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EDITORIAL

FOREWORD

With the blessing of His Eminence Prof. PhD Irineu, Archbishop of Craiova and Metropolitan of Oltenia, a new issue of our journal *Orthodox Theology in Dialogue* is published for the year 2022. In fact, this is the eight issue of the journal, now the first one under the aegis of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Craiova.

The present issue comprises four large parts and covers theological studies in the specializations of dogmatics, oriental theology, missiology and biblical studies. The fifth part is dedicated to a number of three book reviews. It has to be said that the most articles are dedicated to biblical studies and represents the final results of the papers presented during the *Annual Meeting of the Society of the Romanian Orthodox Biblists*, which took place at the Lainici Monastery, in Gorj County, on November 14-15, 2022.

The volume is opened by the study signed by His Eminence Irineu, Professor of Dogmatics at our Faculty of Theology from Craiova, and addresses the following topic: *The Eternal God Entered our Time at the "Fullness of Time" by Becoming Man from the Blessed Virgin Mary*. The next study belongs to a well-known theologian, Prof. Sebastian Brock, and is about *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition*. The third study belongs to Rev. Professor Sorin Șelaru, in which he presents from a missiological perspective the most important realities faced by the Romanian Orthodox diaspora. The title is very clear: *Features of Pastoral Ministry in the Romanian Orthodox Communities of Western Europe*.

With the fourth study, the biblical studies are presented as follows: Rev. Prof. Ioan Chirilă (*Assuming of the Torah, Toledot and Prophets in the Gospel according to Matthew: Citation or Exegesis?*); Rev. Prof. Stelian Tofană and Ovidiu Mihai Neacșu (*Μαθητεύω and διδάσκω or the Evangelization of the world (Matt. 28:19-20). An exegetical-missionary perspective*); Rev. Prof. Constantin Preda (*Matthew, the Publican Scribe - The Church Gospel of Perfection*); Rev. Assoc. Prof. Constantin Jinga (*Biblical Canons in the Postmodern World: Truth or Dare?*); Rev. Assoc. Prof. Ilie Melniciuc-Puică (*Isaianic Text in Luke's Writings and Iconography*); Rev. Assoc. Prof. Doru Fer (*The Contribution of Saint Athanasius the Great to the Accomplishment of the Canon of the New Testament. 39th Festive Epistle. Text, Translation and Analysis*); Rev. Lecturer Cătălin Vatamanu (*"The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1). A Recourse to Old Testament Genealogies*); Rev. Lecturer Ion Sorin Bora (*The Gospel of Matthew, the First Writing in the New Testament Canon*); Rev. Lecturer Ion Reșceanu (*The Initial Function of the Greek*

Tetraevangelion from the Museum of Oltenia in Craiova); Rev. Lecturer Mihai Ciurea (*The Theonym Kyrios in the Gospel according to Matthew*), and Assoc. Lecturer Ovidiu Mihai Neacșu (*Mary in the Matthew Annunciation (Matt. 1:18-25). An exegetical and theological Perspective*).

In the fifth part, are presented three book reviews signed by the undersigned and by our colleague, Doru Marcu, books published in Romanian in three different Publishing Houses (Bucharest, Sibiu and Craiova). In this way, we bring to the attention of English-speaking readers the results of some Romanian authors or researchers.

In conclusion, on behalf of the editorial board, I thank all the authors for the studies published in this issue of our journal. We also encourage and recommend published studies to our readers for critical reading and analysis.

(Rev. Professor NICOLAE RĂZVAN STAN, PhD)

**Pr. Prof. Univ. Dr. Nicolae Răzvan Stan (coord.),
Rugăciunea în cultul Bisericii și în viața creștinului,
Editura Mitropolia Olteniei, Craiova, 2002, 346p.**

This book was published with the blessing of His Eminence PhD Irineu, Archbishop of Craiova and Metropolitan of Oltenia, at the publishing house Mitropolia Oltenia, under the auspices of the Center for Theological and Interdisciplinary Research “Saint Calinic” (CCTISC) of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Craiova. Totalling 346 pages, the work was published in 2022, with the contribution of 21 authors, under the coordination of the dean of the Faculty of Theology, Reverend Professor PhD Nicolae Răzvan Stan. In accordance with the title of the volume, *Rugăciunea în cultul Bisericii și în viața creștinului* [*Prayer in the Worship of the Church and in the Life of the Christian*], the studies have as their main theme prayer. It should be remembered that the year 2022 was declared by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church as the Year of Homage to Prayer.

The first study, which also has the role of *Foreword*, is signed by His Eminence Metropolitan Irineu, a qualified professor of the Department of Dogmatics, and is entitled “Tatăl nostru” – expresia evanghelică a iubirii părintești [*“Our Father” – the Evangelical Expression of Parental Love*]. In the introduction, the author argues with examples the practice of the Savior Jesus Christ to withdraw to secluded places to pray. At the insistence of the disciples, Christ taught them the lordly prayer *Our Father*. Next, His Eminence recalls that this prayer was said for the first time on the Mount of Beatitudes, during the Sermon on the Mount, related by the evangelist Matthew in chapters 5-7. Most of the study is devoted to explaining the content of prayer that reveals divine love. The way of explanation is innovative and current for the man of today and tomorrow. Instead of a conclusion, the author puts before us an evangelical model of prayer, that of the father of the prodigal son, emphasizing that prayer can become an intimate dialogue between us and the heavenly Father.

The second study, *Atenția minții în timpul rugăciunii în scrierile Cuviosului Evagrie Ponticul* [Attention of the Mind During Prayer in the Writings of Venerable Evagrius Ponticus], is also signed by a Church hierarch, but also a professor of the Faculty of Theology, namely His Holiness Nicodim Nicolaescu, Bishop of Severin and Strehaiia. The study analyzes and presents prayer in the vision of Evagrie, found in the work *Word about prayer*, from *The Philokalia*, under the translation of the great Romanian theologian Priest Professor Dumitru Stăniloae. The study is divided into two large parts: *Private and public prayer* and *Attention of the mind during prayer*.

The third study signed by a hierarch and teacher is entitled *Rugăciunea în Sfintele Slujbe și activitățile din parohie* [Prayer in Holy Services and Parish

Activities]. The author, His Holiness Emilian Crișanul, Bishop-Vicar of the Archdiocese of Arad, focuses particularly on the activities that a priest can perform from a missionary point of view in the parish, namely: performing holy services, preaching, cultural activities and philanthropic activities. For the author, the parish represents the place where we are born for eternity, the place where we cross the path from home to the Church, the place where we receive the Holy Mysteries, the place where we await the Resurrection from the dead.

The fourth study represents the translation into Romanian of the paper presented by Rev. Prof. Dr. Nicolae Răzvan Stan, at the International Symposium “The Function and the Limits of Reason in Dogmatic Theology”, organized by the International Association of Orthodox Dogmatic Theologians, Higher Ecclesiastical Academy of Thessaloniki, Greece, in 2011. The study is entitled *Rolul și limitele minții umane în cunoașterea lui Dumnezeu potrivit viziunii Părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae exprimate în notele explicative scrise la traducerea publicată în Colecția Părinți și Scriitori Bisericești (PSB)* [The Role and Limits of the Human Mind in Knowing God According to the Vision of Father Dumitru Stăniloae Expressed in the Explanatory Notes Written to the Translations Published in the Church Fathers and Writers Collection]. The general idea is that in the vision of Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae, the knowledge of God will never cease, not even in eternal life and even more so in earthly life.

The fifth article is signed by Rev. Prof. PhD Picu Ocoleanu and presents the following theme: *Rezonanță și sondare interioară. Fenomenologia isihastă a rugăciunii după “Capetele despre rugăciune” § 1-14 ale Sf. Calist Patriarhul (sec. XIV)* [Resonance and Inner Sounding. Hesychastic Phenomenology of prayer According to the “Chapters on prayer” § 1-14 of St. Callistus the Patriarch (14th Century)]. The article has two parts and a list of conclusions, where the most important is that the prayer is a result of the divine grace inside of the human being.

The sixth article belongs to Rev. PhD Senior Lecturer Constantin Băjău and is entitled *Rugăciunea la Sfinții Părinți în primele secole* [The Prayer to the Holy Fathers in the Early Centuries]. The following authors are mentioned: The Apostolic Fathers, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom. The conclusion claims that all the advice of the holy fathers about prayer is also useful for us because the human soul has the same aspirations for perfection and the same inner turmoil.

The article with the title *Experiența rugăciunii în educația tinerilor și în pastorația lor* [The Experience of Prayer in the Education of Young People and in their Ministry] belongs to Rev. PhD Senior Lecturer Adrian Ivan and it first presents prayer in the primary catechetical tradition of the Church, then the experience of prayer in childhood and adolescence, the universe of

references in the education of children, as well as a detailed catechetical program dedicated to young people in the parish.

As a specialist in the History of Religions, Rev. PhD Senior Lecturer George-Adrian Boldișor introduces us to his study about prayer in different religions, especially in those ancients. The study is entitled *Forme de rugăciune în Religiile Antice* [Forms of Prayer in Ancient Religions]. The author claims that the relationship between humans and divinity has always manifested itself through devotion, through prayer. The idea that man was homo religiosus from the very beginning was always present even in ancient religions.

The ninth article belongs to Rev. PhD Senior Lecturer Iulian Mihai Constantinescu and is entitled *Rugăciunea și obligativitatea slujitorilor canonici de a respecta ritualul prescris pentru administrarea Sfintelor Taine* [The Prayer and the Obligation of Canonical Ministers to Respect the Ritual Prescribed for the Administration of the Holy Mysteries]. The article has five parts and directly emphasizes that the prayers of the Holy Mysteries were ordained by the Church only with the approval of the competent Church authority. At the same time, the Synod of the Autocephalous Church can modify under certain aspects the ritual of certain holy works in such a way as not to affect the liturgical unity of universal or ecumenical Orthodoxy.

Rev. PhD Senior Lecturer Marin Cojoc signs the tenth article, entitled *Rugăciuni și invocări către martiri în inscripțiile din părțile răsăritene ale Imperiului Romano-Bizantin* [Prayers and Invocations to Martyrs in Inscriptions from the Eastern Parts of the Roman-Byzantine Empire]. The author presents the contents of some Greek martyr inscriptions in particular, which means that the article is quite interesting and historically and theologically important.

Another professor of history, Rev. PhD Senior Lecturer Sergiu-Grigore Popescu, presents us the image of a praying man of ruler Constantin Brâncoveanu in an article entitled *Sfântul Voievod Constantin Brâncoveanu – ctitor și rugător al lui Hristos* [Saint Voivode Constantin Brâncoveanu – Founder and Supplicant of Christ]. After a short historical and biographical portrait, the author presents several churches and monasteries built from the ground up with the support of ruler Brâncoveanu, both from Romania, and from Mount Athos, from Greece.

Another interesting article is the one signed by Archdeacon PhD Senior Lecturer Ionel Ungureanu, entitled *Personalizarea liturgicului* [Personalization of the liturgical], which presents the liturgical reality from an existential perspective. The author insists on highlighting an individualization of the liturgical, marked by institutionalism, which is not in the spirit of communion of the saints.

The thirteenth article presents us music as a form of prayer in the Church. The author is a music teacher, Rev. PhD Lecturer Adrian Mazilița,

and the theme is entitled *Muzica bizantină – formă a rugăciunii în cultul Bisericii sub influența curentului isihast* [Byzantine Music – Form of Prayer in Church Worship under the Influence of the Hesychast Current]. In other words, the role of liturgical singing is to symbolically express dogmatic truths, made much more accessible to man through singing.

The article *Limitele rugăciunii iudaice în perioada celui de-al doilea templu* [The Limits of Jewish Prayer in the Second Temple Period] is signed by Rev. PhD Lecturer Bora, university teacher for the study of the New Testament. The author presents the meaning of the terms worship and prayer, the place and time of prayer, the position of the body during prayer, but also a series of important conclusions.

Also a specialist in the New Testament, Rev. PhD Lecturer Mihai Ciurea presents an article entitled *Sfântul Luca – “Evangelistul rugăciunii”* [The Saint Luke – “The Evangelist of Prayer”]. In fact, prayer is one of the favorite themes of the author of the two New Testament works, the Gospel and the Acts. And our author exemplifies this reality very clearly.

The article *“Domnul era de față și vorbea cu ei” – rugăciune și martiriu* [“The Lord was present and speaking with them” - Prayer and Martyrdom] is signed by Rev. PhD Lecturer Lucian Zenoviu Bot and presents to us prayer as unceasing perseverance before the Lord. Subtopics are analyzed such as martyrdom as a sign and imitator of Christ, martyrdom as a view of the world and God, prayer and sacrifice.

The seventeenth article of the volume is entitled *Psaltirea în cultura românească veche* [“The Lord was present and speaking with them” - Prayer and Martyrdom], signed by Rev. PhD Lecturer Ion Reșceanu. After a short introduction, the author presents to us the first translation of Psalter in Romanian. Then, Deacon Coresi and the psalters printed by him are brought up, followed by the Belgrade Psalter from 1651. In the last part are presented printing of the Psalter by the Metropolitan Dosoftei. The general conclusion is that the Psalter for the Church has always been a fundamental book for cultic and spiritual life.

Rev. PhD Lecturer Ioniță Apostolache presents the article *Rugăciunea lui Iisus în dinamica rational-duhovnicească a Apologeticii ortodoxe. Argumente biblice și din teologia părinților sirieni* [The Prayer of Jesus in the Rational Spiritual Dynamics of Orthodox Apologetics. Biblical Arguments and from the Theology of the Syrian Fathers], considering that calling Jesus in prayer and confessing Him as God represents the first and most important step in affirming our Christian entity. The article has four parts, as follows: The name of Jesus in the Old Testament, in the New Testament, about prayer to Afraate, to St. Ephrem the Syrian, to St. Isaac the Syrian and in the work *Liber Graduum*, the prayer of Jesus as a source of apologetic confession.

The nineteenth article is signed by Rev. PhD Lecturer Cătălin Constantin Dan, and is entitled *Rugăciunea personală a credincioșilor și viața liturgică a Bisericii în gândirea Părinților Apostolici* [The Personal Prayer of the Faithful and the Liturgical Life of the Church in the Thinking of the Apostolic Fathers], presents the Christian life according to the Apostolic Fathers and also the prayer in their vision. The main idea is that the prayer it is and will remain an inner indicator of the Christian life.

From the perspective of a music teacher, PhD Lecturer Victor Șapcă, the article titled *Rugăciunea smerită – cântare tainică celui Nevăzut* [The Humble Prayer - Mysteriously Song to the Unseen], resumes the most important examples of prayer from Holy Scripture.

The twenty-first article and the last one is signed by Rev. Assistant Mădălin-Ștefan Petre and is entitled *Liturgicul, ca reper al dreptei credințe și al viețuirii conforme cu Evanghelia* [The Liturgical, as a Landmark of the Right Faith and Living in Accordance with the Gospel], has three parts and presents the Mysteries of the Church as a faithful and living reproduction of saving acts, the symphonic connection of the Mysteries and services of the Church with the Christian way of life. The liturgical feeds the human spirit with the dogmas of faith is the central idea of the study.

In conclusion, I recommend to everyone this collective volume and the topics presented from different perspectives about the importance of prayer in the life of the Christian and the Church. Certainly, everyone can find themselves in one perspective or another, given the large number of authors who present their theological and experiential results.

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