

**“AUREL VLAICU”UNIVERSITY FROM ARAD**  
**FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY “ILARION V. FELEA**

**Parish and Monastery, Culture and Churchly History**  
**The Work of the Romanian Orthodox Church of Making the Man Eternal**

**– HABILITATION THESIS –**

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## **I. Churchly History and Ministration: Iasi's Archbishopric, the Hierarchal Chair of Râmnic and Arad's Eparchy**

### **1. Iasi's Archbishopric during the First Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: the Deeds of the Christian Mercifulness**

The history of the Romanian Orthodox Church experienced, at its turn, a development during the two millennia passed since the foundation of the Church, done by our Savior Jesus Christ. Everywhere in the Romanian Provinces: Dobrogea, the Romanian Country, Moldavia, and Transylvania, the Gospel preached by Saint Apostle Andrew, it brought as fruits, within parishes and monasteries: saints and fulfillers of the God's will.

In addition to the administrative and pastoral-missionary activity, the hierarchs and the clergy implemented also the teaching of the Savior Jesus Christ, regarding the mercifulness and the love for the neighbor who is needy and suffering: "Into this will everybody know that you are My disciples, if you will have love for each other"(Jn. 13: 35).

The philanthropy or the love for people, it is one of the most important sides and characteristics of the activity of the Orthodox Church from the Romanian Province of Moldavia, in the contest of the WWI, of the WWII, and during the drought that took place between the years 1946-1947, and during epidemics and earthquakes.

The biggest and the most important philanthropic and medical institution from Moldavia Province, it was the "Saint Spiridon" Hospital, built around the Church bearing the same name, and later extended with branches within all the Moldavian regions, depending on the needs of that period.

Having reduced material resources, the gentle Metropolitan Iosif Nanescu, was recognized during his time like a great benefactor of the poor people, a model followed also by other clerics.

In addition to other charitable companies, Saint Hierarch Iosif Nanescu also founded in the year 1901 the Charity Company named "The Holy Cross".

The "Binefacerea" Society of the Romanian clergy, it continued its activity also during the shepherding years of the Metropolitan Partenie.

Since Pimen Georgescu, the Bishop of the Lower Danube, became the Metropolitan of Moldavia and Suceava, the social-philanthropic activities of the

eparchy became more diverse, being developed concomitantly to the needs of the people.

According to the model of “Solidaritatea” Society, founded at Galati, Metropolitan Pimen founds also at Iasi, in 28<sup>th</sup> of February 1909, such a Clergy’s Society named “Mântuitorul Hristos”, and then the name changes in “Ocrotirea”, which had local branches in all the eparchy’s counties.

The Balkan armed conflicts, during the years 1912-1913, determined the Ministry of Cults and Education, through the Direction called the Administration of the Church’s House, to ask for the help of the Church, at the request of Queen Mary, the President of the “Committee of Taking Care of Children of the Romanian Soldiers, in order to provide these children with shelter within monasteries from Moldavia’s Eparchy. Metropolitan Pimen supports this action, recommending that, at the Văratec Monastery to be sheltered the girls, and at Agapia, the boys.

The outbreak of the WWI, in which our country was involved also, brought many loses and much sufferance within Moldavia’s Metropolitan. The human sacrifices during the war, the lack of medicines, the lack of hygiene, the frost and the excessive heat, as also other factors, caused and amplified the out breaking and the spreading of diseases.

There were organized societies for helping the people in sufferance, as for instance: “Societatea pentru ocrotirea orfanilor de război”.

During the war, the medics were helped in their activities also by priests, monks and nuns, from Moldavia’s monasteries; they were alleviating and healing the pains of the sick ones, through a work organized by the *Romanian Red Cross Society*.

At monasteries from Bistrița (were also functioned an orphanage for boys): Văratec, Agapia, Neamț, Vorona, Agafton – there were organized, with the approval of Metropolitan Pimen, Hospitals for wounded and invalids, and the monasteries’ personal worked together with the medics. Such hospitals were founded also at Cetățuia and Galata Monasteries.

The “Ocrotirea orfanilor din Război” Society from Iasi Region, was founded in the year 1917, in full war, under the leadership of a Committee presided by Olga Sturdza, the honorific president being Metropolitan Pimen.

After the enthronization in the ministration of Moldavia’s Metropolitan, Nicodim Munteanul laid down the bases – during the year 1936 – of a new

benefaction society called “Caritatea Creștină”, a society for mutual help for burials and for helping the families of the deceased members.

During the Metropolitan Irineu Mihălcescu shepherding at Iasi (1939-1947), there took place WWII, causing much sufferance and needs all over the country.

The philanthropic activity of the Metropolitan was developed in a particular manner during and after the WWII, when the sufferance and the needs multiplied. Thus, at the proposal of Vicar Bishop Justinian Vasluiianul, the Metropolitan Irineu undertakes a series of measures: founding canteens for poor and orphans children from primary and secondary schools; these canteens were located in cities and were supported by priests and through the contribution of the believers.

Due to the big number of war orphans (in Moldavia there were 48.000 orphans, amongst whom 7000 of both parents), Metropolitan Irineu insisted for founding a orphanage at Pângărați Monastery, using personnel from Agapia and Văratec, who were specialized in this domain.

In order to make the social assistance more efficient, there were used two methods: **the closed** and **the open assistance**.

The **closed assistance** meant taking care, educating, and instructing the orphans, in orphanages, where they were attending an organized program, depending on their age and aptitudes.

The **open assistance** represented the way of pacing the orphans at their relatives’ domiciles, or of their neighbors of acquaintances, who were occupying themselves with raising these children.

## **2. The Hierarchal Chair of Râmnic and Its Erudite Hierarchs: Printings from the Time of Saint Hierarch Calinic**

The Vâlcea’s space it is recognized in our Church’s history for what the printing press means, and for what the cultic and the theological books mean.

Starting with the printing press from Bistrița Monastery, where it seems that Hieromonk Macarie printed the Book of Liturgy (1508) and other works, and continuing with the printing press from Govora Monastery from the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, with the work of Matei Basarab, and with the printing house founded by Saint Hierarch Antim Ivireanul (Bisop of Râmnic between the years 1705-1708)

at the Eparchial Center – where he printed eight books – we can speak about a scholarly tradition, continued by the Bishops Damaschin, Climent, Grigorie Socoteanu, Partenie, Chesarie, Filaret and Nectarie.

Saint Hierarch Calinic wanted to renew this rich scholarly tradition from Râmnic.

The reestablishing of the Râmnic's printing house, by Saint Calinic, in the year 1860, didn't put an end to the circulation of the churchly books coming from Bucharest and Sibiu.

In the printing house that worn his name – “Calinic Râmnic”, there were printed several works: *Aghiasmatar* (1861), *Slujba Sfintei Învieri din Duminica Paștilor și peste toată Săptămâna cea luminată până la Duminica Tomei* (1861); *Manual de pravilă bisericească* (1861), *Datoriile Preoților* (1861), *Tipic Bisericesc* (1861, according to the edition printed by Metropolitan Nifon, 1851), *Mineele pe 12 luni* (1862), *Carte folositoare de suflet* (1862, according to the edition from the year 1852), *Liturghierul* (1862), *Pastorala* (1863), *Învățătură către preoți și diaconi* (1865), *Sfânta și dumnezeiasca Evanghelie* (1865), *Octoihul* (1865), *Psaltirea* (1866).

Even if they are being used by priests and singers, these books are accessible also to the believers, directly by, reading or indirectly, by participating to the Holy Churchly Services.

Through printings, the hierarchs from Râmnic, they offered everybody, clerics and laymen, in the name of Lord Christ, the chance to participate to the Church's Mystery and to be imparted with the word of the Gospel.

### **3. The Arad's Archbishopric: Contributions to the Great**

Within Arad's Eparchy, with the allotted parishes and monasteries, in communion with other parishes and eparchies from the Romanian Provinces, it has been developed, cultivated, and maintained, the churchly activity of preaching the truth of faith transmitted by the Holy Apostles from our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Hierarchs, the clergy, and the believers, from Arad's Eparchy, they have been passing through several historical periods, sufferance, and joys, as in fact the whole Transylvania and Romania, enduring centuries of oppressions and division, from other nations and faiths.

The Arad's Hierarchs, together with the clergy, and with the believers, they have been fighting for maintaining the Romanian-ism and the Orthodox faith, through all means: cult, culture, education, and social ministrations.

The Holy Liturgy and the Holy Churchly Services, were being done, after the year 1829, in Romanian language – for the Arad's Eparchy was being shepherded by a Romanian Hierarch (the first Romanian Bishop of Arad), the Bishop Nestor Iovanovici from Făgăraș, who was a Romanian nationalist, establishing the direction of the Church and of the Romanian society on the road of victory.

The shepherding of the Holy Hierarch Andrei Șaguna in Transylvania (1864-1973), it meant the reestablishment of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan (1864-1873), and it meant also: the creation of the Organic statute, the founding of schools, the publishing of books and manuals, deeds having positive repercussions also upon the Arad's Eparchy, by the involvement of the Bishop Ioan Meșian of Arad (1785-1902). This Hierarch developed Arad's administrative, cultural, and educational infrastructure, by founding *The Diocesan Printing House* (1879), on the purpose of promoting the culture of the Romanian people; he also founded or stimulated the continuation of issuing the numerous religious, cultural, and educational publications: the "Biserica și Școala" Review (1879), the Newspapers "Speranța" (1869) and "Lumina" (1872), Churchly, scholastic, literary, and economic sheet, wanting to cultivate the clergy and the people of cultural, economic, and social point of view, for active national liberation; "Diocesan Calendars"(1880) within which there were published articles with Romanian literary and historical character.

To these we must add the tradition of the pedagogical and theological Romanian education system, *Preparandia* (1812) and the *Theological Institute* (1822), the multiplication of the confessional schools, the founding of the *Școlii civile de fete* (1895) - through which it was shown and demonstrated the Latinity of the Romanian language.

To the ground of these activities it fitted also the shepherding of Bishop Ioan Ignatie Papp (1903-1925), and during the period he was also Locumtenant of Metropolitan of Ardeal (1918-1919) a multitude of events took place, culminating with the Great Union.

In this historical context, the Orthodox Church didn't remain indifferent and acted through its own means in order to sustain the desires of the Romanian people

from Transylvania and Hungary. Thus, there were organized the Metropolitan Synods, for achieving the churchly autonomy, the Romanian self-determining in Transylvania, and the Union with Romania – these synods were held at Arad.

Together with other fighters for Union, there was also Vasile Goldiș, eparchial secretary at Arad's Bishopric, he having an exceptional theological, cultural, and political education. He represented the Arad's Orthodox Church, together with Bishop Papp, in all the demarches done for accomplishing the Great Union.

On behalf of Arad's Bishopric, at the Great National Assembly from Alba Iulia (1th of December 1918), there participated, as full right envoys, the Bishop of Arad and 16 Romanian chief-priests.

In conclusion, we highlight the importance of the contribution brought by Arad's Bishopric, through its hierarchs, clergy, and people, to putting in practice a providential national plan, favored by history and accomplished by fully sacrificial Romanians, worthy of loved, and spirited by a unitary national vision.

## **II. Accomplishing the Church's Mission within Parish and Monastery**

### **1. The Parish – amongst Mission, Shepherding, and making Eternal**

The parish, as also the whole world, it is a place of confession the Gospel, for clerics and believers, all the time and with the whole their being, with powerful faith and sacrificial love. The parish represents a geographical and a spiritual space, within which the priest undertakes liturgical and pastoral-missionary activities, which propose a religious authentic Christian living.

The priest can undertake missionary activities within the parish, by: 1. The Holy Churchly Services; 2. Sermon or teaching words; 3. Cultural activities; 4. Philanthropic activities. In these activities, the priest doesn't work alone, but he is helped by the grace of God and by the believers from the eparchy and from other places.

The parish represents the place where we are born for eternity, the place where we are walking the road from home to Church, the place where we are receiving the Holy Mysteries, and the place where we wait for the Resurrection from dead, having the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ as sign of the victory.



## **2. The Parish's Mission and Its Challenges within the Modern Romanian Society**

The parish and the monastery, the family and the school, they have been in communion and collaboration for sanctifying the earthly life and for achieving the earthly life.

The Church's clergy has been educated, from generation to generation, around monasteries, wherefrom the bishops and the metropolitan came also; within the elementary schools of the time, during the 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> Centuries, the future ministers have been formed in the theological seminaries and faculties.

In the conditions caused by war and by the other social events, the hierarchs and the priests mobilized themselves, together with the believers, in order to defend their country and the spiritual-cultural patrimony.

The military priests offered the Romanian soldiers, on the frontline, religious assistance: prayers, religious services, sanctifications, the Holy Mysteries, the Holy Liturgy, the burial service, as also religious-moral education in the burdening conditions caused by war.

The priests who remained in parishes, they had the duty to take care of the families, of the ones who went to war, and to replace the professors in schools.

During the communist regime, submitted to permanent pressure and aggressiveness, the Romanian Orthodox Church was forced to limit its activities undertaken amidst people.

Confiscating the properties (1948), closing the theological schools (there remained only two Theological Institutes at Bucharest and Sibiu and five theological Seminaries), persecuting some of the hierarchs, priests, and monks (many of them were imprisoned and tortured), demolishing churches, closing monasteries and banishing their inhabitants, censoring the churchly publications – behold only a few of the measures undertook by a regime hostile to the Church and to the Romanian nation.

The sacrificial attitude of the clergy during the communist regime, it determined that, at the end of the year 1989, the situations of our Church to the following: 17 cathedrals, 8232 parishioner churches, 3588 branch churches, and 256 cemetery churches, 273 oratories, 20 chapels, and 132 monastery churches.

During the last 30 years (1990-2019), the Romanian society has been transformed, and the Church has preserved and developed the liturgical, pastoral, cultural-educational, and social-philanthropic activities.

The Romanian Orthodox Church has developed itself not only at national level, but also by founding parishes and eparchies abroad, where the Romanian Orthodox communities have multiplied. The Romanian Orthodox Diaspora it has been organized since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

### **3. The Monastery and the Sanctification of the Man – Images of Improved Monks: the Archimandrite Ioan from Hurezi**

The Romanian monasticism is rich in holy monks and deeds which adorn the history of the Christian monasticism from within the Church of Jesus Christ the Savior.

From the Scythian monks, the Pious Holy missionaries Ioan Casian, Gherman, and Dionisie Exigul, to Saint Pious Iacob from Neamț, from the Pious Fathers Paisie and Cleopa from Sihăstria, to the Pious Dionisie Ignat, Teofil Părăian, Arsenie Papacioc, and many others, the historical calendar of our Romanian monasticism it is illuminated by the work of the grace of God within their lives and deeds.

The Romanian pious saints, confessors, hierarchs, and waivodes, they adorn today the churches and the calendar, offering models of saint life and undefeated love.

Honoring of the martyrdom of the Brâncoveanu Saints, but also visiting the Brâncoveanu's foundations, occasion us moments of prayer, of deepening the understanding of their life and sacrifice for Christ, the Son of God, and for the Church, and, in the same time, urge us to spiritually meditate at the life and work of a *Saint* father, the Pious Ioan, the archimandrite and the abbot of Hurezi Monastery between the years 1692-1726.

The founding and scholarly activity of the martyr Waivode it is tightly connected to the work and living of archimandrite Ioan, the abbot of Hurezi Monastery. Ioan took care of the monastic life of Hurezi, of the properties of the coenobitic community, of the people who were toiling for building holy places and of the ones who were working on the monastery's domains; he was the spiritual

father of the waivode's family, defender of the Orthodoxy together with hierarchs, clerics, monks, and believers, during a period of big tribulations (the Austrian occupation from Oltenia, the Uniation from Transylvania, the martyrdom of Brâncoveanu), remaining an unquenched light in the history of the our nation's Church.

Archimandrite Ioan shepherded this monastery for thirty four years, organizing a monastic congregation of Byzantine tradition.

### **III. Romanian Culture and Spirituality**

#### **1. The Brâncoveanu's Foundations**

In the light of the 305 years from the martyrdom of the Brâncoveanu Saints (1714-2019), we observe how Saint Brâncoveanu understood that the Church it means the manifestation of the love of God within world, through the crucifixion and death of His Resurrected Son on the third day, and through the sending of the Holy Ghost upon Apostles.

Saint Martyr Brâncoveanu erected churches, and he created places where we can meet God, "antechamber" of the Kingdom of Heavens.

The art inspired by Brâncoveanu, it has its roots in the spiritual-cultural inheritance of Byzantium and in the Occidental art.

Saint Brâncoveanu adorned many churches with open porches (met also at other founders and foundations), sustained by a few or by many columns. The porch of the Hurezi Monastery is has twelve columns symbolizing the 12 Apostles; in this way, it is being expressed through architecture the fact that the Church is founded by Lord Jesus Christ, on the witness and confession of the Holy Apostles.

The five printing houses from Bucharest, Snagov, Târgoviște, Râmnic, Buzău, brought to light many necessary books for clergy and people, an important contribution to this being brought by Saint Antim Ivireanul, Bishop Mitrofan, Mihail Iștvanovici, and others.

The library from Hurezi Monastery shows the preoccupation of the Romanian Ruler for printing books, but also for buying them from other countries, in order to enlighten the clergy, the monks, and the believers.

The Brâncoveanu's foundations from Râmnic Archbishopric are a witness of the faithfulness of Brâncoveanu family and of the Romanian people, towards the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **2. The Romanian Churchly Literature**

Inventing the printing press, at the half of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, by Johannes Gutenberg, led to its spreading also in the Romanian Countries, at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, where started to be printed the first books in Slavonic language, at Târgoviște. Even if the first Romanian typographers: Hieromonk Macarie ((Liturghierul-1508, Octoih-1510, Tetraevanghel-1512), Dimitrie Lubovici (Apostol-1547, Octoih-1557) and Hieromonk Lavrentie (Tetraevanghel-1582; Psaltirea), they printed using the Slavonic language, it is valuable the fact that they set the bases of the typographical activity in our country, and they gave to Romanians their first cultic books.

Many churchly personalities contributed, along centuries XVI-XVIII, to promoting the Romanian churchly literature and the unity of language by preaching and transmitting the word of God; in this regard, we are mentioning here: deacon Coresi, Saint Hierarch Varlaam, Saint Hierarch Dosoftei, Nicolae Milescu the police and army chief, Saint Metropolitan Simion Ștefan, the Greceanu brothers, Saint Hierarch Petru Movilă, Saint Hierarch Antim Ivireanul, Bishop Mitrofan of Buzău and Bishop Damaschin of Râmnic. All the printing presses from Târgoviște, the Church from Șcheii Brașovului, Dealu Monastery, Snagov, Bucharest, Râmnic, Buzău and Iasi – they belonged to the Church.

Thus, by analyzing the period during which the Romanian language started to be increasingly used, we observe that the entire old Romanian culture was tightly connected to the life of our Orthodox Church, not only as form of expressing, but also as substance.

## **3. The Orthodox Rural Spirituality and Culture within Arad's Archbishopric from the Past to Today**

The Orthodox spirituality from the rural areas of the Arad's Eparchy has been organized and has been taking place in the parishioner churches and in the communities of believers connected to them. The Holy Mysteries and the other

religious services, they have been representing and they represent for the believers from villages, the connection of grace, with God, the sanctification of the life and of the family on the road towards the Kingdom of Heavens. In the same time, the Churchly Religious Services, the Seven Praises and the Holy Liturgy, they constitute the spine between the village's church and the Holy Trinity, as manifestation of the true faith in an inter-confessional disputable context, with many interdictions and social-political intrusions from the temporary leaders.

The period of the years 1706-1829, it represents to the Orthodox Romanian from Arad, a Serbian shepherding, often an exclusivist one, with hierarchs appointed (elected) by the Carlovitze Patriarchy, under the supervision of the imperial administration from Vienna, who favored and followed their own interests, in the context of the catholic and uniate proselytism in full swing, and the Orthodox Romanians saw themselves being persecuted, oppressed, and marginalized, by the so-called Christian "brothers".

Since the enthronization of the first Romanian Bishop, Nestor Iovanovici (1829-1830) - he was coming from Făgăraș -, the Romanian hierarchs paid pastoral visits to the Romanian parishes, taking care of the clergy's discipline, of the confession of the Orthodox faith and of the Romanian identity, of defending the clergy and the believers against the Hungarian oppression, against the Uniate proselytism, and against the intrusions of the Serbian Church.

In what regards the work of founding cultic places within rural areas, we are mentioning here the fact that these ones were build in the majority of the cases with the help of the believers who wanted to be remembered at the Holy Liturgy, by the priests, for the forgiveness of the sins, even after they would have left this world.

The counting from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century shows us that in the twelve deaneries, during that century, there were build 115 churches, 84 of wood and 31 of stone, fact that shows the material resources of the Orthodox communities.

Today within Arad's Archbishopric exist 237 parishes, out of which 207 are organized within rural areas. Along eparchy's history, there have been founded and disbanded several parishes, especially during the Centuries XVII-XVIII, when the clergy was materially and financially supported by the believers.

After the year 1990, in the rural parishes of the eparchy, the priests have been organizing diverse spiritual, catechetical, cultural-artistic activities, as well as

cultural or social-philanthropic associations, in order to support the believers whose number has been decreasing, because of the migration to cities and abroad.

#### **IV. The Romanian Monasticism, or about Making Eternal the Man Who is Thirsty of God**

##### **1. Pages from the History of the Romanian Monasticism: Cross and Mission in the Monastic Life (the Decree no. 410 from the year 1959)**

This year (2019) there have passed 60 years since the communist regime from Romanian gave the hardest blow to the Romanian Orthodox Church through the *Decree no. 410 from 19<sup>th</sup> of November 1959*, which provided that in the monasteries must remain only monks or personnel who were 55 year old, or older, and in the monasteries of nuns, this age was 50. Consequently to the implementation of this decree, several thousands of monks and nuns were excluded from monasticism, and many monasteries were closed.

Thus, before the issuing of the Decree no. 410/1959, the communist state took also other decisions to the detriment of the monasteries, and this decree was the peak of the hard policy directed against the Church and especially against monasteries.

The Decree affected the monastic life within monasteries, and the Metropolitan of Moldavia and Suceava, the richest and the most powerful in monastic life, it suffered the most. Some eparchies were strongly affected by the communist persecution, because they had many monasteries, and some of them remained without any.

We must mention here the fact that, after the falling of the communism in our country, many monks - excluded by the Decree 410 - came back to continue their monastic life in repentance and prayer.

The Romanian monasticism during the communist era, having its tribulations and sacrifice, with the prayer, the self-giving, and the exemplary life, it contributed very much to preserving the right faith, to maintaining the organization of our Church, and to strengthening the faith in God of the Romanian people.

## **2. Monastery's Mission in a Changing Romanian Society**

During the last almost 1700 years, each historical époque questioned the existence of the monasteries and of the monasticism in a society considered as “modern”, regarding the justification of the monastic life.

Together with the parish communities, the monasteries developed along centuries a rich missionary activity in order to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Savior, and also for defending the truth of faith.

According to the Gospel's teaching and to the monastic tradition, the ones who want to become monks must cross three stages: the calling, the renunciation, and the following.

The general characteristics of the Romanian monasticism are considered to be: a system of equilibrium between the eremite life and the coenobitic life, a tradition, an adaptable style of life, more than a rigid rule, characterized by alternating between the liturgical prayer, work, asceticism, and contemplation. Its main contributions consist in: a) artistic creativity, b) culture, and c) promoting the churchly national, cultural, social, and pastoral life, the monasteries being centers of consolidating the state's authority.

Monasticism came out stronger, from the communist persecution, like the statistics of the beginning of the year 1990 show us, and the witness and the resistance of the spiritually improved monks transformed the monasteries in true spiritual pilgrimage centers.

The Romanian monasticism has a very important missionary-pastoral role, for the people come at monasteries with the faith and hope that they will be helped in their spiritual evolution, and they will find treatments for healing their soul and body of sins and sufferance, as also advices for strengthening their Christian life.

At some monasteries, like: Durău, Miclăușeni, Neamț, Văratec, Bucharest, Alba Iulia, Techirghiol, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Galați, Giurgiu, Zalău, etc., there have been founded Cultural-Pastoral or Social Centers, where are received children, young and old people, in order to benefit of religious, pastoral, and social assistance.

### **3. Monastic Philanthropy: the Infirmaries of Râmnic's Eparchy**

After a life spent in obedience, poverty, and chastity, the monks and the nuns, had the right to benefit of an old age when they to be cared by the novice monks.

The infirmary in a monastery was the saving boat for them, which carried the old monks and nuns to the Church, to the "Heavenly Shore:"of the divine Kingdom.

The monasteries form the Romanian Countries, in addition to the spiritual, cultural, and to the administrative role, they also served as places for taking care of the old monks and of the ill people from the territory within the monastery's area.

From old, there are recognized and attested the infirmaries of the monasteries: Putna, Neamț, Argeș (1524), Bistrița (Vâlcea, 1520-1521), Cozia (1542-1544), Vodița, Tismana, Dragomirna (the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century), Sadova (1691-1694), Hurezi (1696-1699) and so on, and their medical-philanthropic role.

The Râmnic's Archbishopric contributed, during centuries, to a intense and necessary social-philanthropic activity, both at the level of the Eparchial centre and of its historical and founded by waivodes monasteries (Jgheaburi, Bistrița, Hurezi, Cozia, Dintr-un Lemn).

### **V. The Activity of Future Scientific Research – *Windows Open towards Future***

Starting from the research directions approached until present in the *History of the Romanian Orthodox Church and of the Universal Church, in the theological culture from the Romanian space of the 15<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Centuries and in the genealogy of the Christian monasticism*, we intend to develop the future research activity by deepening four great themes:

- 1. The Monasticism in Banat**
- 2. Arad's Archbishopric in the context of the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church**
- 3. The history of the Huși Eparchy**
- 4. The Romanian Diaspora: churchly history and tendencies**



## **5. The Monasticism in Banat**

We aim to thoroughly study a series of aspect related to the monastic life in Arad's Eparchy and in the Metropolitan of Banat, in the broad context of the history of the Romanian monastic practice. Given the fact that in the Arad's Eparchy there is the oldest documentary attested monastery from our country, the Hodoş Bodrog Monastery (1177), we will extend the research undertaken until now also to other disappeared monastic hearths (for instance Bizere Monastery) and with more recent activity (for example, the monasteries: Gai, Feredeş, Radna, etc.). We will also contribute to a better knowledge of the role of the monasticism from Banat, regarding the resistance of the Romanian Orthodox believers against Calvinism and Uniation, but also of the Romanian monasticism in the context of the presence of the Serbian Orthodox churchly authorities in Banat and Transylvania.

### **2. Arad's Archbishopric in the Context of the History of the Romanian Orthodox Church**

Being Vicar Bishop of Arad's Archbishopric, we equally intend to extend our research in order to highlight the role played by this Eparchy within the churchly history from our country, and the characteristics of this role. Having a rich and long history, an archive that contains documents speaking about a period of hundreds years, the Arad's Archbishopric can bring to light the contribution of the forerunners in preserving the Orthodoxy in a inter-confessional and multiethnic context, in affirming the Romanian identity through Church and School, regarding also the contribution of the Banat's Church to the realization of the Great Union from 1918, and to the spiritual resistance during communism, and to the churchly development after the year 1990.

From East to West, we will create spiritual bridges between Moldavia and Banat, anchored in clergy's and believers' collaboration within the Church of our Savior Jesus Christ, from the past and of today.

### **3. The History of the Huși Eparchy**

At the proposal of His Eminence Ignatie, the Bishop of Huși, we intend to realize also a historical presentation of the Huși Eparchy, where we were born and educated before entering the monastic life.

The Bishopric of Huși, having 400 years of existence (1598) and a rich churchly history, it has been contributing all this time to the churchly development from the Metropolitan of Moldavia, through illuminated hierarchs, through theological education (there already was functioning a theological seminary in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century), school of churchly singers, parishes, and monasteries. The Eparchial Center, with a cathedral build by Saint Waivode Ștefan cel Mare, it has a churchly patrimony that must be highlighted and made know to everybody.

Also, we will continue and develop the collaboration with the reviews: “Teologia”, “Mitropolia Olteniei”, “Teologie și viață”, in order to valorize the undertaken research, as also with the other reviews where he have been publishing our articles until now.

### **6. The Romanian Diaspora: Churchly History and Tendencies**

Aiming the continuation of publishing books about the consequences of the Decree no. 410/1959, on the Romanian Orthodox monasticism, about the institutional connections between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Royal House, on the Romanian Orthodox Church during the between wars period, during the communist regime from our country, but also on the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church after the year 1989 until today, in the context international of organizing eparchies and parishes in the Romanian Diaspora all over the world. We will study especially the history and the evolution in time of the parochial Romanian communities from Italy, Spain, France, but also from other European countries.

Establishing the connection with the “Irenikon” Review from Belgium, it will be developed by publishing new historical-theological studies which to generate interest both to the Romanian and foreign readers. In the same time, we aim to publish a work on historical theology at the *Resurrection* Publishing House of the Theological College of Leeds, Great Britain.