réduite au silence!”. Dans son fameux *Dialogue sur le Sacerdoce*, rédigé vers 385, il traçais le portrait idéal du prédicateur, du catéchète et pourquoi pas du formateur des caractères: “La parole, voilà l’instrument du médecin des âmes. Elle remplace tout: régime, changement d’air, remèdes. C’est elle qui cautérise; c’est elle qui ampute. Quand elle manque, tout manque. [...] Quand il s’agit de la conduite de la vie, l’exemple est le meilleur des entraînements; mais, pour guérir l’âme du poison de l’erreur, il faut la parole [...] Même si nous avons le don des miracles, la parole nous serait utile, même nécessaire”.

Saint Jean Chrysostome a vécu entre 344 et 407. Il est né à Antioche de Syrie (vers 344-354) (Moulard 1949: *passim*).

Il y a trois éléments qui ont contribué à sa formation:

a) *l’éducation maternelle*. Celle-ci, veuve à partir de vingt ans, a été, pour son fils une véritable éducatrice. Grâce à elle, le jeune Jean n’a pas connu les tourments de l’adolescence, et les païens, en parlant d’Anthousa disaient: “Ah! Quelles femmes il y a chez les chrétiens!”.

b) *l’éducation profane*: il suit les leçons des maîtres réputés: il est le disciple de l’illustre rhéteur Libanios, qui lui donne le meilleur de son intelligence et de son cœur sans réussir, malgré tout, à lui insuffler son idéal païen.

c) *la formation ascétique* qui lui marqua la vie et la pensée. Il a suivi les leçon de Diodore, dont il a été son véritable fils spirituel. Formé par lui aux principes des l’exégèse grammaticale et littérale de l’école d’Antioche, il a acquiert une connaissance très approfondie et réaliste de la Bible. En 386, il a été ordonné prêtre. Dès maintenant, la carrière de Saint Jean commence.

L’héritage littéraire de Chrysostome est immense. On peut le partager en trois catégories: *les opuscules, les homélies, les lettres*.

Les *opuscules* sont des écrits ascétiques réalisés pendant la période monacale et diaconale. Ils ont pour objet: la vie religieuse: *De la Componction*, etc.; la vocation *Dialogue sur le Sacerdoce* etc.; l’éducation: *De la veine gloire et de l’éducation des enfants*.

Entre 386-397, pendant son ministère presbytéral à Antioche, et ensuite durant les années de son épiscopat à Constantinople, de 398 à 403, Saint Jean Chrysostome s’est certainement adressé lui-même au cours de plusieurs Carêmes à ceux qui allaient recevoir le baptême dans la grande

nuît de Samedi Saint au Dimanche de Pâques ou dans les jours qui suivaient, à ces nouveaux baptisés. De ces catéchèses où l'auteur traitait le même sujet fondamental, on n'en a conservé que onze: *Trois catéchèses baptismales*, dans la série de Papadopoulos (1909) – la première catéchèse coïncide avec celle éditée déjà par Fronton du Duc (1609), H. Savile (1612) et Montfaucon (1718), et les deux qui la suivent appartiennent au même cycle catéchétique que la précédente. La quatrième va être éditée dans la série de Père A. Wenger, en 1957, comme la III^e catéchèse du cycle des *Huit catéchèses baptismales*. Cette dernière série comprend: catéchèses I-IV, série de Papadopoulos; catéchèse II, série de Montfaucon; catéchèses I-VIII, série de Stavronikita (1921).

En grec classique, le verbe *katéchein* a apparu assez tard et il n'est pas d'un usage fréquent. Il signifie "faire retenir" l'„écho" de la voix humaine. L'étymologie évoque une parole résonnant à l'oreille d'un auditeur qui est aussi un interlocuteur. L'énoncé catéchétique revêt, dès l'origine la forme d'une communication orale et dialoguée.

Chez les auteurs grecs, *katéchein* acquiert peu à peu un double sens figuré, comparable à celui du français "apprendre": à la fois *aviser*, *notifier*, *informer*, et *enseigner*, *instruire*, *initier*. La première traduction grecque de l'Ancien Testament (III^e-II^e siècle avant Jésus-Christ) appelée version des Septante, ignore ce verbe, mais celui-ci est utilisé par Philon. Quant au substantif *katéchèsis*, on le rencontre occasionnellement dans les écrits des philosophes stoïciens.

Les deux sens du verbe grec sont attestés par le Nouveau Testament. Selon le livre des *Actes des Apôtres*, l'entourage de Jacques a fait par à Paul des "bruits qui courraient à son sujet" (ch. 21, v. 21 et 24). Dans ce cas, il s'agit de rumeurs circulant de bouche à oreille, conformément à l'acception courante de *katéchein*. Mais, l'apôtre Paul donne au même verbe un sens particulier lorsqu'il écrit aux Corinthiens: "Dans une assemblée, je préfère dire cinq paroles intelligibles pour *instruire* aussi les autres, plutôt que dix mille en langues" (1 Co 14, 19). Ailleurs, Paul qualifie le juif d'homme "*instruit* par la loi" (Rm 2, 18). Autrement dit, Paul crée une terminologie propre à l'initiation chrétienne. Tout en utilisant le verbe commun *didaskhein* ("enseigner"), il confère une signification originale à *katéchein*.

En transposant les vocables grecs, les auteurs chrétiens (les Pères de l'Église, notamment) ont créé d'autres termes. Par exemple, on entend par *catéchèse* l'ensemble des discours didactiques destiné à favoriser chez les baptisés une intelligence globale et méthodique de leur foi. Ainsi définie, *la catéchèse* se distingue du *kérygme*, de la *théologie* et de l'*homélie*. Le *kérygme* – synonyme des expressions “mission” et “évangélisation” – désigne la première annonce du message chrétien; il s'adresse, non seulement à des baptisés, mais aussi à ceux qui ignorent tout la Révélation biblique. À la différence du *kérygme* et de la *catéchèse*, la *théologie* ne consiste pas en une interpellation à l'égard d'autrui, que ce soit en vue de la conversion ou d'un approfondissement de la foi. Ce sont les croyants qui font œuvre théologique dès qu'ils appliquent au donné chrétien les ressources de la raison scientifique ou spéculative. Quant à l'*homélie*, appelée aussi “prédication”, elle représente *une forme occasionnelle* de *catéchèse* puisqu'elle s'inscrit dans le cadre de l'action liturgique. Tandis que chaque *homélie* commente, à la lumière de l'actualité, les lectures bibliques insérées dans la célébration de la Liturgie, *la catéchèse* proprement dite tend à procurer une compréhension *d'ensemble* du mystère chrétien.

Il y a une différence majeure entre les expressions: “instruction religieuse”, qui suppose un système scolaire laïc, “enseignement religieux”, qui suppose un enseignement de vocation, intégré aussi dans un système scolaire, et “catéchèse” qui n'est pas une transmission de contenus intellectuels, mais proposition d'une “bonne nouvelle” capable de changer la vie. La *catéchèse* se déroule dans un espace sacré, l'Église, notamment.

La série de huit *Catéchèses* éditées par A. Wenger se présente ainsi:

Catéchèses I et II – prébaptismales

Catéchèses III-VIII – postbaptismales:

III – le matin du jour de Pâques;

IV – le jour de Pâques (ou le lundi);

V-VIII – semaine de Pâques.

Les rites de l'initiation chrétienne que Chrysostome mentionne sont: les exorcismes, la cérémonie de la renonciation à Satan et l'adhésion au Christ, l'onction pré-baptismale, l'immersion sacramentelle, le baiser de paix et la communion eucharistique.

a) Le premier rite préparatoire au baptême mentionné par Chrysostome est celui *des exorcismes*: “Après l’instruction quotidienne, nous vous envoyons vers les voix de ceux qui vous exorcisent” (*Catéchèses II*, 12, 5-7, dans Chrysostome 1970: 129).

b) Après le rite des exorcismes, Saint Jean mentionne la cérémonie solennelle du renoncement à Satan et de l’attachement au Christ: “Je renonce à toi Stan, à tes séductions, à ton service et à tes oeuvres” (*Catéchèse II*, 20, 2-4, dans Chrysostome 1970: 145).

c) Chez le Saint Jean, cette cérémonie du renoncement à Satan et d’adhésion au Christ est suivie non pas de la profession de foi, mais d’onction pré-baptismale du catéchumène: “[...] comme à un combattant en l’arène spirituelle, le prêtre te fait une onction au front avec le chrême spirituel, et te signe en disant: «Est oint un tel au nom du Père et du Fils et du Saint-Esprit»” (*Catéchèse II*, 22, 3-7, dans Chrysostome 1970: 145-146). Chez Chrysostome la profession de foi est représentée par la proclamation de la suzeraineté du Christ.

e) Après l’onction de tout le corp, le catéchumène descend dans les piscines sacrées pour recevoir *le baptême*: “Lorsque le prêtre prononce sur l’intéressé: «Est baptisé un tel au nom du Père et du Fils et du Saint-Esprit», il lui plonge la tête dans l’eau et la relève [...] Car ce n’est pas le prêtre seulement qui touche sa tête, mais aussi la droite du Christ” (*Catéchèse II*, 26, 3-9, dans Chrysostome 1970: 147).

En sortant des piscines baptismales, on félicite les néophytes, on les embrasse, on leur donne le baiser avant qu’ils s’approchent de l’autel pour recevoir la communion (cf. *Catéchèse II*, 27, 3-5, dans Chrysostome 1970: 148).

Ces catéchèses baptismales de Saint Jean Chrysostome, nous donnent un élément appréciable pour une théologie du baptême et pour une pastorale de la liturgie pascale.

Sur la veine gloire et l’éducation des enfants est une catéchèse de Saint Jean Chrysostome qui présente un intérêt exceptionnel pour l’histoire d’une institution si importante dans la société antique et aussi pour l’histoire de l’éducation: la vanité (l’évergétisme).

Pour notre étude, c’est la deuxième partie de cette catéchèse, celle dédiée à l’éducation qui nous intéresse. Ce qui fait de ce texte un document unique, ce sont les précisions qu’il donne sur la catéchèse des

petits enfants. Nous avons ici un véritable programme, avec l'indication des textes de l'Écriture qu'il faut choisir selon l'âge, la manière de les raconter (les méthodes didactiques employées), les moyens et les termes à employer pour se faire comprendre d'un tout petit.

Saint Jean a voulu donner à l'enfant une éducation équilibrée et harmonieuse. Malgré le fait que les conditions de vie changent, il y a des vérités de l'éducation qui demeurent à travers les siècles: l'importance de la formation de l'enfant dans ses premières années, le rôle irremplaçable du milieu familial où il grandit, et l'amour attentif qu'il faut, pour faire un homme et un chrétien.

Le but de l'éducation chez Saint Jean et celle d'élever "un athlète pour le Christ" (Chrysostome 1972, §19: 103-104) et "apprends lui [...] la crainte de Dieu dès son jeune âge" (Chrysostome 1972, §19: 103-104).

L'âme de l'enfant est comparée à *une cire* molle: "Si l'âme encore tendre reçoit l'empreinte des bons principes, personne ne pourra les effacer, lorsqu'ils seront durs comme une empreinte, ce qui se passe pour le *cire*" (Chrysostome 1972, §20: 105), à *une perle*, à *un tableau*, à *une statue*, à *une cité*: "Pense qui tu es un roi ayant sous sa domination une cité: l'âme de ton enfant, car c'est véritablement une cité que l'âme" (Chrysostome 1972, §23: 109) [cette comparaison se développe du §25 au §55].

Cette cité a besoin des lois pour être gouvernée. Les sens sont les portes donnant accès à la ville (la langue, l'ouïe, l'odorat, la vue, le toucher). La description de la cité est interrompue par deux histoires: a) celle de Caïn et Abel, et b) celle de Jacob et Esaü (Chrysostome 1972, §39-42; §43-46: 131-145).

L'auteur demande la préparation de l'enfant: "Ensuite, quand il aura retenu ce récit en détail, un autre soir, tu lui demanderas de nouveau: «Raconte-moi l'histoire de ces deux frères»" (Chrysostome 1972, §45: 143). Puis suit l'histoire "Rends tes récits agréables de façon que l'enfant y trouve un certain plaisir" (Chrysostome 1972, §39: 133). L'étape suivante s'appelle l'*association*: "«Raconte-moi l'histoire» pour qu'il se sente pris d'émulation" (Chrysostome 1972, §40: 137), puis l'*application*: "[...] alors tu lui en dira l'*utilité*" (Chrysostome 1972, §41: 139). Ce sont

de moments psychologiques qu'on va trouver dans la structure d'une leçon de Religion, à l'école.

Dans le même contexte, Saint Jean donne un programme des matières d'enseignement, en respectant les principes didactiques, celui des particularités d'âge surtout: "Lorsqu'il aura atteint dix ans ou huit ans, ou moins encore, qu'il entende parler du déluge, [...]. Lorsqu'il aura atteint quinze ou davantage, qu'il entende parler de l'enfer [...] du Nouveau Testament" (Chrysostome 1972, §52: 151-152).

On doit souligner aussi les moyens didactiques employés par Chrysostome et qu'on trouve aujourd'hui dans l'enseignement de la Religion. Il parle des *moyens (remèdes) négatifs*: a) l'enfant doit mépriser les spectacles où on déroule des mauvaises choses: "[...]jamais envoyer l'enfant au théâtre, pour ne pas l'exposer au mal sous toutes ses formes, à la fois par l'ouïe et par les yeux" (Chrysostome 1972, §55: 155); b) l'enfant ne doit pas avoir contact avec les femmes: "Qu'il ne prenne pas de bain en compagnie des femmes; [...] et qu'on ne l'envoie pas non plus là où les femmes se donnent rendez-vous" (Chrysostome 1972, §60: 159); c) autour de lui, il doit avoir une servante plus âgée, seulement: "[...] une servante déjà avancée en âge, une vieille femme" (Chrysostome 1972, §79: 183).

Saint Jean parle aussi des *moyens positifs*: a) on doit offrir à l'enfant des exemples des personnes sages, vertueuses (les domestiques, par exemple); b) le châtement, mais avec mesure: "Pas de châtements corporels sans trêve, ne l'habitue pas à ce moyen d'éducation, car il apprend à être continuellement corrigé par ce moyen, il apprendra aussi à mépriser la correction" (Chrysostome 1972, §30: 121); "Qu'on agite le fouet, mais qu'on ne frappe pas" (Chrysostome 1972, §30: 121); c) les stimulants psychiques: "[...] flatte-le et fais-lui des promesses" (Chrysostome 1972, §30: 121); d) L'enfant doit jeûner, deux fois par semaine: "Qu'on lui apprenne à jeûner [...] le mercredi et le vendredi. Qu'il aille de lui-même jusqu'à l'Eglise" (Chrysostome 1972, §79: 184-185); e) On doit lui enseigner à prier: "Qu'on lui enseigne à prier avec beaucoup du zèle et de componction" (Chrysostome 1972, §80: 185); f) Il doit être marié "de bonne heure": "[...] amène-lui de bonne heure une fiancée et n'attends pas qu'il soit à l'armée [...]. Forme d'abord son âme et ensuite songe à sa réputation extérieure" (Chrysostome 1972, §81: 188-

189) ; g) la catéchisation de l'enfant, qu'on eu a en parlé déjà. Saint Jean consacre à ce remède 14 paragraphes. Ce moyen a deux buts: a) remplacer les histoires de la mythologie antique, et b) instruire l'enfant dans l'enseignement chrétien.

Saint Jean parle aussi de l'éducation des filles: "Que la mère apprenne à élever la jeune fille selon ces principes, à la détourner du luxe et de la parure [...] C'est très important pour maîtriser ses passions" (Chrysostome 1972, §90: 197).

Les problèmes d'éducation sont posés dans le concret, dès la naissance, et se multiplient à mesure que l'enfant grandit: costume, coiffure, rapports avec ses parents, ses frères, ses serviteurs ; formation religieuse et temps de prière ; danger de la rue, des spectacles, orientation et mariage. En suivant tous ces conseils, on peut pénétrer dans l'intimité d'une famille chrétienne au IV^e siècle et, en respectant les lignes générales, pourquoi pas, dans une famille d'aujourd'hui !

Les conditions de vie ont pu changer et, sur certains points, les moyens et les méthodes d'éducation aussi. Mais, on trouve chez ce saint pédagogue un fond de vérité qui demeure à travers les siècles: l'extrême sensibilité de l'enfant devant les impressions venues du dehors, l'importance de la formation dans ces premières années, le rôle très important de la famille (de l'Eglise, de la société – voir les pédagogues recommandés: les serviteurs, les esclaves, les nourrices), et l'amour attentif qu'il faut pour faire un homme et un chrétien.

La perspective historique sur la relation éducation-religion conduit à la conclusion que les deux pratiques culturelles sont interdépendantes; elles se sont manifestées simultanément et elles tendent à se corrélérer aussi dans nos jours. Jésus-Christ représente cette corrélation entre le logos et le praxis, entre l'idée et l'action, sa vie terrestre étant un modèle d'unité et de continuité entre la pensée et l'action.

Les valeurs religieuses représentent pour l'homme contemporain un horizon d'idéalité très nécessaire. Sans Dieu, l'homme glisse dans des paradoxes dangereux.

La religiosité contemporaine a beaucoup de formes en ce qui concerne le contenu et les modalités de vivre. À côté des modalités authentiques de manifestation, on assiste aujourd'hui à des concrétisations dénaturées et dénaturantes, à des exagérations et des formes monstrueuses

de manifestation. On a besoin, chez nous et en Occident aussi, d'une éducation et un esprit critiques de sorte qu'on puisse distinguer la vraie religion de la fausse religion.

L'éducation religieuse suppose, à côté de l'homme, la présence d'une force et d'une dimension transcendantes, d'un facteur informant au-dessus de l'homme et du monde.

Dans la formation religieuse de l'enfant et de l'adulte, la liberté représente la prémisses et le résultat de l'acte païdeutique; toute forme de contrainte est exclue.

Chez nous, l'éducation religieuse veut faciliter la formation d'une vision personnalisée de la réalité, d'un sens existentiel propre, en contribuant à l'affirmation d'une individualité et la définition d'un caractère. Elle ne conduit pas à l'homogénéisation et à l'uniformisation des consciences.

Chez nous, la tâche de l'éducation religieuse est double: tout d'abord, elle a le rôle d'installer l'enfant, l'adulte dans sa foi, dans l'orthodoxie, et, deuxièmement, le rôle de déterminer l'orthodoxe à reconnaître la religion de l'autre – qui a une autre foi – que la sienne – pour ne pas glisser dans un totalitarisme et une intolérance dangereux même pour le croyant orthodoxe. La richesse de tous est donnée par la richesse des manifestations particulières. Le plaidoyer qu'on manifeste pour la compréhension interconfessionnelle ne se fonde pas sur la réduction, subordination ou l'hierarchie des valeurs des religions, sur l'uniformité des spécificités confessionnelles. Toute manifestation d'un culte a quelque chose de particulier qui le différencie des autres. L'éducation religieuse dans la perspective interculturelle vise la réalisation d'une éducation dans l'esprit de la reconnaissance et du respect des différences qui existent dans le cadre des religions; elle ne vise pas une telle religion, en niant les valeurs sur lesquelles se fondent les autres religions. Une éducation religieuse authentique ne se fait par une clôture réciproque, mais par la perméabilité réciproque et l'acceptation de l'altérité raccordée à d'autres valeurs.

Le « pluriconfessionnalisme » contemporain est une richesse potentielle à condition qu'il n'annule pas l'identité de chaque religion, par des subordinations forcées.

On a besoin à savoir quelque chose en ce qui concerne les autres, pour qu'on puisse rendre compte de notre spécifique et de notre valeur. Il est nécessaire à avoir une telle capacité empathique. Il s'agit de la compréhension de l'autrui, de sa religion, mais sans qu'on adore les valeurs de sa religion.

La formation des attitudes et l'apprentissage des valeurs religieuses est une démarche compliquée et à long terme.

Le professeur de religion ou le prêtre (le pasteur) sont obligés à avoir une bonne formation psychopédagogique également pour réaliser en même temps une vieille et nouvelle éducation. Cela suppose la fixation des objectifs spécifiques pour cette branche de l'éducation, des contenus informatifs et formatifs en accord avec la situation de l'apprentissage, employer des méthodes et des techniques d'enseigner efficaces, établir correctement des techniques d'évaluation. Cette éducation va se réaliser mieux si celui qui la réalise est aussi un bon pédagogue. Pédagogue dans l'école et dans l'église, pédagogue dans toutes les circonstances.

La foi ne s'évalue pas, mais, en revanche, l'intelligence de la confession de foi peut être évaluée et faire l'objet d'une classe de religion ou d'une catéchèse.

Les quatre fonctions de la catéchèse et du projet didactique que l'on présentera plus loin: *information*, *création*, *parole libre* et *prière* complètent la grille des "paroles", le type d'investissement. *L'information* touche l'imaginaire individuel de l'enfant; *la création* est le temps de l'activité pratique; le temps de *parole libre* permet l'expression verbale et le dialogue sans lesquels le sens ne naîtrait pas. *La prière* est la production originale du lieu liturgique (Lagarde et Lagarde 1980: 103-104).

Le professeur de religion ou l'animateur peut employer un ensemble de fiches ou de séquences indépendantes les unes des autres et dont l'ordre peut varier. Il peut les choisir en fonction de leur contenu qui peut être adapté aux centres d'intérêt des enfants ou en fonction de leurs difficultés, d'où la possibilité d'une progression. L'animateur de catéchèse peut repérer aisément dans les fiches ce qui est information, ce qui est activité de création et ce qui est célébration. Connaissant bien les enfants, dont il a la charge, il peut modifier la fiche en conséquence: augmenter l'information, rendre l'expression plus attrayante ou la prière

plus spontanée. Les auteurs des fiches, respectivement des projets didactiques, incitent d'ailleurs souvent à l'invention.

Le temps de parole libre est plus difficile à repérer, parce qu'il n'est pas forcément prévu d'une manière explicite. La parole est parfois donnée à l'enfant dans un but précis: à partir des questions orientées, à partir d'un dessin ou d'une formule à expliquer. Une telle activité n'est pas entièrement libre dans la mesure où elle ne permet pas une expression différente ou une critique. Les différentes informations données, qu'elles soient "prises dans la vie" ou dans la Bible, contiennent le mot central ou l'image clé: repas, appel, eau, etc. On demande parfois même à l'enfant d'apporter son expérience ou ses observations et donc de prolonger l'information. De telles fiches mettent en œuvre des opérations de rapprochement. On vit des temps où l'enfant n'écoute pas passivement des explications et des commentaires théologiques, mais il fait des rapprochements qui permettent une certaine compréhension.

La chef de l'interprétation de la Bible se trouve dans les rapprochements constants entre l'Ancien Testament et le Nouveau Testament. Toute lecture de l'Ancien Testament est une lecture christologique et derrière les textes néo-testamentaires il faut lire les images et les récits de l'Ancien Testament.

Cette correspondance entre les deux testaments fonde la divinité de Jésus de Nazareth. Les chrétiens ont confessé Jésus-Christ, Fils de Dieu, en utilisant l'Ancien Testament. Seule la comparaison des évangiles à l'Ancien Testament permet de comprendre le Mystère du Christ. Il n'est plus possible de s'en tenir à la signification initiale du récit. L'illumination consiste donc à méditer les Ecritures pour y découvrir en filigrane, à travers les multiples évocations, la figure du divin: "La Bible contenait bien un secret caché dans le repli de ses mots. Nous le proclamons toujours. Les apôtres ont crié ce secret sur les toits. Ce mystère s'appelle «Evangile», il est celui du temps qui jusqu'ici restait voilé, gardé en réserve par Dieu depuis les origines. Tout à coup sa Révélation éclate comme un coup de tonnerre (Jn 12, 29). Le voile du Temple se déchire, libérant le sens des Ecritures. La Croix en est la cause. A partir d'elle, l'histoire biblique est tout entière transfigurée" (Lagarde 1991: 38).

Les évangiles sont une reprise des mots et des images de l'Ancien Testament. Ceux-ci deviennent langage pour dire un aspect du credo.

Par exemple, lorsque le récit de la Passion chez Matthieu parle de Jésus comme de l'agneau muet, cette «vieille image» rappelle toute une série de récits de l'Ancien Testament. «L'Exode où le Pasteur mène sa petit brebis au désert, le beau récit d'Ezéchiel où l'on voit le troupeau errant, le psaume 22 où l'agneau est mis à mort... deviennent un langage et ont un contenu: le crucifié ressuscité. Les images de l'Ancien Testament deviennent christologiques et liturgiques. Ils deviennent le vocabulaire d'images pour dire le «contenu» de la foi, le credo: la plupart désigne Jésus, soit directement (par exemple: berger, agneau, roi, serviteur, étoile, soleil, etc.), soit indirectement en désignant la Croix (bois, poutre, barque) ou un des sacrements (eau, pain, vin, repas, etc.). L'incarnation de Jésus, c'est-à-dire sa plongée et sa sortie est évoquée par les images du désert, de la traversée, de la guérison, de la résurrection. Certaines images désignent plus spécifiquement l'Esprit (la colombe, le feu, le vent, etc.), d'autres l'Eglise (le peuple de Dieu, le bateau, le Temple, la femme).

Pour accéder au langage de l'Eglise, l'enfant touche deux objectifs pédagogiques qu'on peut identifier chez les Lagarde et chez moi, en Roumanie.

1. Il doit enraciner les mots qu'il apprend dans une expérience anecdotique de la vie. Il va lier, par exemple, le mot *guérison* à plusieurs situations personnelles dont il a le souvenir. Cet enracinement des mots dans l'expérience quotidienne est le travail de la famille et de l'école qui s'y emploie d'ailleurs de mieux en mieux.

2. L'enfant doit «déconstruire» ce qu'il a appris pour entrer dans l'analogie. C'est le travail de la catéchèse. L'Evangile contredit même des évidences rationnelles démontrées par l'expérience pratique.

Bien que Dieu se soit fait homme, une distance infinie existe entre Jésus – Le Verbe – et nous. Jésus-Christ nous appelle mais nous ne pouvons pas l'imiter puisqu'il est Dieu. Et cette distance (Cf. 1 Co 11, 1; Ph 3, 17; 1 Th 1, 7) qui nous sépare de Dieu est due au péché qui obscurcit notre intelligence et limite notre action. L'appel de Jésus se réalise dans la méditation des Ecritures et dans la vie sacramentelle. Nous investissons les mots d'une certaine façon parce qu'ils ont statut de

confession de foi. L'analogie définit bien le "fonctionnement" de tout le langage de l'Eglise.

"On comprend dès lors l'importance de la distinction des «paroles» de l'homme dans la pratique catéchétique si on ne veut pas réduire la profession de foi à un savoir positif ou à une morale indépendante de Dieu" (Lagarde 1983: 168).

Au début l'enseignement religieux a été organisé et développé dans les églises et monastères, et, plus tard, dans les écoles. Les premiers professeurs ont été les prêtres, et après que l'enseignement religieux ait été pris par l'Etat, il a été réalisé par les maîtres et les professeurs.

On ne doit pas oublier deux choses: premièrement que *l'enfant* représente l'Amour, est celui qui désire voir tout, qui veut agir et valoriser toutes les possibilités de la vie. Deuxièmement, *le vieux* représente la Sagesse qui observe, analyse et conclut. Les deux doivent aller ensemble – ils sont: l'enfant – l'élève, et le vieux ou le sage – le professeur de religion.

Les enfants sont pleins de confiance en eux-mêmes, ils croient qu'ils peuvent lutter contre les adultes, les vaincre, qu'ils sont plus forts qu'eux. Quand ils essaient cette chose, même s'ils ne réussissent pas, ils y continuent à croire. C'est pourquoi l'enfance représente le moment propice de la modération spirituelle, car ils croient dans leurs forces; plus ils vont croire dans la puissance de Dieu, insuffler par la foi de l'éducateur.

Le respect ne remplit jamais notre âme; ce n'est que l'amour qui vous rend heureux. Le professeur de religion finira sa mission de guide vers la Royaume de Dieu, non par l'imposition du respect aux élèves, mais par l'amour avec lequel il va les entourer.

Celui qui refuse la Religion perd le sens de l'existence. C'est pourquoi la religion est la seule voie qu'on doit suivre pour connaître Dieu. La religion a sa source d'inspiration tant dans la Révélation naturelle que dans la Révélation surnaturelle. Jésus a dit: "La vie éternelle c'est qu'ils te connaissent toi, le seul véritable Dieu; et ton envoyé, Jésus-Christ" (Jn 17, 3).

Connaître Jésus signifie connaître son œuvre, et la connaissance est l'un des donc du Saint Esprit. Qu'on aide l'enfant à recevoir l'Esprit Saint

qui le guide vers la Lumière et puisse devenir adulte du point de vue spirituel.

La manque de la religion représente une vie artificielle pour l'enfant. Quelque part, Comenius disait: "la branche doit être courbée tant qu'elle est verte". La religion doit être enseignée avec beaucoup de sagesse. Elle est la racine dont l'homme pousse dans sa normalité.

À mon avis, pour enseigner la religion, on a besoin d'un guide pratique, d'une didactique de la religion. Par cette "discipline", on ne suit pas seulement la communication des connaissances, mais la construction des caractères moraux, l'implantation dans les âmes des enfants des convictions religieuses, en consolidant ainsi la conscience du devoir envers Dieu.

Mais, en ce qui concerne le lieu institutionnel, c'est-à-dire l'école (dans notre cas), on doit être attentif à deux aspects:

a. Si le partenaire "savoir" est privilégié, on parlera d'une "dérive programmée" (Baumann 1999: 95). L'être humain n'est qu'une bibliothèque technique, la vie n'est rien de plus qu'un problème technique.

b. Si l'enseignement est privilégié, on parlera d'une "dérive démiurgique" (Baumann 1999: 95). Elle va produire la pensée unique et la dépendance absolue. La vie ne sera qu'une copie conforme.

c. Si l'acteur "élève" est sollicité à être actif en permanence, on parlera d'une "dérive psychologique" (Baumann 1999: 96).

Il est difficile de trouver l'équilibre. Même si j'ai proposé deux projets didactiques traditionnels, j'insiste et je propose que l'école devienne aujourd'hui un lieu d'apprentissage de la différence, un espace d'écoute tolérante où chacun trouve sa place. La laïcité de l'enseignement religieux implique le respect de la liberté religieuse.

Les traditions religieuses doivent être interrogées au niveau des questions qui les rassemblent, car leurs réponses sont toujours d'ordre confessionnel et institutionnel.

L'enseignement doit encourager l'apprentissage autonome des élèves. Une telle pédagogie se veut critique à l'égard de certaines attitudes traditionnelles de l'enseignement.

Je pense qu'on doit "appliquer" chez nous aussi, l'idée protestante telle que le pédagogue propose et l'élève dispose. Il doit initier un

dialogue critique entre les élèves et les différentes traditions religieuses. La valeur de leurs affirmations religieuses se mesure à leur capacité d'humaniser la vie.

Ainsi l'école doit encourager et développer les compétences intellectuelles, émotionnelles et affectives des apprenants.

Comme lieu de communication, elle conduit à la découverte de la complexité et de l'interdisciplinarité. Elle tente de préparer des "usages à la multiculturalité" (Baumann 1999: 107).

La didactique de la religion est un double instrument. D'une part, elle esquisse les contours généraux de toute activité catéchétique, d'autre part, elle fournit les moyens d'une analyse de la situation concrète afin de permettre à chacun la réalisation concrète d'un projet catéchétique.

La didactique de la religion n'a pas une difficulté d'ordre théorique, mais plutôt psychologique, car elle met en cause des schémas théologiques et éducatifs marqués par la rigidité de la tradition et des habitudes. Notre démarche révèle la cohérence et les correspondances entre les niveaux théologique (Dieu, Jésus, l'espérance), didactique (la problématique, le test) et pédagogique (la confiance, les choix, les projets).

La réalisation des objectifs proposés dépend de la modalité dont le professeur combine l'exposition des connaissances avec l'amour paternel, mais sérieux et même sévère jusqu'à un tel point. "Or le serviteur de Dieu ne doit pas être querelleur, mais accueillant à tous, capable d'instruire, patient dans l'épreuve; c'est avec douceur qu'il doit reprendre les opposants, en songeant que Dieu, peut-être, leur donnera de se convertir de connaître la vérité" (2 Tm 2, 24-25).

Le cœur du professeur de religion doit avoir comme idéal l'Amour divin, l'Intellect – la Sagesse divine, et la volonté – la Force divine. Ce n'est qu'ainsi il pourra transformer l'enfant dans un véritable Fils de Dieu, auquel Dieu donnera la vie éternelle – le but suprême vers lequel on doit tous aspirer.

L'éducation chrétienne ajoute encore un élément: la grâce divine. C'est Jésus lui-même qui précise cela: "Demeurez en moi, comme moi en vous. De même que le sarment ne peut pas de lui-même porter du fruit, sans demeurer sur le cep, ainsi vous non plus, si vous ne demeurez en moi. Je suis le cep; vous êtes les sarments. Qui demeure en moi, comme

moi en lui porte beaucoup de fruit; car hors de moi, vous ne pouvez rien faire” (Jn 15, 4-5).

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Unpublished Musical Manuscripts from Agapia Monastery (20th century)

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Abstract:

The present study briefly describes seven novelty musical manuscripts stored in the library of Agapia Monastery (Neamț County, Romania). These were gathered in the course of the 20th century, representing collections of psaltic chants used in church services. Analyzing these manuscripts, I have identified without question the nuns preference for chants composed by Romanian authors. I have also noticed the involvement and musical influence of professor and composer Gh. N. Carp in the Psaltic Singing School from Agapia in the years between the World Wars.

Keywords: *Agapia Monastery, psaltic music, musical manuscripts, church singing, composers, Gh. N. Carp*

Since its establishment (17th century), Agapia Monastery (Neamț County, Romania) has made significant contributions to church singing and the musical training of monastic communities. In 1871, a church singing school was established, at Abbess Tavefta Ursache's initiative. Mother Tavefta mentions in her request for the school's establishment that "ten young girls, pupils at Primary School in Agapia Monastery, and other orphans, raised by their relatives, our nuns, showed singing talent and devoted themselves to psaltic singing. The undersigned, convinced of the dire necessity for singers of our church, the number of whom diminishes because of illnesses, and attrition ... (for that), Your Holiness, with profound respect, please give me the blessing so I can open this little school of psaltic singers..." (*File 30/1871, address no 702*).

This school was reorganized in 1932 under the guidance of Professor Gheorghe Carp from Iasi and in 1952 it was transformed into a monastic school (Ciucanu s.a.: 125-128). Throughout the 20th century we have identified notable involvement of renowned teachers in the musical

training of nuns from Agapia Monastery: Archdeacon Filotei Moroșanu, Gheorghe Carp (within the musical manuscripts from Agapia Monastery, papers and various adaptations by Gh. Carp were included, which proves once more his involvement in training the nuns and assisting the choir of the monastery, *File* 14/1926, fol. 94), Mother Eufrosina Mihailescu, graduate of the Conservatory of Iasi, Protosingelos Ghervasie Hulubaru, Mother Andrieș Pulcheria (Ciucanu, s.a.: 127-128), Deacon Grigore Panțiru, Mother Ambrozia Hrițuc, Priest Anibal Panțiru, etc., and today Mother Colonescu Ignatia, conductor of the “Venerable Raphael from Agapia” choir of nuns.

Continuity of concern for church music in the 20th century at Agapia Monastery is very much reflected in musical manuscripts stored in its library. Therefore, the present paper describes briefly seven new manuscripts found at Agapia Monastery, in which the main chants used during church service are illustrated and also some compositions of lesser known authors.

1. MS 427/1998

It is a notebook of songs, with hard back cover, reddish, in two parts, written with chrysanthine notation (the first part is a kind of sheet music for voice I, but with psaltic notation, and the second part, sheet music for voice II).

Title: *Songs for the Divine Liturgy*, found at the beginnings of the first and second parts (fol. 2r, for part I, and fol. 22r, for part II).

Format: A5

Number of folios: 89 numbered folios, plus one folio A4 inserted at the beginning of the notebook with a summary of the copied songs. They are written only on the front side of the page. The folios have two types of numbering. Here, the numbering in chemical pencil was considered.

Number of lines per page: ten lines per page, with large spaces in between, and some pages with eleven lines, written in purple ink.

Language: Romanian with Latin characters.

Scribe/Dating: The notebook belonged to the nuns Anisia and Tatiana, according to some notes (fol. 2, 49, 84r), but it was written by Priest Constantin Rădulescu (fol. 2r, 22r), in 1934.

Authors: The scribe does not mention the authors of the songs or of the secondary vocal part. But, in comparison with other collections of printed songs or manuscripts, we have identified, among others, these authors of the psalic melodies: Anton Pann, Iosif Naniescu, Ioan Zmeu, G. Claru, Ghelasie Basarabeanul, etc. In the making of voice II, Priest C. Rădulescu, the scribe of this manuscript, may have contributed (illustrated by some of his signatures, written at the bottom of the page, fol. 49r, 84v).

Content: Songs, in general, from the Divine Liturgy service, for two voices, and some for three voices:

The Great Litany, mode 8 and the *1st and 2nd Antiphons*, mode 5, traditional variants (fol. 3-5 for voice I, respectively fol. 23-24, for the second voice), *O Lord, save the pious*, mode 8 triphonos, the *Trisagion Hymn*, mode 5, by Ghelasie Basarabeanul, *Halleluiah*, mode 8, a recitative variant, *The Litany of Fervent Supplication*, mode 8, traditional (fol. 5-7, respectively fol. 25-27), *Cherubic hymn*, mode 8 (fol. 7-9, respectively fol. 27-29), *The Litany of Supplication*, mode 8 (fol. 9, respectively fol. 29), the *Leitourgika*, mode 8, according to Iosif Naniescu (fol. 9-11, respectively f. 29-31), *The Hymn to the Theotokos*, mode 5 (fol. 11-12, respectively fol. 31, 32), *And each and every one*, mode 8, *One is Holy*, mode 8 (fol. 12-13, respectively fol. 32-33), *How glorified*, mode 8, the *Trisagion Hymn*, mode 3, *My hope*, mode 5, *The mystery of Christianity*, mode 5 (fol. 13-14, respectively fol. 33-34), *Blessed is the man*, mode 8 (fol. 15-17, respectively fol. 35-37), *Our Father*, mode 5, by A. Pann, *Psalm 145*, mode 5 (fol. 18-20, respectively fol. 38-40), plus other two copies (fol. 70-72 and fol. 74-76, for voice I, but fol. 77-79 and fol. 80-82, for the second voice). We offer the following examples:

voice I Δ

A - li - lu - i - a, A - li - lu - i - a, A - li - lu - i - a.

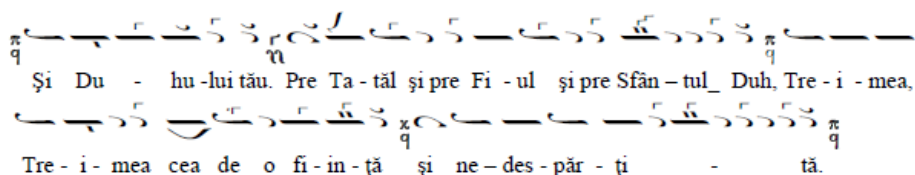
voice II Δ

v. I Δ

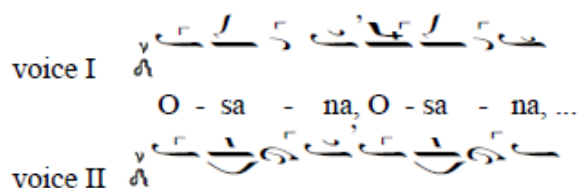
Doam-ne mi - lu - ieș - te, Doam-ne mi-lu- ieș - te, Doam-ne mi - lu - ieș - te.

v. II Δ

In the second part of the notebook there are other songs for one or more voices: 4 copies of the *Leitourgika*, mode 5, for voice I (unknown author, fol. 41-48), and a copy for voice II (fol. 67-68);



Patriarchal Hymn (composed of these parts: *O, Holy, Holy, Holy, I will hope in the Lord* and *Hosanna in the highest*), mode 8, three copies for voice I (fol. 50, fol. 83 and fol. 87) and three for voice III (fol. 49, fol. 88-89);



The Hymn to the Theotokos, mode 5, two copies for voice II (fol. 51-52 and fol. 55-56) and two for third voice (fol. 59-60 and fol. 63-64), *Hymn to the Theotokos*, mode 6, by I. Zmeu – *Don't cry for me, Mother, when you see me in my grave...* – “written by Priest Constantin Rădulescu” (fol. 84r-v), *Cherubic hymn*, mode 5, voices II and III (fol. 85r-86v), according to G. Claru's melody.

Unwritten pages: fol. 21, fol. 53-54, fol. 57-58, fol. 61-62, fol. 65-66, fol. 69, fol. 73.

Notes:

- fol. 2r, in green ink, at the top of the page: “M. Anisia”, and in purple ink: “The songs of Divine Liturgy, written by Priest Constantin Rădulescu. 1934”;

- fol. 22r: “The songs of Divine Liturgy, written by Priest Constantin Rădulescu. 1934”;

- fol. 49, in greenish ink, at the top left side of the page: “m. Tatiana”, and at the bottom the scribe's signature, as in fol. 50, 52, 56, 60, 64: “Pr. C. Rădulescu”;

- fol. 84r, in black: "Mother Anisia", on fol. 84v: "written by Priest Constantin Rădulescu".

MS 427 is therefore a choir repertoire of songs from Divine Liturgy service, arranged for two or three equal voices, in the form of sheet music in psaltic notation. It constitutes a clear testimony of the interpretation practice for more voices in Agapia Monastery toward the middle of the 20th century.

2. MS 250 (old inventory 534)

This is a notebook of church songs, with purple hard back and a golden cross on the dark background of the cover I (it is mentioned and described briefly by Hieromonk Veniamin Palaghiu, in his graduate thesis 1975: 63).

Title: written at the top of the cover *Ir – Musical bouquet*, and at the bottom: "Church Saint Ioan Blagoslov".

Format: A5 (21cm/17cm).

Number of folios and pages: 153 folios numbered with Arabic figures and 10 pages at the beginning of the notebook, numbered with Roman figures (p. I-X), all in A5 format, lined.

Number of lines on the page: usually 9 lines per page, in double red framework. The text of the songs and neums are written in black ink, with titles and capital letters in red ink.

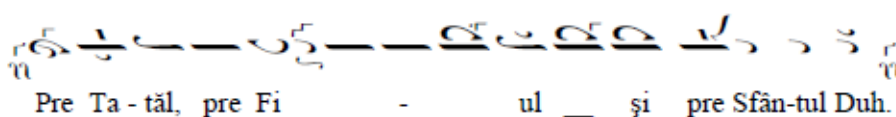
Language: Romanian in Cyrillic characters, most of them, but also in Latin characters (fol. 141v-153r).

Scribe/Dating: the scribe is not mentioned, but, reading the notebook, we conclude that it was written by the end of the year, 1957 (fol. 148v), by a nun living at Agapia Monastery, possibly Agnia Stamate (fol. 38r). The notebook contains many songs of Professor G. N. Carp, who trained the nuns in church music. Also, the notebook was used by the nuns of Agapia Monastery, thus the presence of a song – *Happy birthday* – being explained, in honor of Abbess Epraxia, written by the same Professor, G. Carp (fol. 58).

Authors: A. Pann, D. Suceveanu, I. Zmeu, Alexandru Raicu, I. P. Pasărea, G. N. Carp, Nifon Ploieșteanul, N. Bărcan, Cociu, Filip Paleologul, etc.

Content:

Generally, it contains songs necessary for the serving of the Divine Liturgy: *Cherubic hymns*, mode 1, “of I. Smeu” and mode 7 varis, of Zo diatonic (fol. 1r-13r), others, “from Anton Pann’s book”, modes 1, 7, 4, 8 and 5 (fol. 13v-22v), *Leitourgika*, mode 5, “by (Alexandru) Raicu” (fol. 22v-24v), others, by A. Pann (fol. 24v-26v), mode 3, “from *ca.* high note Ke”;



Leitourgika, mode 5, “by Cociu” (fol. 26v-28v), others, mode 5, by I. P. Pasărea and A. Pann (fol. 28v-32r), mode 8 triphonos, by A. Pann (fol. 32r-34r), others, mode 8, by A. Pann (fol. 34r-35v), “*Answers*, revealed by D. Prof. G. N. Carp, after (Filip) Paleologul”, mode 5 (fol. 35v-37v), others, mode 2, with this note – “Agnia Stamate” (fol. 38r-39v), *Our Father*, modes 8, “vocal music”, and 5, “overwritten” (fol. 40v-42r), *Leitourgika* by A. Pann, modes 4, “leghetos”, and 6 (fol. 43r-46v), *The Symbol of Faith*, mode 5, “musical track by A. Pann” (fol. 46v-49r), *1st and 2nd Antiphons* (Psalms 102 and 145 in their entirety), mode 5, by Nifon Ploieșteanul (fol. 49v-54r), *You, who were born*, mode 5, “of Pasărea” (fol. 54v-55v), *Assumption Hymn*, mode 1, “August 15th, composed by D. Prof. Carp” (fol. 55v-56r), *To Thee, the Champion Leader*, mode 8, “by the same – Carp” (fol. 56r-v), *Let our mouths be filled* (traditional version), mode 5, “by the same one, measure in 2” (fol. 56v-57v), *Apostles from margins*, “by the same one”, mode 3, “May the Lord bless our Humble and Saintly Abbess with many years”, mode 8, by G. Carp (fol. 57v-58v), *Happy birthday*, mode 6 (Anonymous, fol. 58v-59r), *Trisagion Hymn*, mode 3, by A. Pann, another, mode 1 (fol. 59r-60v), *O Lord, save the pious, And hear us*, mode 8 triphonos, *All of you who have been baptized into Christ*, mode 1, *We bow in worship before Your Cross*, mode 5, *Lord, have mercy*, mode 2, *Let my prayer arise*, mode 1 (fol. 59r-62v), *Hymns to the Theotokos* (fol. 63v-101v), modes 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, “from I. Smeu’s book”, mode 5, “gathered, prescribed from Văratec” (fol. 75), another, “Muntenian”, others, by Cociu, mode 3 (fol.

83), “of Bărcan, in harmony”, mode 5 “hisar” (fol. 88), by (G. N.) Carp (fol. 86v) and (A.) Raicu (fol. 94r), mode 5; by I. P. Pasărea, mode 8 and by A. Pann, modes 1, 5 and 8; *Cherubic Hymns* (modes 8, respectively 6) and *Special Hymns to the Theotokos* (modes 5, respectively 6), for the Great and Holy Thursday and Saturday (unmentioned authors, fol. 102v-114), *The Angel has cried*, mode 1, “from D. Suceveanu’s book” (in three variants), *All of creation rejoices in you*, modes 8 and 5, by I. Zmeu (fol. 124r-126r), *From the Master’s feast - Megalynarion of the Great and Holy Thursday*, mode 6, by Gh. Carp (fol. 128r-v), *Psalm 102*, mode 5, *Psalm 145*, modes 5 and 8, *All of creation rejoices in you*, mode 5, “translated from *Great Doxology* sung at *The Burial of Christ*”, *Hymn to the Theotokos*, mode 5, after the melody of *Fatherly Arms*, written in November the 2nd 1957 (fol. 148v), *Cherubic Hymns*, modes 5 and 8, *Leitourgika*, mode 8, by I. P. Pasărea, *Hymn to the Theotokos*, mode 5 (fol. 129-151), the text of *Christ is risen from the dead* song (fol. 153v).

Folios and pages unwritten: p. II-VIII, fol. 42v.

Notes:

- p. Ir, in pencil, at the top left: “Blessings”;
- p. IX, in pencil: “Of Church Saint Ioan Blogoslov”, and in black ink, at the bottom of the page: “please, not to be given away”;
- fol. 38r: “Agnia Stamate”;
- fol. 148v: “2 Nov. 1957”;
- fol. 139r-140r – from the text of the *Prayer Canon* to the Holy Mother of God, „waiting for the war”.

MS 250 is an anthology of psaltic songs for Divine Liturgy service, officiated in the church “St. Ioan Blogoslovul” of New Agapia Monastery, in the middle of the 20th century, in which Romanian authors are favored, such as A. Pann, I. P. Pasărea, Al. Raicu, and Gh. N. Carp – music teacher for the nuns of this monastery.

3. MS 739/2002 (old inventory 356, 539)

It represents an anthology of church songs, with hardbacks and a cross engraved on the cover Ir.

Title: on the cover Ir: *Bouquet of church singing*, and on fol. 2r: „Bouquet of church singing gathered from many bouquets for the Church of the Assumption”.

Format: A5

Number of folios: there are two kinds of numbering, first with 276 folios (Palaghiu 1975: 61), and the second, which we are going to use in describing the manuscript, with 253 folios (in chemical pencil). The notebook contains A5 lined pages, written on both sides.

Number of lines per page: approximately 9 lines per page.

Language/Notation: Romanian, with Cyrillic characters; Chrysantine psaltic notation.

Scribe/Dating: The notebook was written by a nun (fol. 4r), unnamed, around the year 1934 (July 20th, fol. 2r), for Vespers and Matins services officiated in the Church of the Assumption and then it was bought by nun Eufrosina Baroi. In 1940, the notebook and five other copies, put together with help from Mrs. Silvia Paraschev, were given to the three churches mentioned below, in fol. 251v.

Authors: A. Pann, I. Zmeu, Ghelasie Basarabeanul, Memnon Glavan, Gh. Carp, Doroftei (Iordachiu), Manolache, etc.

Content: songs for Vespers: *Anixantaria*, mode 8, *Blessed is the man*, mode 8 and mode 5, by Gh. Carp (fol. 9v), plus other songs for evening service; *Fatherly arms*, mode 5, “the work of Dorofteiu, singer at Neamț Monastery” (fol. 33r); chants for Matins: *Polyeleos for Theotokos - Kind word*, mode 4, the polyelea *By the rivers of Babylon*, mode 3, and *O ye servants, praise the Lord*, modes 5, 2, and 1, by I. Zmeu, the *Great Doxology*, mode 8, by Manolache, mode 5, by Ghelasie Basarabeanul, mode 8, by A. Pann, the *Great Doxology of The Burial of Christ*, mode 5 etc., *Psalm 50*, on notes, “beat in two, mode 7, composed by Mr. Prof. Gheorghe Carp” (fol. 49v-51v), *Exapostilarion* for the Nativity of Christ – *Our Savior the dayspring of the East*, mode 3, “for December 25th, comp. by D. G. Carp” (fol. 52r-v), *Heirmos* on January 1st, by Gh. Carp (fol. 54r), the addition to Ghelasie Basarabeanul’s *Great Doxology*, mode 5, written in Latin characters (fol. 84r-v), *Polyeleos for Theotokos*, mode 5, by Memnon Glavan (fol. 232), etc.

Unwritten folios: fol. Iv, fol. 1r-v, fol. 2v, fol. 55v, fol. 58r-59v, fol. 72r-73v, fol. 105-106, fol. 128-129, fol. 131r-132v, 137r-231v, 246v-250r.

Torn or missing folios: fol. 62r-v – torn; between fol. 62 and 63, 8 leaves are missing, between fol. 84-85, one leaf missing, and between fol. 132-133, there are 5 leaves missing.

Notes:

- fol. Ir at the beginning of the notebook, with chemical pencil: “Right lectern”;

- fol. 2r, in red: “Bouquet of psaltic music gathered from many bouquets for the Church of The Assumption. 1934, July 20th; Just bought from M. Efrosina Baroi”;

- fol. 3r și 4r, at the bottoms of the pages: “M. Efrosina ..., written by a nun”;

- fol. 250v: “these books, in our year 1940, in the days of His Holiness, the Metropolitan of Moldova and Suceava and Our Abbess, Agafia Velase, are a gift”;

- fol. 251r: “the year 1940; in remembrance. Mrs. Silvia Paraschev, for all her kindness, love and at her expense, helped in the making of these books, and moreover, she gave pledge books. She is a benefactor to be remembered forever. Amen”;

- fol. 251v: “For remembrance. For the making of these six books which will be given to three churches, as follows: 2 books – To the Church of *The Assumption*, 2 books – to the Cathedral Church *Holy Voivodes* and 2 books to the Church of *Old Agapia*, it was Father Nicodim Măndiță who contributed”;

- fol. 252r: “Contributions from (1938): Nuns Eufrosina Baroiu, Eufrosina Petenghea, Amf. Teleanu, Agapia Paroiu, Fevronia Jinghel, Rev. Damian Bădicu, Mrs. Lucreția Ionescu, Mrs. Lucreția Albină, Mr. and Mrs. Ecaterina and Gh. Ciurea”;

- fol. 252-253: “Curricula”.

MS 739/2002 is an anthology of chants for Vespers and Matins, used in the fourth decade of the 20th century, in the right lectern of the Church of *The Assumption* from Agapia Monastery. The musical content fits with the tradition of Neamț monasteries, with authors such as Memnon Glavan, Doroftei Iordachiu and Gh. Carp.

4. MS A not included in the inventory

It looks like an A5 notebook with hardbacks, containing songs mostly for the Divine Liturgy, but also some for Vespers and Matins.

Title: it is not mentioned, but, from the content, we deduce that it is a bouquet of psaltic music.

Format: A5.

Number of leaves: 117 numbered leaves of which only the first 39 contain church songs, the others (fol. 40-117) contain the text of sermons.

Number of lines on page: 9-10 lines per page, the neums being written in black, and the text in red.

Language/Notation: Romanian language, in Latin characters; psaltic (Chrysantine) notation.

Scribe/Dating: From the only notation on fol. 31r, we can deduce that at least a part of this notebook's songs were copied by Gheorghe Mardarie, in the first decade of the 20th century (December 20th, 1906).

Authors: D. Suceveanu, Mr. Gâdeiu, Gh. Grigoriu, Gheorghiu Mardarie, etc.

Content: *the Evlogitaria* (on Sundays), mode 5, by D. Suceveanu (fol. 1), *Polyeleos for Theotokos – Kind word*, mode 4 (fol. 4v and fol. 33), *Katavasia on Palm Sunday*, mode 4 (fol. 9v), *Katavasia of the Ascension of the Lord*, mode 7 (fol. 12v), *Katavasia of the Assumption*, mode 1 (fol. 15), *Now the heavenly powers*, mode 6 (fol. 17v), *Hymns to the Theotokos for Great and Holy Thursday*, mode 6 (fol. 19r), for Great and Holy Saturday, mode 6 (fol. 19v), *Megalynarion (Axion estin)*, mode 2, “at the Archbishop worship – at Vespers” (fol. 20v), *Megalynarion (Axion estin)*, mode 8 (fol. 21r), *Leitourgika*, mode 8, “composed by Mr. Gâdeiu, protopsaltes of Huși Bishopric and teacher of both kinds of music” (fol. 23r), *Megalynarion*, mode 5, by Mr. Gâdeiu (fol. 25), *Cherubic Hymn*, mode 1 (fol. 26), *Great Doxology*, mode 2, “translated by Gh. Grigoriu; December 17th, 1906” (fol. 28), *Megalynaria*, mode 1 (fol. 31v), mode 4 (fol. 36), *Blessed is the man*, mode 8, “by Gheorghiu Mardarie” (fol. 37), *Megalynarion*, mode 6, by Gh. Mardarie (fol. 39).

Fol. 40-115 contains words of spiritual benefit and in fol. 116 the text of the carol *Three Magi* is written.

Notes:

- fol. 31r: “the end of the Great Doxology, mode 2; 1906, December 20th, Grigoriu Apostolachi”.

The afore-mentioned notebook does not belong to the tradition of Neamț monasteries; it seems to belong to the church music schools of Professor Gâdei from Huși.

5. MS B not included in the inventory

This is a notebook of medium size, with green hardbacks, tab and leather margins. On the cover I a lyre is engraved, and, on a piece of paper, the name Irina Țăbară is written in red.

Title: it is not mentioned, but, from the content, we deduce that this notebook is a bouquet of church songs for the service of the Divine Liturgy, in particular.

Format: A5.

Number of leaves: 192 leaves, written on both sides, numbered automatically.

Number of lines on page: 8 lines per page; the titles of songs and the capital letters are written in red, and the psaltic neums, including the text, in black ink, sometimes blue. Sometimes, the scribe drew, around the titles, floral ornaments in pencil or colors.

Language/Notation: Romanian language, with Cyrillic characters; Chrysantine notation.

Scribe/Dating: the name of the scribe is not clearly mentioned; we know that this notebook belonged to Mother Irina Țăbară and from the two notations below that it was written between 1930-1933.

Authors: A. Pann, D. Suceveanu, I. Zmeu, Em. Zmeu, Iosif Naniescu, Gh. N. Carp, Ghelasie Basarabeanul, Varlaam Protosingelos, G. Claru, Filip Paleologu, A. Raicu, Ioniță Năpârcă, A. L. Ghenadie, M. Nectarie, I. P. Pasărea.

Content: two *Megalynaria*, mode 6, the first, by Ioniță Năpârcă, and the second, “following the Russian tradition” (fol. 2v-3v), *Blessed is the man*, mode 5, “gentle, slow, refined, carefully maintained”, signed in pencil, “Carp” (fol. 4r), *O Gladsome Light*, modes 2 and 8 (fol. 7v-11r), *Anixantaria*, mode 8 (fol. 11v), *Polyeleos for Theotokos*, mode 2, (fol. 17r), *Great Doxology*, mode 5, by Ghelasie Basarabeanul (fol. 35r), *Ist*

Antiphon, mode 5, 2nd *Antiphon*, mode 2, “of A. Pann” (fol. 53r), *O come, let us worship*, mode 2, by I. Zmeu (fol. 57v), *Troparia for ordaining* (fol. 5r-v), *I will love thee, O Lord*, mode 5 (fol. 59), *Let my prayer be directed like incense before you*, mode 2, *Cherubic Hymns*, mode 5, by G. Claru (fol. 62v), another, mode 5, *Cherubic Hymn*, mode 7 protovaris, by A. Pann (fol. 67r), others, mode 4, by A. Pann, mode 8, by I. Zmeu, mode 5 (fol. 71v- 80r), *Leitourgika*, mode 8, by Iosif Naniescu, the Canticle of Simeon – *Master, now let Your servant depart in peace*, mode 5, ”composed by Mr. Prof. Gh. Carp, 1932” (fol. 82v), another, mode 7, by the same author, *Leitourgika*, mode 5, “after Filip Paleologu (Craiova) 1854, adapted by I. Popescu-Pasărea” (fol. 83r), *Since I, the sinner*, mode 5, “composed by D. Prof. G. Carp” (fol. 86r), *You have stepped over the enemy in great strides*, for September 24th, by G. Carp (fol. 89v), *Let our mouths be filled*, mode 5, “beat in 2, D. D. Prof. G. Carp, 1932” (fol. 91r), *Our Father*, mode 5 (other version than that of A. Pann), *Leitourgika*, mode 2 (fol. 95r), mode 5 by (A.) Raicu (fol. 97r), mode 8 (fol. 99v), mode 5, by Varlaam Protosingelos (fol. 103v), mode 6, by Ioniță Năpârcă (fol. 106r), mode 4 (fol. 107v), modes 5 and 8, *For the Master*, mode 2 (fol. 114v), *Cherubic Hymn*, mode 5, *Megalynaria*, mode 8 (fol. 118r), mode 1, mode 5, “Muntenian” (fol. 121v), mode 5, “by A. L. Ghenadie” (fol. 122v), four other versions, mode 5, a version on mode 8, others, mode 7 with *Zo agem* (fol. 134v), mode 2, by M. Nectariu (fol. 136r), mode 5, by (A.) Raicu (fol. 137v), mode 8, “original, harmonized by I. P. Pasărea” (fol. 139r), mode 5, by I. Zmeu, mode 1, *All of creation rejoices in you*, mode 5 (fol. 148r), another, by I. Zmeu (fol. 150r), *Turn not thy face away from thy servant*, mode 8, “from A. Pann’s book”, *Megalynarion for Pascha - The angel spake to her*, mode 1, by A. Pann (fol. 158v), *Christ is risen from the dead*, mode 1, “from D. Suceveanu’s book” (fol. 162r), *Megalynarion*, mode 5, by Em. Zmeu, “translated from Greek”, “December 25th, *Exapostilarion of the Nativity*, by D. G. Carp”, mode 3 (fol. 181r), *Doxastikon* for “Three Holy Hierarchs”, by Gh. Carp (fol. 182r), *Megalynarion*, mode 5, “following the Russian tradition” (fol. 192r).

Notes:

- fol. 51v: “This flower was drawn on the 20th of November, 1933”;
- fol. 192r: “1930, November (8), brought from Neamț Monastery”.

MS B is a collection of church songs, mostly for the service of the Divine Liturgy. We notice again, in the heart of things, Professor Gh. Carp, with more compositions, which proves his undeniable influence, musically speaking, on the Agapia Monastery community.

6. Ms. C not included in the inventory

It is a notebook with few leaves, no covers.

Title: not mentioned.

Format: A5.

Number of leaves: 22 leaves, on which only the first 8 are written.

Number of lines on page: 9-10 lines on page; titles of songs are written in red, and text and psaltic neums in blue.

Language/Notation: Romanian with Cyrillic characters; Chrysantine notation.

Scribe/Dating: the scribe is not mentioned; dating – the first half of the 20th century.

Authors: are not mentioned.

Content: *Doxastikon from the Artoklasia* “of Venerable Parascheva”, mode 8 (fol. 1r-v), *Doxastikon from the Aposticha* for the same “Venerable Parascheva”, mode 2 (fol. 1v), *Doxastikon from the Aposticha* for “Hieromartyr Charalambos” (February 10th), mode 1 (fol. 2v), *Doxastikon* of the Stichera for the feast day of the “Life-giving Spring” – *Who will speak of your powers*, mode 5 (fol. 4r), another for “Three Holy Hierarchs” – *Let us extol today those mystical trumpets*, mode 5 (fol. 6v-8v).

Unwritten leaves: fol. 9-22.

7. MS. D not included in the inventory

It is a notebook with hardbacks in red leather, with a golden cross engraved in the middle of the cover and ornamented corners. On the stub, at the bottom, it is written: “S. M. Hodor”.

Title: it is not mentioned, but, from the content of the notebook, we deduce that it is a bouquet of church songs.

Format: A5.

Number of leaves: 159 numbered leaves, plus 46 blank leaves.

Number of lines on page: 10 lines per page; the title of songs, the neums and the text are written in the same black ink, and, in some cases, in purple or blue ink.

Language/Notation: Romanian with Cyrillic characters, in some places Latin; Chrysantine notation.

Scribe/Dating: The notebook was copied by Sister Maria Hodor, from 1923-1926, at Agapia Monastery (fol. 1r, 32r, 39r, 57r, 70r).

Authors: Anton Pann, Iosif Naniescu, Nectarie Hieromonk, Gh. Cociu, N. Barcan, I. Zmeu, I. Popescu Pasărea, A. Raicu, N. Severeanu, Ghelasie Basarabeanul, Gh. Carp, Archdeacon Anton V. Uncu, Filotei Moroșanu, etc.

Content: chants for the main church services: *Megalynaria*, mode 8 and mode 5, “Muntenian” (fol. 2r-3r), *Cherubic Hymn*, mode 1 (fol. 3v), “*Leitourgika*, mode 5, the work of Gh. Cociu” (fol. 6r), “Harmonical *Megalynarion*, mode 3, the work of Gh. Cociu” (fol. 7v), *Megalynarion*, mode 8, by I. P. Pasărea (fol. 9r), *Leitourgika* and *Megalynarion*, mode 5, by (A.) Raicu (fol. 10r), *1st and 2nd Antiphons*, mode 5 (fol. 13v-20v), *Megalynarion*, mode 8, “following the Russian tradition” (fol. 21r), *Great Doxology*, mode 5, by Ghelasie Basarabeanul (the scribe mentions I. Zmeu as author, fol. 22r), *Polyeleos for Theotokos* (copied on December 27th, 1923 – fol. 32r), mode 4 (fol. 26r), *Megalynaria*, mode 5 in four versions, the last one, by N. Barcan (fol. 38r), mode 3 – “Russian tradition”, mode 1 in two versions (fol. 39r), *Since I, the sinner*, mode 5 (fol. 42v), the *sticheron* – *You, who have fed...* – “which is to be sung at dedication days”, mode 8 (fol. 45r), *May it be well*, mode 8 – a song used “when guests toast” (fol. 46r), *Fatherly arms*, mode 5 (fol. 46v), *Megalynarion*, mode 6 (fol. 48r), *Leitourgika*, mode 8, “composed by Hierodeacon Iosif Naniescu” (fol. 50v), mode 6 (fol. 52r), *Trisagion Hymns*, mode 5, by N. Severeanu, and mode 3, copied at Agapia Monastery, August 4th, 1924” (fol. 57v), *Megalynaria*, modes 1 and 5 (fol. 59v-61r), *Great Doxology*, modes 8 (fol. 61v) and 2 (fol. 66r), copied on January 8th, 1926 (fol. 70r), *Leitourgika*, mode 5, by I. P. Pasărea (fol. 70v), *Cherubic Hymn* for Great and Holy Thursday, mode 6 (fol. 72r), Special *Megalynaria* for Great and Holy Thursday (mode 5) and Great and Holy Saturday (mode 6, fol. 75v), *Our Father*, mode 5 (fol. 77r),

Megalynaria, mode 6, by I. Năpârcă (fol. 77v), mode 5 (fol. 79v), mode 6, “following the Russian tradition” (fol. 80v), *Troparion* of the Assumption, mode 1, by Gh. Carp (fol. 82r), *Exapostilaria*, by Gh. Carp, *Great Doxology*, mode 8, “composed by Hieromonk Nectarie” (fol. 85v), *Leitourgika*, mode 5, “adapted by I. P. Pasărea” (fol. 88r), the kontakion *O Champion Leader*, mode 8, “by Mr. Carp, beat in 2” (fol. 90r), *Blessed is the man*, “composed by Mr. Carp... slow, nuanced, good vocals”, mode 5 (fol. 90v), *Psalm 50*, mode 7, by Gh. Carp, “beat 2” (fol. 92v), *Let our mouths be filled*, mode 5, by Gh. Carp, the prayer of St. Symeon - *Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace*, modes 5 and 7, by Gh. Carp (fol. 97r), *Since I, the sinner*, mode 5, by Gh. Carp (fol. 98r), *Many years*, by Gh. Carp (fol. 102r), *Leitourgika*, mode 5 hisar (fol. 104r), a model for reading the Epistle, mode 8, “in two beats” (fol. 105v), *Cherubic Hymn*, modes 5 and 1, by I. P. Pasărea, *Leitourgika*, mode 3 (fol. 112r), *My all too kind Empress*, mode 5 (fol. 113v), *That which came to pass in thee, we in no wise comprehend*, mode 3 (fol. 115v), *Katavasia* for the Nativity (fol. 121r), *Hymn of Theotokos*, for the Assumption celebration: *Beautiful and kingly day*” (fol. 128v), *Cherubic Hymn*, mode 8, by Archdeacon Anton V. Uncu (fol. 131r), another, mode 5 (fol. 132v), *Leitourgika*, modes 5 and 8, by A. V. Uncu (fol. 134v, fol. 136r), others, mode 8, *Great Doxology*, mode 8, by A. V. Uncu (fol. 139r), *Cherubic Hymn* “from A. Pann’s book”, mode 1 (fol. 142v), *Megalynarion*, after the melody of the song *Fatherly arms*, mode 5, adapted by I. P. Pasărea (fol. 151v), *O Gladsome Light*, mode 8, by Filotei Moroșanu, arranged for three equal voices in psaltic notation (fol. 153v), *Leitourgika*, “mode after the melody of canons of Palm Sunday” (fol. 156r), *Our Father*, mode 8 (f. 158r-v).

Unwritten leaves: fol. 87r-v, fol. 143v-151r, fol. 159r-v.

Notes:

- fol. 1r, in Cyrillic characters: “Maria Hodor” and then Latin: “Mărioara Hodor, c II, N=65”. There are also four staves drawn in chemical pencil with the song *A mercy of peace, a sacrifice of praise*, an attempt to set an arrangement for four voices, in B flat major.

- fol. 1v – the text of stihira *I called to mind the Prophet, how he cried*.

- fol. 32r: "The end and praise the Lord; Sister Maria, 1923, December 27th" (in Latin characters).
- fol. 35r: "1924, January 14th".
- fol. 38r, 39r: "1924, January 18th".
- fol. 57v: "M. Agapia, August 4th, 1924".
- fol. 70r: "1926, January 8th, S. Maria Hodor".
- fol. 107-108: only text, from *Psalm 3* and verses by St. John Koukouzelis.

Therefore, the present MS. D brings together a part of the psaltic music repertoire from Agapia Monastery, supervised by Professor Gh. Carp, a fact proven by the presence of many of his compositions and the expression indications in some of the chants (regarding the song *Blessed is the man*, a few indications are written: „slow, nuanced, good vocals”, fol. 90r).

The library of Agapia also houses other musical manuscripts already researched by others such as Rev.Lect.PhD. Alexandrel Barnea (*MS B II 135*, dated 1929-1930, Barnea 2009: 79-80), Hieromonk Veniamin Palaghiu (approximately 20 manuscripts), etc.

Conclusions

Agapia Monastery keeps in its library numerous musical manuscripts that attest to the continuity of its concern for church singing for the duration of the entire 20th century.

From the short analysis of the seven manuscripts mentioned above, we conclude that, during the 20th century, the nuns from Agapia used two types of repertoire: psaltic (monodic) and harmonico-polyphonic, but favoring psaltic chants. The musical notation they used was the Chrysantine one (even in the case of the songs for many voices).

I have also noticed, a clear preference for Romanian composers of psaltic music: A. Pann, D. Suceveanu, Nectarie The Hieromonk, Iosif Naniescu, Ghelasie Basarabeanul, Nifon Ploieșteanul, I. Zmeu, Alexandru Raicu, N. Bărcan, Memnon Glavan, Gh. N. Carp, Filotei Moroșanu, Doroftei (Iordachiu), Gh. Cociu, I. Popescu Pasărea, N. Severeanu, Archdeacon Anton V. Uncu, etc. Among these, Gh. Carp was directly involved in organizing the psaltic music school from Agapia Monastery.

References:

- Barnea, Pr. Alexandrel. 2009. *Muzica bisericească în Moldova secolului al XX-lea*. Iași: "St. Mina" Publishing House.
- Ciucanu, Nun Eustochia. s.a. *Mănăstirea Agapia (Agapia Monastery)*. Publishing House of Agapia Monastery.
- *File* 30/1871. Iași State Archives: Fund "Metropolitan of Moldova and Suceava".
- *File* 14/1926. Văratec Monastery Archives: Chancellery Fund.
- *Manuscript* 250 (old inventory 534). Library of Agapia Monastery.
- *Manuscript* 427/1998. Library of Agapia Monastery.
- *Manuscript* 739/2002 (old inventory 356, 539). Library of Agapia Monastery.
- *Manuscripts A, B, C and D* - not included in the inventory. Library of Agapia Monastery.
- Palaghiu, Hieromonk Veniamin. 1975. *Manuscrise și tipărituri de muzică bisericească de la Mănăstirea Agapia Nouă și Agapia Veche* (graduate thesis in manuscript". Library of Agapia Monastery. Quota B II/77: inventory 1443).

