

Doctoral thesis

"The Priest and the Army in the Past and Today. Necessity, organization, service"

Abstract: For contemporary man, the connection between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the country's Army through the military clergy may be considered unimportant or contradictory, but, in essence, it is not at all to be neglected. The Church and the Army, the cleric and the soldier, as prominent representatives of the two institutions, have contributed greatly to the defense of the identity of the nation and faith, of cultural and moral values, so that the military clergy imposed itself with "Necessity", having a separate "Organization" and a specific "Service".

If at the beginning of the 19th century, the military clergy, as an institution, was somewhat of a novelty for our history, the onset of the events of the same century would plant in the consciousness of Romanians and political, military and religious people, the necessity and importance of the military clergy in difficult moments of history. Thus, in the key moments of our definition as a people in Europe, we find faces of worthy ordained priests and soldiers who, in addition to the priestly mission of teaching, serving and being saints, fulfilled other special works within its ranks, distinct from their calling as servants, but which were part of their duty as sons of the Romanian nation. The encouragement of soldiers in the midst of the fire of battle, their presence in trenches or hospitals, dressing wounds or administering medications to the wounded or sick, supplying the soldiers on the front line with the necessary things (ammunition, weapons, etc.), the extraction from the midst of "hell" of those who lost the fight with the enemy, in order to be able to walk them in a Christian manner, the creation of heroes' cemeteries and many others, come in support of their heroism, patriotism and sacrifice.

The communist regime established after the events of August 1944 led to the severing of ties between the Church and the Army. The Military Episcopate of Alba Iulia, established in 1921, was abusively abolished in 1948, and the military bishop, Dr. Partenie Ciopron (1896-1980), together with the military priests, were excluded from the army structures, losing all rights. This situation lasted almost 50 years, because in 1995, through the care and collaboration of the representatives of the Romanian Orthodox Church and those from the Ministry of National Defense, the military clergy was recalled to the army, but not only in the military units in the country, but also in the theaters of operations within NATO, the UN and the EU, contributing

through speeches, services, sacraments and hierurgies, to the spiritual edification of those called under arms.