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FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY
"ISIDOR TODORAN" DOCTORAL SCHOOL

MEDALLIONS OF PRIESTLY FAMILIES FROM
BUCOVINA-PARADIGMS OF WITNESS,
CULTURAL-ARTISTIC AND PASTORAL

Summary

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The doctoral dissertation "Medallions of priestly families from Bucovina - witnessing, cultural-artistic and pastoral paradigms" is motivated by the special importance of the priest's family in his mission in the parish community entrusted to him for shepherding. The priest's family is a model for the members of a parish community, especially in the contemporary social context which is increasingly marked by secularization, the crisis of moral values and the redefinition of traditional roles.

It is intended, as far as possible, to offer a balanced perspective on the priest's family, especially since this topic often brings unrealistic expectations or criticism from society in general and the parish community in particular.

The thesis addresses practical and actual aspects of pastoral life in which the priest's family has an essential role through catechetical, philanthropic, missionary and cultural activities. The involvement of the priest's family - coordinated by either the priest or his wife - shows dedication and involvement in providing a noteworthy role model for both the troubled youth and adults of the community .

The family occupies a central role in the life of the Church as well as in society, and the priest's family has a major responsibility to promote and reinforce Christian values, especially as moral relativism, identity crisis and loss of values assail ever more aggressively.

The priest's family has been and must continue to be a symbol of unity, faith and holiness for the secularized society, which challenges the traditional model. Providing a concrete model for the parish community is essential for its unity and a healthy spiritual life. In this way, the pastor and his family become a support, a living/living model/models of love, faith, service in the face of the aggressive challenges of contemporary society.

The work is divided into four chapters, the first of which deals in general with the family and especially the family of the priest as the soul and not only the soul of the parish community. The second chapter deals historically, culturally and theologically with the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Chernivtsi - the place where most of the servants of the Church who have worked in Bukovina were formed, including the seven priests who were included in the research part. The third chapter presents the witnessing life, as well as the cultural-pastoral, liturgical and missionary activity of seven priests who served in the city of Fălticeni or had links with the parish communities of the city on the Șomuz.

CHAPTER 1 THE PRIEST - THE SOUL SHEPHERD OF THE FAMILY AND THE SPIRITUAL LINK OF THE COMMUNITY

The first chapter "The Priest - the soul shepherd of the family and the spiritual bond of the community" presents the role of the priest in building the community of the faithful shepherded by the example of his family and is structured in six sub-chapters. The first sub-chapter "Family - the nucleus of the Christian community" presents the family as the nucleus of any Christian community. The family is the nucleus of the Christian community, being a model of unity for those in the parish, living in harmony, love and mutual respect. The traditional family or the Christian family is not an isolated reality - as it is desired and tendentiously presented - but a constitutive element of the community, and its good functioning directly influences the health of the parish community. The family is a place of sacrifice and mutual service, which strengthens its unity and makes it a worthy model for other members of the community. The family's participation in parish life is an essential aspect of Christian living, having a profound impact both on the members of the family and on the community of which they are part. In this way the family is integrated into the Church community, establishing spiritual links with other believers.

The family also fulfills the role of a factor of spiritual continuity by preserving and transmitting the teaching of the Church, and the priest's family in particular must occupy a central place in the life of the parish community, being an example of the authentic living of Christian values. The life and behavior of the priest's family have a profound impact on the community because they correctly reflect the teaching of the Church in their daily life.

The second subchapter, "Challenges of the Christian Family in Contemporary Society", presents the growing challenges facing the Christian family in an increasingly secularized world.

Secularization represents one of the greatest challenges facing the Christian family in contemporary society, having a major impact on the moral, spiritual and cultural values that define family life.

The first and most visible impact of secularization on the Christian family is the dilution of traditional moral and spiritual values, followed by the tendency to marginalize religious faith and practice in the daily life of the family. The family is based on love and communion, but it can become vulnerable to those who aggressively promote selfishness, exaggerated independence and lack of responsibility for others. An active religious life through regular attendance at Church services and observance of Christian traditions strengthened the bond between family members and gave them a spiritual anchor in the face of life's difficulties.

Another consequence of secularization is the redefinition and disregard of the role of the family in the community, especially as contemporary society promotes an education devoid of spiritual landmarks, in which material success and individual autonomy are considered primary objectives.

In the face of these challenges, the Christian family must rediscover the central role of faith in its life and resist secularizing influences by returning to Gospel values.

The subchapter "The Mission of the Priest in a Postmodern Society" shows the profound call, but also the particular challenge of the priest, given the cultural, social and spiritual context of contemporary society.

The major challenges to which the priest has to respond are: moral relativism and the crisis of values, exaggerated individualism, technology and its influence on people's spiritual life and youth ministry.

The adaptation of the priestly mission to the postmodern context is an imperative necessity for the Orthodox Church in the face of the profound and rapid transformations that contemporary society is undergoing.

The sub-chapter "The Priest - Missionary Servant or Civil Servant?" attempts to show the missionary side of the priest, who serves without a clerical program, but permanently being at the service of the faithful.

The priest, as a missionary minister, assumes his mission as a spiritual calling and a living work among people. He is not a mere intermediary between the faithful and God, but a spiritual father, a guide and model of Christian life.

In contrast, the priest seen as a functionary is one who approaches his ministry in a formal way, lacking spiritual depth. The bureaucratization of the ministry transforms the priest into an executor of administrative obligations, where pastoral activities are treated as mere formal duties. Instead of being a spiritual father, the priest runs the risk of becoming an administrator of acts or rituals, carried out mechanically and without personal involvement.

The sub-chapter "The priest - "vector" of communion of the parish community" attempts to show the role of a priest as "vector" of the community.

The priest, as a servant of God and shepherd of the parish community, plays a fundamental role in uniting the faithful and strengthening communion among Church members. In an increasingly fragmented world, marked by individualism, social tensions and lack of solidarity, the priest becomes a 'vector' of communion, bringing unity and harmony through his liturgical, pastoral and social ministry.

The priest becomes a 'vector' of parish communion when he makes the parish community a spiritual family by uniting the faithful around the Gospel values which are the foundation of Christian teaching and practice.

The sub-chapter "The priest's wife - maternal archetype of the parish community" deals with the role of the priest's wife in the priest's work as well as in the life of the parish community.

The role of the priestess in supporting pastoral activities is an essential and profound one in the life of the parish community, even if this role is often discreet and unofficial. The priest, as the priest's wife, has a special mission in supporting the priest's work, being an indispensable

support both personally and in the community. She thus becomes a true maternal archetype, contributing to the formation and strengthening of the community through active involvement in the life of the parish, offering spiritual, moral and administrative support. The Prioress is a model of balance and virtuosity, combining personal and community responsibilities, offering a living example of authentic and dedicated service.

CHAPTER 2 THE FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY IN CERNĂUȚI - CENTER OF THEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL EXCELLENCE IN ROMANIAN SPACE

This chapter deals with the Orthodox Theological Academy in Chernivtsi - the place where worthy servants of the Church in the European Orthodox world were formed, including the seven priests who were included in the research part of the work.

The chapter is divided into four sub-chapters, dealing with elements of historiography, prominent professors of the institution, the library and the "Orthodox Academy".

The sub-chapter "Elements of Historiography" briefly deals with the Orthodox theological school in Bukovina from its beginnings until the abolition of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in 1948.

Theological education in Bukovina has ancient roots. As early as the time of Alexander the Good, there was a Princely School where altar servers learned to read and write. Then, the Putna schools are known, among which the one led by St. Jacob Putneanul.

After the annexation of Bukovina by the Habsburg Empire, Metropolitan Isaia Baloșescu, who succeeded in 1827 in opening the Orthodox Theological Institute, which had 50 places, began the work of establishing a theological institution. The Theological Institute became a faculty in 1875 with the establishment of the University of Chernivtsi.

After the establishment of the Bukovinian theological faculty, this institution went through three stages: the first from 1875 to 1918 - when the Great Union took place; the second from 1918 to 1940 and the third from 1940 - when it had to take refuge twice in Suceava until its abolition in 1948.

The sub-chapter "The elite of the professors of the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi - biobibliographical medallions" presents some of the most important figures of the professors who worked at this prestigious institution in Bukovina. Among these outstanding figures are the music teachers: Isidor Vorobchievich, Mihai Ursuleac, Iancu Ursuleac and Ștefan Nosievici; as well as outstanding professors from all three periods of the faculty: Isidor Cavaler de Onciul - Old Testament Studies; Vasile Tarnavschi - Liturgics; Vasile Găină - Dogmatics; Metropolitan Vladimir de Repta - music, psychology; Alexiu Comoroșanu - Dogmatics; Orest Bucevschi - Dogmatics and Sectology; Simion Reli - Church History; Romulus Cândea - History, etc..

The subchapter "The Library of the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi" traces the academic basis used at this theological institution which gained prestige over the years, so that it was sought after by young people from the Balkan countries and the Habsburg Empire.

The library was very serious because it was the solid material base to help in the instructive-educational training of the students. Although at the beginning there was no library fund, the professors made sure that the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Chernivtsi acquired rare copies of specialized literature. Thus, in 1939 there were 30,000 volumes.

Among those who donated books to the Library of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Chernivtsi were: the founder Constantin Popovici, Bishop Isaia Băloşescu, Archimandrite Filaret Bendeveschi, the Metropolitans of Chernivtsi, the family of the boyar Hurmuzachi, Bishop Gherasim Safirin of Râmnic and others.

The sub-chapter "Orthodox Academy" deals with the student cultural societies in Chernivtsi, which were intended to meet the cultural, literary, missionary needs of those attending the Faculty of Theology.

The first student cultural society was "Arboroasa", founded in 1875 together with the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi, but it was disbanded in 1877, after its members - led by Ciprian Porumbescu - wrote a telegram against the authorities in the context of the 100th anniversary of the beheading of the Voievod Grigore Ghica.

After 1877, until the establishment of the "Orthodox Academy" in 1884, Bucovina's students were active in other cultural societies, such as "Junimea" - 1879 or "Bucovina" - 1880.

It was Metropolitan Silvestru Morariu-Andrievici who initiated the steps for the formation of the new students' cultural society, together with professors Eusebie Popovici, Isidor Onciul and Isidor Vorobchievici, to which 10 students were added. The "Orthodox Academy" lasted until 1943 and was headed by the priest Gheorghe Şandru (the first president), Ion Creangă, Valerian Şesan, Nicolae Cotos, Petru Rezuş and others. Gheorghe Baltag, Ilie Anisescu, Radu Dăscălescu.

CHAPTER 3 MEDALLIONS OF PRIESTS FROM BUCOVINA

The third chapter includes several medallions of priests who studied at the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi and who worked in the churches of Fălticeni, most of them for a longer or shorter time in the Church of the Oprişeni neighborhood of the city on the Şomuz.

The chapter is divided into two subchapters with several subdivisions. The first subchapter "The Priest and his Family-Referential Factors in the Church's Mission" deals with the activity of the priest and his family in the mission entrusted by the Church. The priest's family plays an essential role in the support and fulfillment of the pastoral ministry, being a fundamental element in the formation and strengthening of the priest's mission in the parish. Built on a foundation of love, devotion and communion, the priest's family becomes, first and

foremost, the priest's emotional and spiritual support, providing him with the stability necessary for the successful fulfillment of his pastoral duties. The subchapter also deals with a problem facing the priest's family, namely the priest's children between rebellion and piety. The children of the priest are brought up to follow religious teachings and to live according to the principles of the Church, but on the other hand, they are exposed to a society that not only does not support these values, but also challenges them, promoting instead individual freedom of choice and relativism in morality. Another aspect dealt with in this subchapter is the parish family in relation to the priest's family. The relationship of solidarity between the priest's family and the parish family is essential for the life and development of the Christian community, having deep roots in the teachings of the Church and its spiritual traditions.

The second subchapter contains seven medallions of priests who served in the city of Falticeni, and most of them for a short or long time at the Church "Sfinții Voievozi" in the Oprișeni neighborhood.

The first medallion is dedicated to Father Ioan Iordăchescu - a native of Oprișeni. Father Ioan was born on August 13, 1918, in a large family from the suburb of Oprișeni in the city of Fălticeni. He went to school in the Oprișeni neighborhood of his native town, then attended the Theological Seminary in Galati and the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Chernivtsi. He married the daughter of the boyar Nicolae Lupașcu, Ortansa in 1947. He was ordained priest by Metropolitan Irineu Mihălcescu on May 4, 1947 for Poiana Mărului Parish, Commune Mălini. From 1951, he also took over the parish of Văleni-Stănișoara, where he served with devotion, pastoral-missionary tact and shaped two beautiful parish communities. He moved to Fălticeni in 1982 to the Parish of "Sfântul Ilie", where he served until 2011, when his health no longer allowed him to serve.

Father Ioan Iordăchescu was pursued by the Securitate because he was married to the daughter of a "boier" - a large owner of agricultural and forest land. The fact that he lodged his father-in-law in his house in Văleni meant that the visits of the Securitate were frequent and the attention on the priest's activity was constant. Then the fact that nearby began the phenomenon of Slătioara (stylists) also caused the attention of the Security on all priests in the area, including Fr. Ioan.

The second medallion is dedicated to Fr. Constantin Malanca, minister at the Church of Băișești, and after his retirement at Oprișeni. Originally from Păltinoasa, he attended primary school in his native town, then high school in Câmpulung Moldovenesc and the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi. After marrying Maria Iordăchescu (sister of Fr. Ioan Iordăchescu) he was ordained priest by Metropolitan Nectarie Cotlarciuc for the village of Lalancea in the Chernivtsi area. The war led him to take refuge twice, and after the final occupation of Bukovina he became a priest in the parish of Ioneasa-Ruși and then in Băișești. After his retirement (1987),

he settled in Fălticeni, where he served in the Church of Oprișeni and Buciumeni with Father Ilie Anisescu. He left several sermon books, especially his funeral speeches that show his concern for preaching and catechesis, but also the importance of the moment in the life of the community he served.

The third medallion is dedicated to Fr. Ilie Anisescu - a priest who has remained in the conscience of the people of Oprișeni. He was born in Petricani commune, Neamț county, in the family of the church singer Gheorghe Anisia. He attended primary school in his native village, high school in Târgu Neamț, the Theological Seminary in Dorohoi and the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi.

He married the schoolteacher Maria Ciocan from Slătioara and was ordained priest for the commune of Bobilești, Botoșani County. From 1931 he served in his wife's native village of Slătioara and from 1935 in Oprișeni until his retirement in 1973. Because he had been disciplinarily transferred and wanted to return to Oprișeni, it was suggested that he join the Legionary Movement, and this brought him persecution from the Securitate. He was even arrested for possessing some forbidden books, investigated for some words he said during sermons on Sundays and holidays, for trying to bring to light the work of his teacher, priest Dumitru Furtună, and others. He was a lover of culture, being a collector of folklore.

The fourth medallion is dedicated to Fr. Constantin Geanopol - a minister at Valea Glodului and Mihăieși, but who lived on Ion Creangă Street in Fălticeni, being linked to the Oprișeni Parish - where he has his grave.

Originally from Mitocul Dragomirnei, he was the son of a Greek who had come to the area for work - Dumitru Geanopol - and Elisabeta, originally from Mitoc. He attended primary school in Mitoc, then 8 grades at the Seminary of Edinet and Socola Seminary in Iasi. The Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Chernivtsi was the place of cultural affirmation for Father Geanopol. He is a great lover of literature (especially poetry), is a member of the "Iconar" circle and publishes in several magazines of the time.

He marries Eugenia Ionescu from Fălticeni and is ordained priest by the Archpriest Valeriu Moglan for Glodului Valley. He later served in Mihăiești and Rotopănești, closer to his home in Fălticeni. He was a great lover of culture, but the Securitate prosecuted him for his involvement in the Legionary Movement, for listening to forbidden radio stations and for not always having words of praise for the communist regime.

The fifth medallion is dedicated to Father Leonida Gavrilescu - known as a confessor in communist prisons. Born in Horodniceni, Baia County, one of the 13 children of Petru and Maria Gavrilescu. He attended school in his native town, then the Theological Seminary "Veniamin Costachi" in Iasi and the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi. In 1931 he married Maria Popescu from Lespezi and was ordained deacon for the Church of the Assumption in Targu Neamt, then

priest for the village of Blăgești, a suburb of Pasacnilor. In 1941 he moved for a year to Oprișeni, then until 1952 to the Church "St. Elijah" in Fălticeni, and from 1952 until his death in 1977 to the Church "Assumption of the Virgin Mary" in Fălticeni. Because he was a member of the P.N.L. he was arrested and spent five years in the Galles Labor Colony.

He was a priest appreciated for his theological and other theological culture. The poet Nicolae Labiș lived in his house for a while, but many of the intellectuals of Fălticeni also stayed there: Horia and Steliana Lovinescu, Aurel George Stino, Grigore Vasiliu Birlic and many others. His poems were collected by the care of P.S. Timotei Aioanei Prahoveanul in a post-mortem volume.

The sixth medallion is dedicated to the priest Gheorghe Baltag - the dean of the parish of Fălticeni during a difficult period of confession in the midst of the communist regime.

Originally from Boroaia, he went to school in his native town, then to the "Veniamin Costachi" Theological Seminary in Iasi and the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi. In Chernivtsi he formed a beautiful friendship with St. John James.

He married the daughter of the priest Mihai Grigoraș from Țolești in 1934, being ordained deacon in 1935 and serving in Târgu Neamț. In the fall of 1935 he was ordained priest for the village of Ciumulești (the native village of Fr. Gherasim Cucoșel), then from 1939 in Țolești, from 1964 in the parish of Grădini-Fălticeni until 1977. From 1977 he served until his retirement at the Parish "Adormirea Maicii Domnului" Fălticeni.

He has remained in the consciousness of the people of Fălticeni through the building projects that he carried out or supported: the construction of a building for the Deanery of Fălticeni; the construction of churches in Țarna Mare, Fântâna Mare; the renovation of some churches from the foundations.

He was persecuted by the Securitate for his cultural and other activities, especially because he did not praise the communist regime in his youth.

The seventh medallion is dedicated to Father Radu Dăscălescu - the priest of my childhood.

He was born in the family of the priest Vasile Dăscălescu and Artemiziei (sister of Father Leonida Gavrilescu). He attended school in Botești-Horodniceni, the Theological Seminary "Veniamin Costachi" in Iasi and the Theological Seminary "St. Andrew" in Galati, then the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi.

He married Eva Dediu from Baia, and was ordained deacon for the "Sfântul Ilie" Church in Fălticeni, then priest for the Bogata Parish. From 1946 to 1992 he served at the parish "Stefan cel Mare" in Baia.

As a member of the P.N.L. with no important positions in the party, he was followed by the Securitate. Also, being a relative of Father Leonida Gavrilescu and the spiritual counseling he gave to former political prisoners in Baia attracted the attention of the communist authorities.

He remained in the consciousness of those he shepherded for 45 years as the one who always sought peace and understanding among the inhabitants of Baia, as well as the one who baptized hundreds of children (as godfather) and fought against concubinage.

CHAPTER 4 PRIORITIES OF THE PRIEST'S PASTORAL ACTIVITY

Chapter 4 is organized in four sub-chapters and covers the pastoral activity of the priest. The priest realizes parochial unity, being the spiritual leader and the central pillar supporting the life of the parish community.

The first sub-chapter "Unity of the faithful - realization of parish communion" deals with the activity of the priest in realizing the unity of the parish community. Parish unity is not merely an external form of organization, but implies a deep communion among the faithful, characterized by active participation in church life, mutual support, respect and Christian love. In this context, the priest is a key element, both through his preaching and by personal example, in strengthening the bonds between the members of the parish and maintaining an atmosphere of solidarity and fraternity.

The priest plays a crucial role in strengthening parish communion, and through a range of practical methods, such as organizing liturgical services, educational activities, involvement in social and philanthropic activities, encouraging dialogue and promoting socialization, he can strengthen the bonds between members of the community.

The second sub-chapter "The fight against immorality in the family and against the family" deals with a sensitive topic for the pastoral activity of a priest. Immorality represents a significant danger for the Christian family, affecting both its structure and the fundamental values it promotes. In contemporary society, immorality manifests itself in various forms, from lack of mutual respect between spouses, to infidelity, domestic violence, drugs or behavior that goes against traditional moral principles.

Pastoral solutions to protect Christian values in a society increasingly marked by immorality are essential for maintaining the integrity of the family. The priest, as the shepherd of the community, plays a vital role in protecting and promoting these values through various pastoral means, which focus on education, counseling, spiritual support and active involvement in community life.

The third sub-chapter "Preserving the holiness of the family" deals with pastoral issues that the priest encounters in his work.

To preserve the sanctity of the family, the priest turns to the example of his own family. Therefore, the priest's family plays an essential role in the upbringing of the parish community, having a direct influence on the spiritual and moral formation of the faithful. Through their example of love, unity, humility and responsibility, the priest's family has a positive influence on the whole community, helping to strengthen a parish united in faith and service. The pastoral model provided by this has a ripple effect on the whole parish, having a significant impact on the spiritual, moral and social formation of all members of the community.

The fourth sub-chapter "Youth Ministry" deals with an essential aspect in the work of the priest. Youth ministry has a significant impact on the spiritual, moral and social formation of new generations. At a time of rapid change, diversifying sources of influence and modern challenges, young people face a unique set of difficulties and dilemmas that shape their lives. In this context, the Church has a crucial responsibility to guide, support and encourage young people to live according to Christian principles, providing them with a healthy spiritual framework and a model of life based on the Gospel teachings.

CONCLUSIONS

The priest's family plays an essential role in strengthening pastoral activity and exemplifying Christian values in the life of the parish community. It is not only a support for the priest, but a living model of living the faith, inspiring and encouraging the families of the faithful to adopt a way of life centered on Gospel values. The priest's family thus becomes a concrete symbol of Christian unity and harmony, values which are the foundation of any spiritually and morally healthy community.

The family and the priest are called to offer an authentic and firm response to contemporary challenges. By the example of their lives, their pastoral ministry and their uncompromising witness to Christian values, the priest and his family become a light to the community. In an ever-changing world, the Church must remain a support for families, reaffirming the essential role of faith, prayer and Gospel values in the life of every believer.