

**“LUCIAN BLAGA” UNIVERSITY OF SIBIU  
“SAINT ANDREI ŞAGUNA” FACULTY OF THEOLOGY**

**SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS**

**„THE DEBATE OVER THE CONCEPT OF THE ”RE-EVANGELISATION”  
OF EUROPE.**

**AN ORTHODOX PERSPECTIVE”**

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## TABLE OF CONTENT OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

<b>Motto`s</b> .....	<b>p. 3</b>
<b>Table of Content.</b> .....	<b>p. 5</b>
<b>Introduction.</b> .....	<b>p. 9</b>
<b>A. Modernity of the subject.</b> .....	<b>p. 9</b>
<b>B. Current stage of the researches concerning the subject of „new evangelisation”</b> .....	<b>p. 11</b>
<b>C. Delimitation of the chosen subject</b> .....	<b>p. 15</b>
<b>I. The Church: affected by theological errors and by secularisation</b> .....	<b>p. 18</b>
<b>A. Secularisation and it`s consequences in western Europe</b> .....	<b>p. 18</b>
<b>B. The old concept of created Grace and the effects that common christians suffered because of this theological error.</b> .....	<b>p. 29</b>
<b>1) ”The beatified contemplation of God” in the old roman catholic theology.</b> .....	<b>p. 32</b>
<b>2) The deification of Man in the orthodox theology.</b> .....	<b>p. 45</b>
<b>3) Conclusions and catholic doctrinal reviews.</b> .....	<b>p. 56</b>
<b>C. The Orthodox Church`s work in the world, unaffected by time and by history</b> .....	<b>p. 60</b>
<b>II. The birth of the concept of „re-evangelisation” in contemporary occidental Europe.</b> .....	<b>p. 68</b>
<b>A. The scale of the religious chrysis in Western Europe.</b> .....	<b>p. 68</b>
<b>1) De–secularisation or post – secularisation of Europe, from theory to reality</b> .....	<b>p. 77</b>
<b>2) ”Vicarious religious affiliation”</b> .....	<b>p. 80</b>
<b>3) Case Study: The roman-catholic Archdiocese of Vienna</b>	<b>p. 83</b>
<b>B. The hostile attitude of statal, european and world authorities towards the bi-milenar christian values</b> .....	<b>p. 90</b>
<b>C. The growing influence of Islam in Western Europe</b> .....	<b>p. 94</b>
<b>1) The proportion of the Islamisation problem in Europe</b>	<b>p. 95</b>
<b>2) The Orthodox Church`s solution to these problems</b>	<b>p. 101</b>

3)	Conclusions .....	p. 104
III.	"The new evangelisation" – roman catholic missionary project of great span	p. 107
A.	Brief description of the concept of „new evangelisation” from the perspective of the catholic popes and theologians. ....	p. 109
1)	Points of view of the popes, concerning the subject of the „new evangelisation” .....	p. 110
2)	Other roman – catholic clergymen and theologians, refering to the topic of the „new evangelisation” .....	p. 112
B.	Official documents of the Catholic Churches, referring the concept of „new evangelisation” .....	p. 114
1)	„ <b>Redemptoris Missio</b> ” (7 december 1990) enciclical of pope John Paul II: context, exigencies, priorities .....	p. 115
2)	<b>The Hommily of Mogila</b> , Poland (09 june 1979) of pope John Paul II, announcing the notion of “new evangelisation” . .....	p. 119
3)	The pastoral constitution „ <b>Gaudium et Spes</b> ” (7 december 1965) of the II’nd Vatican Council .....	p. 119
4)	The decree „ <b>Ad gentes</b> ” (7 december 1965) of the II’nd Vatican Council .....	p. 121
5)	The apostolic exhortation „ <b>Nuntiandi Evangelii</b> ” (8 december 1975) of pope Paul VI .....	p. 124
6)	The apostolic exhortation „ <b>Christifideles laici</b> ” (30 december 1988) of pope John Paul II .....	p. 126
7)	The apostolic letter „ <b>Nuovo Millennio Ineunte</b> ” (6 january 2001) of pope John Paul II. ....	p. 128
8)	The apostolic letter „ <b>Ubicumque et Semper</b> ” (21 september 2010) of pope Benedikt XVI .....	p. 129
9)	The apostolic letter „ <b>Evangelii Gaudium</b> ” (24 november 2013) of pope Francisc. ....	p. 131
C.	The pontifical council for promoting the „new evangelisation”	p. 132
D.	Catholic theologians concerned with the topic of „new evangelisation” .....	p. 136

1)	The Holy Liturgy – means for promoting the evangelisation ”Ad Gentes” and the ”new evangelisation” . . . . .	p. 144
2)	The family – nucleus of the „new evangelisation” . . .	p. 148
3)	Reticent catholic theologians regarding the concept of the „new evangelisation” . . . . .	p. 153
<b>IV.</b>	<b>The lay associations in the Catholic Church – an answer to the missionary call for a „new evangelisation”. A selective presentation . . . . .</b>	<b>p. 158</b>
A.	Introduction to the topic. . . . .	p. 159
B.	The Neocatechumenate . . . . .	p. 162
C.	The Focolary Movement . . . . .	p. 167
D.	The Pontifical Council for Laity and it’s relation to these movements . . . . . .	p. 170
E.	Other associations of the faithful with „Pontifical Right” . . . .	p. 172
F.	”Annus Fidei”, ”The Metropolis Mission” and other parish missionary programs initiated by the Catholic Church . . . . .	p. 179
G.	Intemperances . . . . .	p. 183
<b>V.</b>	<b>Perspectives of „re-evangelisation” in orthodox missiology. . . . .</b>	<b>p. 186</b>
A.	The opinions of some orthodox theologians related to the concept of „re-evangelisation” . . . . .	p. 186
B.	Initiatives of the orthodox mission, related to the subject of „re- evangelisation” . . . . .	p. 195
C.	Personal opinions related to the implementation of the „re- evangelisation” concept in the orthodox theology. . . . .	p. 199
D.	The Pan-Ortodhox Synod at Constantinopol, 2016 – a fulfillment of a desire more than 1000 years old, or the premis for the orthodox „re- evangelisation” . . . . .	p. 211
	<b>Conclusions . . . . .</b>	<b>p. 216</b>
	<b>Annexes. . . . .</b>	<b>p. 220</b>
A.	<b>Annex 1</b> – The number of muslims in Western Europe and this percentage compared to the total population of the countries, as they were in the year 2005. . . . .	<b>p. 220</b>

<b>B. Annex 2</b> – The statistical evolution of the number of faithful in the The roman-catholic Archdiocese of Vienna between 1950 and 2010 . . . . . . . .	<b>p. 221</b>
<b>C. Annex 3</b> – The percentage of europeans who (don't) believe in God, presented in paralell between the years 2005 and 2010 . . . . .	<b>p. 222</b>
<b>D. Annex 4</b> – The percentage of european countries in wich the people believe or not in God . . . . .	<b>p. 223</b>
<b>E. Annex 5</b> – The positioning of European countries between the two dimensions: "traditional" – "secular" and "materialist" – "post- materialist" . . . . .	<b>p. 224</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> . . . . .	<b>p. 225</b>

**KEYWORDS**

Missiology, mission, secularisation, created Grace, roman – catholic theology,  
orthodox theology, re-evangelisation, new evangelisation, religious chrysis, de-  
secularisation, post-secularisation, vicarious religious affiliation, Islam,  
Neocatechumenate, Focolary movement

## INTRODUCTION

The subject of this scientific paper attracted me when I was reading a volume of His Beatitude, Patriarch Daniel, în wich I **discovered a personal confession of Father Dumitru Stăniloae's, adressed to His Beatitude some years ago: "If I were young again, I would do everything for the re-christianization of Europe"**<sup>1</sup>. After this, I ended up realising that this theological subject is of great modernity, considering that in the last years, as I had the oportunity to visit a part of Western Europe, I was shocked because I visited very beautiful cathedrals, constructed in impressive architectural styles, and I was expecting to see some somptous liturgical services in them, with the churches being full, exactly as I saw in the images from Vatican City. My surprise was to see that theese cathedrals existed, indeed, but they were completely empty. All the liturgical services they celebrated consisted in a one hour Mass, once or twice a week, which was attended by a maximum of ten believers, then the church was either closed, or if it was open, there was nobody in it, not even an employee. Over the years I got used to this picture that I saw constantly. I could not find, however, a justification for this. I tried to find the causes that generated this religious gap that is visibly felt or the consequences and solutions to this situation, but without satisfactory answers. I felt the need, in this context, to underline and underpin through a logical topic of studying, all these issues, to effectively bring a personal contribution to the ongoing efforts to resolve the religious crisis that Western Europe travels.

I found this subject interesting in a practical sense also, because today the Romanian Orthodox Church is more present than ever in Europe, through the mission that the Romanian dioceses make there, with great difficulty. Many studies on this topic that I have covered, had a rather scholastic vision of the world and the moral principles that govern it. As the authors of these studies are almost exclusively

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<sup>1</sup> DANIEL, Patriarhul Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, *Loctiitor de Mitropolit al Moldovei și Bucovinei, Comori ale Ortodoxiei*, Editura Trinitas, Iași, 2007, p. 1.

Catholic, I often felt the need to bring a personal opinion on the subjects dealt with and tried to find the cause of such vision. Therefore I often returned to basic Christian principles, such as family, Christian living, etc. which I were treated in a derived form and which, if misunderstood, generate many problems in understanding the authentic message of the Gospel.

As confusions or the religious crisis, that requires attitude of the Church, is felt most in Western Europe, I decided to limit the scope of my research in this geographical area. I had the opportunity to personally see cathedrals turned into shopping centers or impressive churches that on Sundays did not exceed a number of ten to twenty believers, and statistics about the practice of religion in public and in private, that I read later, strengthened and deepened more and more my sad finding.

## **I. THE CHURCH – AFFECTED BY THEOLOGICAL ERRORS AND BY SECULARISATION**

In the first part of the paper I discussed some general introductory aspects, to prepare the analysis of the concept of " re- evangelization ". In this first introductory part I have developed theme of secularization with appearances in Western Europe, and its consequences. Given that the subject of secularization is very much studied by Orthodox theologians and theologians of other Christian denominations, I have summarized those studies that are relevant to the analysis of the subject of "re-evangelization" and which are recent. Furthermore, I argued that the work of the Church in the world has to be unaffected by the course of history to preserve the holiness. The last introductory argument is related to theological error of the old created Grace and how it has affected all Catholic Christians in history, distancing them from the Gospel.

Theologians attribute to the term " secularization " several meanings, deriving from the form of understanding of God's relationship with the world. Thus, Georges Mantzarides says that " the primary form of secularization is the process of separating God's world or waiver to assign a transcendent nature to the world and worldly things, which was a characteristic of the Old Testament faith. The world is, of course, recognized as the work of God and can not be understood without Him. In addition to this, God manifests and works in the world. But in the same time the focus is on the

secular nature of the world, on its characteristic of being created, which makes it radically different from God"<sup>2</sup>.

The escape from this period of secularization is seen in two possible directions, by those who have seen an end to it.

The first and most likely, in my opinion, is the idea of "re-confessionalization" or "de-secularization" characterized by a return to Gospel values in a sincere form and with interest. I will treat this theory in the next chapter, where it fits the context.

The second development of secularization is a pessimistic one from a religious viewpoint because it involves the transition towards a model of perfect man in evolutionary terms, through what is called "**transhumanism**"<sup>3</sup>. This concept, also called "post-humanism" says, in short, that man will evolve through technological developments so fast to live longer, healthier, happier, etc. because technology will eliminate biological imperfections and social illnesses that they cause, thus perfecting both man and the society<sup>4</sup>. The concept leaves no room for any religion in human life, as individual needs are covered by technology which is handy for everything. Cultural and intellectual evolution, says the concept of "post-humanism" will propel man to a condition improved by reason, condition that will be enough for continuing the developments to which one aspires. This concept involves taking the people through the process of these evolution methods, to free the human species from its biological limitations<sup>5</sup>.

The last introductory argument is related to the theological error of the old created Grace and how it has affected all Catholic Christians in history, distancing them from the Gospel.

I believe that this doctrinal innovation is one of the major causes that generated the distancing of the man from the Catholic Church. I started to develop this idea after I stumbled upon a word of Father Stăniloae, that describes the effects of this theology on the Catholic Christians: "In various Christian denominations there are many believers whose Christian life was not reduced to the formal doctrinal

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<sup>2</sup> George Mantzarides, The Phenomenon of Secularisation, in The Greek Orthodox Theological Review nr. 1/1980, p.1 Apud Protosinghel Ambrozie Meleacă, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

<sup>3</sup> Hava Tirosh-Samuels, *Transhumanism as a secularist faith*, în Zygon, Nr. 47/2012, Issue 4, p. 711-716.

<sup>4</sup> See also Robert M. Geraci, *Video Games and the Transhuman Inclination*, în Zygon, Nr. 47/2012, Issue 4 și James J. Hughes, *The Politics of Transhumanism and the Techno-Millennial Imagination, 1626–2030* în Zygon, Nr. 47/2012, Issue 4.

<sup>5</sup> This way of seeing things and its consequences are made fun of by a cartoon from the year 2004 called: „Wall-E”.



formulas of their confessions. **Ancient Christian tradition was stronger than doctrinal innovations** brought by their founders and officially supported until now by those parties and their theologians. **In Catholicism, for example, Mysteries are practiced to this day**, accompanied by the belief that through them the faithful are united intimately and directly to Christ, so that Christ is working in the Church, although theological theory gave an alternate Christ and conceives salvation as being accomplished by simply pleasing God through Calvary, **and declares that the grace received in the sacraments is created grace and not a work originated in the uncreated divinity of Christ and as the extension of it in the being of the faithful**". But although "the faithful of different Christian denominations found themselves unwillingly in those denominations, with beliefs about a Christ who is not present in all his saving efficiency within them, **their incomplete participation to Christ, and primarily without their fault may result in an incomplete participation to Him and in the next life**"<sup>6</sup>.

The following introductory theme that I developed in the first part of the paper is on the immutability of the Orthodox Church in the world, as the foundation of true Christian mission. I stated here that regardless of changes in society with the passage of generations, the work of the Orthodox Church is unchanged in essence, only the form of preaching being modified, adapting to the needs of a certain community, a certain time etc. This I think is needed in the paper because I brought - as a personal contribution - the argument that if the work in the history of the Orthodox Church is unchanged because dogma remained unchanged, the same cannot be said about the Roman - Catholic Church. This is because when the situation seemed to demand it, the doctrine of the Roman - Catholic Church suffered modifications or additions, this undermining the confidence of the "flock" in its "shepherd". And this has caused in time human remoteness from the Evangelical rules, **creating a vicious circle in which man departs from the Church, and the Church approaches the man, departing from its essential values.**

## **II . THE APPEARANCE OF „RE-EVANGELISATION” IN THE CONTEMPORARY WESTERN EUROPEAN AREA**

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<sup>6</sup> Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, apud Pr. Lect. Dr. Nicolae Moșoiu, *Unitatea și catolicitatea Bisericii*, în *Revista Teologică*, Nr. 1/2007, pp. 2-3.

The second part of the thesis presents various causes of the emergence and deepening of the religious crisis as a given fact. Here I presented the scale of the Western European religious crisis first after its very visible and disturbing effects. Then I set the size of Western Europe's religious crisis by its causes, including the increasing influence of Islam in Western Europe, causing effects among Christians in the European West and assault them by intolerance and militant message, not peaceful. All these elements have in common the fact that they weakened the faith of bi-millennial Christian European communities proffered by mistakes, thus affecting the individual, the family and the Christian community that has left the Christian message for ephemeral thing.

If in the chapter on this subject I have defined secularization as a process in which man tries to become independent from God, meaning that he can not see that he is dependent on God, in the current chapter I will outline briefly the effects of settling in this wrong thinking, as an alternative to traditionalist thinking<sup>7</sup>.

I stated in the chapter on secularisation that it begins with the Enlightenment, with the gradual forgetting of God, in the everyday actions that man does in his life. If secularization has greatly affected some people, this is because people have turned from God. But this is not only attracted their remoteness from God. Although after the flood God promised to no longer punish the man, this does not mean that God does not quarrel the man who forgot Him. And especially it does not mean that God does not also turn away from those who reject Him. If we know that God is happy when we ask for help in every moment of our lives, even in the smallest matters, it is because of the fact that ignoring Him and self-sufficiency are not to His liking.

Of course, God is delighted when he sees a civilized society where people respect each other and respect the law, but He does not enjoy it at all if these things are done without invoking Him. If we see the prophetic books of the Old Testament that God scold people when they forgot Israel, to a cycle of several hundred years, and punished them, it does not mean that now with the New Covenant, God does not get angry and does not turn his face from a people who ignored him increasingly

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<sup>7</sup> Patriarch Daniel said that at 28 years old when he wrote his doctorate, the state of crisis of Western Christianity is manifested to the world crisis, by distance or tension between the official doctrine of the Catholic Church and actual faith of believers, by emphasizing attitudes groups in the Catholic Church by open conflicts and disputes through loss of the sense of belonging to the Church, by Secularism, the spiritual life crisis by crisis theology, and multiplying sects. Each of these issues is still very nowadays, with some emphasizing as the years go along. - Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, *Theology and Spirituality*, Romanian Patriarchal Basilica Publishing, Bucharest, 2010, pp. 257-268.

more. I made this statement because I believe that the process of secularization took effect not only as human remoteness from God but also as human punishment by God, by turning His face from them, from those who have been evangelized and now have forgotten who gave them peace.

Therefore, my opinion is that secularization is not new, but the same mistakes repeating in the history of salvation, when people stumble in is the same forgetting of the Lord, they, who are the people of God ( or now - the new people, called by His name, as Christians are called in Matins and beyond<sup>8</sup>), and He, if during the Old Testament he punished Israel, His people, now he does not punish by sending prophets to proclaim a penalty but punishes us by leaving us alone since we ask to be without him. And this is a punishment for man indeed, because being without the care of God, truly means that the would self-destruct. Sins in the Old Testament meant that people were saying that what they do is not against God's will, and that is why they had laws, punishments and prophets to show them in every way that it is bad. And nowadays the sins mean the ignoring of God in our lives and therefore the penalties are different now compared to then.

The good news, however, is that this post- secularization or de- secularization is, seeing things in the context of the history of man's salvation, the very act of man returning to his Creator. And this recovery takes place without man received any punishment, any large sign visible, unmistakable, as God sent through His prophets the miracles, but occurs through human awakening by his own return and by finding that this void left by the atheism produces a negative effect.

But, although the phenomenon of secularization is increasingly present in Europe, there is no sign of an increase in the number of believers, but rather a further decrease. The fact that this gap in the souls of people is not filled by traditional European Christianity is a question mark. For this I decided that in this chapter I will introduce selective aspects that I believe are the main alternatives that threaten the restoration of fundamental bi - millennial and apostolic European Christian traditions. First, however, I want to appeal to specific situations in which to present different aspects of European religious life and then do a more extensive presentation of the Catholic Church in Austria, situation that I managed to understand more closely.

A topic that is becoming increasingly important in Europe is that of the empty churches in which only tourists come to take pictures.

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<sup>8</sup> *Liturghier*, Editura I.B.M.B.O.R, București, 2000, p. 69.

This finding is particularly sad and as I heard about it, I wanted to check if it is a realistic picture of the situation<sup>9</sup>. So I got to the following news. In the Netherlands, for example, is a practice already known for churches to be converted into libraries, theaters and cafes<sup>10</sup>. Sacred objects of these cathedrals are stored or are donated to other parish communities in the countries that need them. And the people remember how "in the Netherlands, the Catholic church was the highest in Europe, over 90 %"<sup>11</sup>. Now it is less than 10%. This way of doing things - all or nothing, is specifically Dutch"<sup>12</sup>, said Rev. Jan Stuyt from the city of Nijmegen, one of the team members who decides which churches will be closed.

In total, from 1970 to 2008, 205 Catholic churches in the Netherlands were demolished and 148 were converted to health centers, restaurants, bookstores and apartments.

To a stranger it seems, perhaps, that Sunday Liturgy is always the same and nothing new appears in worship, for the ordinary believer. But the Christian life is never dull because if services, prayers, the liturgical rotation of the years bring no new elements, the element that is always changing is our biological age and our spiritual age and these two always put us in front of something new. God is always the same, the Church is always the same (as shown in the first chapter), but man is not always the same. Biological age shows new reasons for joy, new powerlessness, new temptations etc. and the spiritual age – ever so much more.

Therefore the work of the Church is unaffected by the passage of generations, but the form of the transmission of the ever - same message is modern and must be constantly updated.

The Superficiality with which many Western European Christians treat the religious side of their own lives has been criticized, called in many ways and attributed to several causes, particularly by the Catholic theologians who have felt this change, but also by Orthodox theologians who are missionaries in these places since more recent times. The main causes, which also generated the need for a "new evangelization", I decided to briefly mention in the first two chapters of my work. An

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<sup>9</sup> See: Friedemann, Walldorf, *Towards a Missionary Theology for Europe: Conclusions from the Ecumenical Debate on the New Evangelization of Europe between 1979-1992*, in *European Journal of Theology*, Nr 13/2004, Issue 1, pp. 34-37.

<sup>10</sup> Knippenberg, Hans, *Secularization in the Netherlands in its historical and geographical dimensions*, in *Geo Journal* 45/1998, pp. 209 – 210.

<sup>11</sup> Hans Knippenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.zf.ro/business-international/olanda-transforma-bisericile-in-biblioteci-sau-teatre-si-camioane-intregi-de-obiecte-religioase-ajung-in-tari-din-toata-lumea-9679063> 26 march 2014

interesting point which outlines in the best way the state of things is the theory of "vicarious religious affiliation"<sup>13</sup>. This was best expressed by Professor Richard Rymarz, in the study "Living vicariously : Some Implications of the New evangelization for Catholic Schools". He argues that the "new evangelization" is actually a direct response to contemporary social tendency to "pass on" to others the duty of their own religious experience. This view seemed to me to be the best way to describe the situation of European Christians who need "re- evangelization". They are not hostile towards religion, but they feel and act like they do not belong to the church, although declaratively, they say they belong to it. This paradox is explained very well by the definition of their condition. Christians affected by this form of "superficiality" does not deny the existence of God, they are glad that there is a group of people who pray and maintain a relationship with Him, but they are not part of this group<sup>14</sup> except for the sense that the Church also helps them by her prayers.

Of course, first of all, that this is all due to lack of knowledge of the true Christian values. But a secondary issue I think is the attitude of the Vatican to "institutionalize" the Church, in a pyramid shape, the top of the pyramid being "Vicarius Filii Dei"<sup>15</sup>, whose decisions are implicitly accepted by God, especially in the situations where he has the controversial infallibility, and the believers consider sufficient to have the acknowledgment by him for various problems. Besides, the one who closed works to the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI often said that the biggest obstacle to (re) union of Christians is the institution of the papacy<sup>16</sup>.

Father Alexander Schmemmann said that the main effect of secularism in contemporary society is to reject the cult: "secularism, in my opinion, is, above all, a denial of the cult. I emphasize: not the existence of God, not a type of transcendence and therefore of a certain type of religion"<sup>17</sup>. No one can really know from the exterior if a man believes in God or not, but can find out from the way this person relates to the cult. A man without the habit of attending services is one without God. In this context I decided to criticize the decision of the Archdiocese of

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<sup>13</sup> Grace Davie, *Is Europe an Exceptional Case?*, in *International Review of Mission*, Nr. 95/2006, pp. 248-251.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Rymarz, *Living Vicariously: Some Implications of the New Evangelization for Catholic Schools*, in *The Catholic Social Science Review*, nr 7/2012, p. 111.

<sup>15</sup> **"The Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter, is the perpetual and visible principle and foundation of unity of both the bishops and of the faithful"** – Papa Paul VI, *Constituția Dogmatică Lumen Gentium* (21 noiembrie 1964), Cap. III, Art. 23.

<sup>16</sup> Norman Tanner, *The Church in Council. Conciliar Movements, Religious Practice and the Papacy from Nicaea to Vatican II*, Editura I.B. Tauris, Londra, 2011, p. 172.

<sup>17</sup> <http://ziarullumina.ro/analiza/opozitia-secularismului-fata-de-cult-lumea-moderna>

Vienna , which released on September 19, 2012 a draft for a "re -organization" of all parishes across the archdiocese, by the voice of Cardinal Christoph Schönborn. Before specifying the details of this project , I mention that he is a member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, which aims for the refreshing the minds and souls with the gospel message. The project in question involves reducing the number of parishes in the Archdiocese from 660 (in 2012 ) to 150 in a span of 10 years , so by 2022<sup>18</sup>.

Finally , an element that contributes greatly to the deepening of the religious crisis of the West is the spread of Islam in Europe. Any discussion over the phenomenon of the spread of Muslims in Europe must start with the discussion about the extent that this phenomenon is recorded. In the last half century, many European communities have accepted immigrants from Africa and Asia so that today, Muslims constitute more than 4.7% of Europe's population, as shown in the graph in Appendix 1.

But the most important statistics related to this phenomenon is related to the birthrate of these Muslim communities in Europe, which is three times higher than the birth rate other European communities. A report by the World Christian Encyclopedia<sup>19</sup> claims that by 2030, countries such as France, Germany and the Netherlands will have a Muslim population of 20 % - 25 % with exponential upward trend<sup>20</sup>. Now, statistics show that if all the Muslim population of Europe would gather in one state, that state would be the seventh most populous in Europe, more than twice the size of Romania<sup>21</sup>. Because of this mentality, today reports on births relating Western European nations demonstrate a shocking reality: while the normal birth rate necessary to maintain a stable population is 2.1 children per woman, Spain and Italy recorded a figure of only 1.2 children per woman and Germany - below 1.0 children per woman. This is just one of the effects of separation from the Church's teaching. This statistic is relevant if we consider that no danger from proselytizing Islam in Europe will increase their number more, but that tight group which they form, they have a greater tendency to give birth to children.

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<sup>18</sup> Christa Pongratz – Lippitt, *Archdiocese of Vienna to undergo a radical parish reform*, in National Catholic Reporter, din 5-18 oct 2012.

<sup>19</sup> reference work published by Oxford University Press, which provides statistical information about world religions, of all states, including statistics for future

<sup>20</sup> Prof. Dr. Philip Jenkins , *Demographics, Religion, and the Future of Europe*, in , Ed. Elsevier Limited, An 2003, p. 520.

<sup>21</sup> Janice Broun, *God's Continent: Christianity, Islam, and Europe's Religious Crisis*, in Religion, State & Society, Nr. 38/2010, Issue 2, p. 191.

### III . THE "NEW EVANGELISATION" – LARGE-SCALE CATHOLIC MISSIONARY PROJECT

In the third part I presented the Roman-Catholic missionary project of "re-evangelisation", linking its appearance and the de-christianisation of Europe as a consequence of all the aspects dealt with in the previous chapter. Then I exposed the encyclical "Redemptoris Missio" and the missionary zeal it promoted at boot time by the institutions, studies and plans with this missionary profile of "re- evangelization" and other official documents of the Vatican , which contributed to the development of this concept missionary Roman Catholic.

Therefore , after seeing the social context in which the Church must do her holy mission, I will show how the Catholic Church responded to this social context, giving rise to the concept of " new evangelization". Many theologians have spoken about this concept and that is why I mentioned in the paper only those who had brought a new set of meanings that "new evangelization" now has<sup>22</sup>.

The term "evangelisation" was very rare in the Catholic world until the Second Vatican Council , being used in the mission of preaching. In contrast, those who were doing mission then were using terms like "evangelism" and "missionary activity", "spread the faith" or "planting the word"<sup>23</sup>. However, the Second Vatican Council , Popes and the Roman Curia following their example and Catholic theologians began to promote this term increasingly more, to define the mission of Christian preaching<sup>24</sup>.

Pope Paul VI introduced the term "evangelisation" in the apostolic exhortation "Evangelii Nuntiandi" (December 8, 1975). In this document he says that evangelisation is essential to the nature and mission of the Catholic Church. In this regard, he said that at the Second Vatican Council "evangelism" was the main topic discussed in an attempt to prepare the Church for preaching the gospel in this century.

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<sup>22</sup> other studies on the subject "Ad Gentes evangelization" or "new evangelization" researched, that I have formed some opinions are: Dance, Wilhelm, Christian identity and values of today's Europe, the Theological Dialogue. Roman Catholic journal Science Institute, no. 19/2007, 5 p; Dance, Wilhelm, God, Europe and religions. Christian identity and religious pluralism in theological dialogue. Roman Catholic journal Science Institute, no. 19/2007, 17 p; Dance, Wilhelm, recent man and the new evangelization, the Theological Dialogue. Roman Catholic journal Science Institute, no. 13/2004, 25 p; Ghergut, Alois, freedom versus having the wisdom to believe in the new Europe

<sup>23</sup> Avery Dulles, *John Paul II and the New Evangelization*, in America, Nr. 166/1992, Issue 3, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Edward McCormack, *As It Is in Heaven. Can re-imagining the Gospel revitalize the Church?*, in America, Nr. 207/10-17 octombrie 2012, p. 17.

After him , Pope John Paul II<sup>25</sup> devoted his entire pontificate for "evangelisation". The first act in this direction was the reorganization of the Roman Curia in 1967. Then , he renamed the "Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith" in the "Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples". In the missionary field, he was also a pioneer and renewer the Catholic Church as the first pope in history to have traveled to other continents: to the Holy Land (1964 ) in India (1964), New York ( 1965) , Portugal , Istanbul and Ephesus (1967 ) and so on , for which he was named "the pilgrim pope". **He also introduced the new concept of "new evangelization"**. In the encyclical " Redemptoris Missio " (December 7, 1990) he asks all the children of the Catholic Church for the application of new methods of evangelisation claim based on the call to holiness, which is the way for all men<sup>26</sup>.

The successor of Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, in his brief reign, took over and he promoted the term "evangelisation" of the Second Vatican Council, renamed by his predecessor the "new evangelization"<sup>27</sup>. However, unlike the charismatic and "ecumenical" predecessor, he was, from the works of Vatican II Conciliul extremely tough and trenchant in the assertion of Catholic truth and untruth of the other religions and Christian denominations, thereby giving - again – to the "new evangelization" a conquering , domineering view, that characterized the Catholic mission since the time of the aggressive Crusades. He said then that the one Church of Christ subsists only in the Catholic Church, which is identical with it, even if there are Orthodox Churches and they are recognized the title and status of "particular or local sister Churches"<sup>28</sup>. This shows clearly his conquering vision and antiecumenical views, giving a different meaning to the efforts for "re-evangelization". For the efforts to "re- evangelization" in the concrete sense, he instituted the "Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization" and gathered in 2012, in a "council"<sup>29</sup>, 251 bishops who sought ways to accomplish the "new evangelization".

The current pope, Francis, was also a follower of this renewing vision in the mission of the Catholic Church, and he promoted, in the charismatic style that already

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<sup>25</sup> For the role in missionary work, the Catholic Church canonized him on April 27, 2014, a unique event in history: 2 living popes canonize 2 recent popes.

<sup>26</sup> Avery Dulles, *John Paul II and the New Evangelization*, în *America*, Nr. 166/1992, Issue 3, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup> Christopher Dickey, *The Vision of Benedict XVI*, în *Newsweek*, Nr. 145/2005, Issue 18, p. 3.

<sup>28</sup> Arhid. Prof. Univ. Dr. Ioan I. ICA jr, *Vatican, iulie 2007 - răspunsuri vechi la contexte noi. Radiografia unei autodefiniri*, în *Revista Teologică*, Nr. 3/2007, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup> In the Catholic sense of the term, because for the orthodox view, the most suited term is "conference".



characterizes him, the "new evangelization". He particularly praised the actions of associations laity who have this goal to "re- evangelise" saying that "frequently, they bring a new zeal for evangelization and a new capacity for dialogue with the world, by which the Church is renewed"<sup>30</sup>.

Although the Church has constantly proclaimed the Gospel message through religious services and through addresses committed by non-practicing catholics and unbelievers, especially in Western North Europe, everyone can observe a process of de- Christianization, the removal of Christian values, which is concerning. Secularized Man seeks no answer to the question "how to live ?"<sup>31</sup> in the Church. But obstacles in faith may be related to the Church (eg passive or private living of the faith, refusing to be educated in the faith or the separation between life and faith) or related items outside of the Christian life alike (eg secularisation, consumerism or nihilistic hedonism<sup>32</sup>). Thus arose the need for a new evangelization process in these countries, wich, with new ways, is to make heard the evangelical model of living for those people who lack access to traditional ways of teaching because of the desecrated social environment they belong to<sup>33</sup>. An interesting definition of "re- evangelisation" is offered by Roman Catholic Archbishop Nikola Eterovic, secretary general of the Synod of Bishops, which says that "the new evangelization is the expression of the internal dynamism of Christianity"<sup>34</sup>.

Regarding the need for new ways of evangelization in the countries of long Christian traditions that have departed from the Church, Roman - Catholic Archbishop Salvatore Rino Fisichella , who is also president of the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization said in conclusion to the synod mentioned above: "It is important to keep in mind that John's gospel page about the Samaritan woman, Jesus is addressing the woman, he does not wait for others to address him. Therefore, I believe that now is the Church that need to adress the modern man to ask him how he feels, how he is facing this desert situation caused by the current economic crisis and to give true water that will quench your thirst ... at a time of globalization, it is really

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<sup>30</sup> Pope Francis apostolic exhortation "Evangelii Gaudium" about proclaiming the Gospel in today's world, chapter II, article 29, November 24, 2013.

<sup>31</sup> Michael J. McCallion, Benjamin Bennett-Carpenter, David R. Maines, *Individualism and Community as Contested Rhetorics in the Catholic New Evangelization Movement*, în Review of Religious Research, Nr. 54/2012, Issue 3, p. 292.

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.catholica.ro/2012/06/19/instrumentum-laboris-al-sinodului-pentru-noua-evangelizare/>

<sup>33</sup> Arhimandrit Teofil Tia, *Reîncreștinarea Europei? Teologia religiei în pastorală și misiologia occidentală contemporană*, pp 12 – 55.

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.catholica.ro/2012/06/19/instrumentum-laboris-al-sinodului-pentru-noua-evangelizare/>

hard to say who is most in need of the "new evangelization". Certainly, it is urgent in the West, because the dominance of secularism has led to the impression of a desert and dramatic loss of sensitivity to God. However, transmission of the faith effort gets a lesson from young Churches: Only in Africa, for example, there are over 270,000 catechists"<sup>35</sup>.

Cardinal Francesco Coccopalmerio, President of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts raised the issue of the Synod of Bishops mentioned above, whether it would be possible to have cooperation between the Catholic Church and other Christian churches, stressing that personally he considers such an initiative necessary. He stated that the separation of Christian Churches "is not blameless in the European de-christianisation ... and ecumenism or even intensive cooperation with the Orthodox Churches are very necessary as the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church have similar challenges before them ... and would present a great sign for Islam"<sup>36</sup>. This view is shared by the Romanian Orthodox theologian who referred more than the concept of "new evangelization", Fr. Theophilus Tia<sup>37</sup>, who sees a causal link between this problem and the "new evangelization".

This view is relevant given that we accept that the problems facing the Catholic Church in Western countries today will eventually come to a greater or lesser extent to be also the problems in the first Orthodox missionary efforts of the diaspora and then in predominantly Orthodox countries. Cardinal Coccopalmerio's point of view is shared by Metropolitan Nicholas Corneanu, who is saying that "such a regeneration is required in all countries that were until recently dominated by totalitarian and communist rule. Not even in Western countries where <<secularism >> strongly rooted we cannot say that the world would be evangelized. It is felt everywhere that the need for a real re-christianisation of the people, which imposes a serious and persistent evangelisation. But this work of evangelization can not be done by „evangelists” of one confession or the other in isolation, it cannot be conducted effectively and honestly by those who follow their own confession earnings. The

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<sup>35</sup> <http://www.catholica.ro/2012/10/30/sinodul-episcopilor-impuls-pentru-o-credinta-uneori-lenesa-si-obosita/>

<sup>36</sup> <http://incaelo.wordpress.com/2012/10/16/>

<sup>37</sup> Arhimandrit Teofil Tia, *Reîncreștinarea Europei? Teologia religiei în pastorală și misiologia occidentală contemporană*, p. 460 ș. u.

contemporary world lacks the depth knowledge and the practice of full gospel principles that can now be achieved only through the efforts of all denominations"<sup>38</sup>.

John - Paul II says in " *Redemptoris Missio* " that the Catholic Church's mission of evangelization , it must take into account the three main pillars<sup>39</sup>. The first pillar is the concentration of missionary efforts of the Catholic Church for preaching the Gospel message wherever he went. This is the primary meaning of the term or the classic one. The second pillar is to still embrace those who are believers "practitioners" and answer the claims of the Catholic Church as an example for others. The third pillar is the one who, hierarchically speaking, should be an intermediate, but in terms of novelty, is the "young". It refers to attracting those who, because of their indifference or their pastors, were lost on the way and should be brought back, although some of them recognize their master. The third pillar is the need to attract a "new evangelization" , according to Pope John Paul II in the encyclical.

#### **IV. LAY ASSOCIATIONS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH - A RESPONSE TO THE MISSIONARY CALL FOR "RE-EVANGELISATION". A SELECTIVE OVERVIEW**

I booked the fourth part of the paper for some practical attempts of this current missionary trend, that hopes to return the civilized people, who developed in western Europe, to faith. Also I underpined some visible excesses in missionary worship or practice clarifying, whether these excesses are caused by a wrongful understanding of the content of "re- evangelisation", or by a wrongful concept to begin with, and which is therefore doomed to failure.

John Francis Collins, Catholic theologian and project manager at the National Office for Evangelisation in Australia, says that in the work he performs, he observed that some differences between the clergy and laity, all of them being faithful people, gradually began to disappear, and without these barriers there began to appear a new hierarchy. On the lowest level, in his view, are atheists, and after them there are the non-Christians who are not active in their religion. The next category, in his opinion, is made up of people faithful to their religion. **After this category are non-Catholic Christians but whose baptism is recognized as valid by the Catholic Church and**

<sup>38</sup> Mitropolit Nicolae Corneanu, *Pe baricadele presei bisericești*, vol I, Editura Învierea, Timișoara, 2000, p. 199.

<sup>39</sup> Avery Dulles, *John Paul II and the New ...*, p. 4.

baptized Catholics follow them. Moving on, the next category is that of the Catholic Christians who go to church constantly, and their superiors, the next category are those involved in parish activities. And the most "advanced " level of participation in the life of the Catholic Church, in his view, is the category of Catholic Christians who participate in the services dedicated to the specific theological or spiritual gatherings, meaning the active part of lay associations<sup>40</sup>.

Renewal Movements in the Catholic Church have a common feature that they started from the womb of communities of ordinary laymen, then went on to drawing their priest, and their bishop and finally, to receiving acceptance (I have not met the formula of "blessing" ) of Vatican. I found this interesting information as I was researching about some movements like the Neocatechumenal Movement, which has, as I will show, over 40,000 communities in the world and more than 1 million members, all very active.

the Neocatechumenal Movement was praised in 1974 by Pope Paul VI who said, in a general audience "Such joy and such hope you give us with your presence and with your activity... Living and promoting this reawakening is what you call a form of "after baptism" which will be able to renew in today's Christian communities those effects of maturity and deepening that, in the primitive Church, were realised by the period of preparation for baptism"<sup>41</sup>. So it is true that the Neocatechumenal is a response of the people, pointing in the direction of the "new evangelization" promoted by the Vatican, as it was to be confirmed later by voice of all the popes, to the present Pope Francis, who says to the Neocatechumenals: **"I thank the Lord for the joy of your faith and for the passion of your Christian witness ... I thank you for all you do in the church and in the world ... as you continue to reach out to areas in need of the new evangelisation"**<sup>42</sup>.

The movement was confirmed by the Vatican in 2008, as I will show, 44 years after its birth. The Focolare Movement or Work of Mary, another international association of the faithful, with Pontifical Right<sup>43</sup> "received recognition by the Vatican Pontifical Council for the Laity, on 29 June 1990, 47 years after he was born.

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<sup>40</sup> John Francis Collins, *New Evangelisation ...* , pp. 314-315.

<sup>41</sup> Speech of Pope Paul VI by Neocatechumenal communities during the general audience, dated May 8, 1974, in *Notitiae*, no. 94-96/1974, p 230.

<sup>42</sup> <http://ncronline.org/news/spirituality/pope-neocatechumenal-way-work-unity-respect-local-cultures>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.laici.va/content/laici/en/sezioni/associazioni/repertorio/opera-di-maria.html>

From these observations I conclude that, unlike the missionary experiences of the Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church has a characteristic in the appearance of these laity movements by their own initiative, not at the initiative of the Church, by any representative of it<sup>44</sup>, but at the initiative and at the desire of Christians, these Christians bringing them to full maturity also. This delayed response has unfortunate consequences also. For example, the Focolare movement, which began by addressing Catholic Christians, later came to seek other Christian denominations, non-Christian religions and then finally to those with no religion. Or, if it is not a sine qua non condition to have a sharing of the word and of the sacraments of the Church, I can not see how the Church remains an association whose only remaining purpose is fellowship and philanthropy. But it is clear that missionary activity is conducted "bottom-up" or from lower to higher hierarchy. As I show below, the most important "association of the laity" of the Catholic Church, the Neocatechumenate, appeared 15 years before the first mention of the term "new evangelisation" but with a missionary plan oriented exactly in the direction of what is 15 years later to be called the "new evangelisation". Moreover, this association was in harmony with the new orientation of the Second Vatican Council, was praised by the Congregation for Divine worship in 1974, saying that "an excellent example of this renewal (the council) can be found in the communities of the Neocatechumenate .. (who have) a catechumenal itinerary that follows all the steps that the catechumens in the early church followed until the receiving of the sacrament of Baptism"<sup>45</sup>.

This may entitle us to believe that mission directions promoted by the Vatican are actually copied, and formalizing acceptance of the missionary direction that is actually occurring among believers. No less interesting is the context in which the Vatican will have accepted at January 8, 2012, through the voice of "the Congregation for Divine worship and the Sacraments" the liturgical practices of the Neocatechumenate's innovative movement, which I present below, as announced in the official website the "Pontifical Council for the Laity"<sup>46</sup>: "I encourage you to offer your original contribution to the cause of the Gospel. In your precious work always

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<sup>44</sup> By comparison, the Army of God (Oastea Domnului) movement appeared at the initiative of the priest Joseph Trifa and immediately received the blessing of Metropolitan Nicolae Balan of Transylvania, and the Orthodox Christian Association Women's League of Romania (Asociația Liga Femeilor Creștine Ortodoxe din Romania) emerged at the initiative of the local bishop, etc.

<sup>45</sup> Piccolo Totò, *The Neocatechumenal Way*, in *The Australasian Catholic Record*, Nr. 89/2012, Issue 2, p. 177.

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.laici.va/content/laici/en/media/notizie/comunicato-del-pontificio-consiglio-per-i-laici--approvazione-de.html>

seek profound communion with the Apostolic See and with the pastors of the particular Churches, to which you belong: the unity and harmony of the ecclesial body are an important witness to Christ and his Gospel in the world where live ... a little while ago I was reading **the Decree by which they are approved celebrations in the "Catechetical Directory of the Neocatechumenal Way," which are not strictly liturgical, but are part of the itinerary of growth in the faith.** It 's another element that shows you how the Church accompanies you attentively in a patient discernment, that understands your richness but also looks to the communion and harmony of the whole *Corpus Ecclesiae* ..."<sup>47</sup>. On one hand, in the first part of the quotation, we see the pope's recommendation to the Neocatechumenate, to remain loyal to the See of Rome (so not to rebel<sup>48</sup>), and on the other hand we see the acceptance of the compromises made by them. The most striking is the compromise on changing the form of the Catholic Mass and communion around the table, seated, and breaking and dividing the Holy Body, and then walking the Chalice from a believer to another, partaking of both. The Second Vatican Council made all the necessary liturgical adaptations (vernacular, vocabulary changes, changing the altar, and the "Holy Table" rotation in the altar, architectural changes etc. ) and there should not appear other forms of worship<sup>49</sup>.

This seemed like a major change, considering that the Council of Trent (1545-1563) and to the official recognition of this practice, in 2012, only the Catholic Church's clergymen are receiving Eucharist with both the Holy Body and the Holy Blood, the laity sharing only the Holy Body for 449 years. This change , if it occurs naturally, should be subject to a council similar to the Trident Council to decide the return to the practice of the communion of believers with Holy Blood also, as is and always has been the Church. The form in this new Catholic Eucharist wich was accepted and the fact that together with the grant of acceptance, the recommandation to the Neocatehumenali to remain loyal to the Holy See has been strengthened, makes us ask questions about the conditions in which these events took place.

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<sup>47</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2012/january/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20120120\\_cammino-neocatecumenale\\_it.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2012/january/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20120120_cammino-neocatecumenale_it.html)

<sup>48</sup> About the tension between the upper and lower ranks within the Catholic Church and priests attitude vis-a-vis some issues discussed in society and in the Catholic Church, the comparison between pre and post Vatican II views can be read in more detail: Andrew Greeley, *The Catholic Revolution. New Wine, Old Wineskins, and the Second Vatican Council*, Ed University of California Press, Los Angeles, 2004, pp. 1-3.

<sup>49</sup> Romano Amerio, *Iota Unum. A Study of Changes in the Catholic Church in the XXth Century*, Editura Sarto House, Kansas City, 1998, pp. 611-655.

## V. PERSPECTIVES OF THE "RE-EVANGELISATION" IN THE ORTHODOX SPACE

The fifth part of the paper focuses on the concept's Orthodox issues, both in the debate and in the practical, applied aspects. Also, among the practical aspects I mentioned also some implications of the newly announced Pan-Orthodox Synod of 2016.

Although it is the shortest of all the orthodox views that I was able to gather about the concept of "re-evangelization", rev. Stăniloae's opinion is mentioned in this chapter first, for several reasons. The first reason is that, although he did not developed the theology of "re-Christianization of Europe" rev. Stăniloae's is a phrase loaded with meanings and spiritual mission: "If I were young again, I would do everything re-Christianization of Europe"<sup>50</sup>. We infer that this orientation of the Orthodox mission concerned him very much, seeing God gradually departing Europe. And therefore I can not believe that he adressed the above statement also to the Eastern Europe, who was kept away by force from God by the atheist, or rather "anti - theist" authorities.

Rev. Professor Ion Bria, Romanian missiologist rooted in the religious realities of European West, spoke about the need for reconstruction of Christianity, in order to exit a mixture of paradigms and competing religious alternatives<sup>51</sup>. Explaining his theology, Rev. Conf. David Pestroiu says that " the work of a new evangelization of Europe in the difficult context of postmodern and post-Christian society installing a represents the greatest challenge of Christianity, irrespective of religion, once entered in the third millennium"<sup>52</sup>. About the "new evangelisation" Rev. Ion Bria said that it should "become a unifying process, an effort of reconciliation of all Christians"<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>50</sup> DANIEL, Patriarhul Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, Locțiitor de Mitropolit al Moldovei și Bucovinei, *Comori ...*, p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> Pr. Lect. Univ. Dr. David Pestroiu, *Părintele prof. dr. Ion Bria – misionar al Ortodoxiei*, în *Relevanța operei Părintelui Profesor Ion Bria pentru viața bisericească și socială actuală. Direcții noi de cercetare în domeniul doctrinei, misiunii și unității Bisericii*, Editura universității "Lucian Blaga", Sibiu, 2010, p. 445.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 445.

<sup>53</sup> Pr. Lect. Univ. Dr. Vasile Vlad, *Dinamica Ortodoxiei: Identitate și înnoire – în perspectiva Părintelui Profesor Ion Bria*, în *Relevanța operei Părintelui Profesor Ion Bria pentru viața bisericească și socială actuală. Direcții noi de cercetare în domeniul doctrinei, misiunii și unității Bisericii*, Editura universității "Lucian Blaga", Sibiu, 2010, p. 454.

Rev. Professor Nicolae Moşoiu talks about the "re- evangelization of Europe" in a brief but eloquent passage, part of a study<sup>54</sup>. Briefly, the fragment presents the point of view that associated with the notion of "re- evangelization " of Pope John Paul II, is the offering of an apology for "what happened in the history of Western Christianity unnatural: the Inquisition, the lack of firm positions against slavery and colonialism, persecution and even death warrant of scientists, looting of Constantinople during the fourth Crusade..."<sup>55</sup>. He concludes that only at the end of the II millennium we all started to realize that the gospel has not been preached properly everywhere and that there have been made serious errors in the Christian teachings, primarily by those who preached.

It is known that the Romanian Orthodox diaspora is populated through the Romanian Orthodox missionary priests and their bishop who preach Orthodoxy. But if Orthodox believers would respond with a similar fervor as has those families that are in the Catholic movement of Neocatechumenate, who do mission where the Church sends them, I think there would be an explosion of Orthodox Christianity in Europe.

Moreover, studies on the subject of immigrants shows that the migration process is also called " the making of theology" because immigrants not only continue their religious practices in the new country going, but get even much more religious. If they were not practicing before migrating, now they become practitioners in a large proportion. In addition to the parish role in enhancing the religious sentiment of immigrants, it will bring them closer and in great numbers because there in parish activities, they will keep expressing their national identity<sup>56</sup>.

The role of the Orthodox Church, and especially the Romanian Orthodox Church in Europe is even more important, as a benefit of globalization, because now it is the permitted to have free movement of people between countries. Thus, the Romanian citizens, starting 2014, have also the right to work in countries where they already had the right to travel. This involves numerous social benefits, but it also benefits the religious aspects, since they will gather, according to studies and practical examples, around their parish, which also holds them together.

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<sup>54</sup> Pr. Lect. Dr. Nicolae Moşoiu, *Unitatea și catolicitatea Bisericii*, în *Revista Teologică*, Nr. 1/2007, p. 15.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 15.

<sup>56</sup> Margaret, Magat, *Teachers and New Evangelizers for their Faith: Filipina Domestic Workers at Work in Italy*, în *Paedagogica Historica*, Nr. 43/2007, Issue 4, p. 606.



This aspect is particularly relevant in the context of nationalism encountering a decline in Western Europe, unlike Eastern Europe. Therefore, barring isolated cases, they are welcomed and respected in countries that they live and work in. For example, Viennese people's attitude towards their immigrants is quite tolerant, as they recognize the fact that without immigrants the city would not have developed in the last 30 years at such a scale, but would have been decreasing in the number of inhabitants and the quality of life. And the frequency with which they attend Church services is an example for Catholics who have forgotten this aspect of life, which is part of their tradition.

I think it is very important that these things are taken into account and it is very beneficial for the Church to be with her sons in Western Europe, especially given the fact that many experts say that Eastern Europe has the same destiny as Western Europe, but with a generation behind<sup>57</sup>. Therefore, taking into account that the wave of secularization still hits, the Church can be prepared, knowing what lies in the near future, and what hardships and temptations will Orthodox Christians encounter in Western Europe.

Also, I consider that among the benefits of the ecumenical efforts, we can include the strengthening of the authority of the Christian Church, facing all the enemies of this world, listed in this paper.

Another beneficial aspect of these joint efforts is the fact that although we live in an age of democracy and also one of globalization, where "superstates" form "supergovernments" and they own "super military coalitions" it is not yet possible by all these factors to stop the persecution of Christians. From April 2011 until April 2014, for example, in Syria 140,000 Christians were killed and 2.6 other million Christians are refugees in neighbour countries of Syria, in addition to the 6.5 million who are internally displaced. With these facts in front of us, we see that the protection of Christianity by the blessed and Holy Emperor Cosntantin the Great was a time unrepeated today, as the fate of Christianity today is the opposite. Therefore I believe that preaching efforts (the mission) and the solidarity between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches are essential, on top of interdenominational differences.

## CONCLUSIONS

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<sup>57</sup> Mattei Dogan, *Nationalism in Europe: Decline in the west, revival in the east*, in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Nr. 3/2007, Issue 3, p. 75.

The last part of my research is the result of analyzing all the aspects mentioned above, since we can determine the true value of the effort of "re-evangelisation" as a missionary movement and the degree of success that it is recording and will record in the future.

The novelty that Orthodoxy can bring in perfecting this current missionary concept is best expressed by the comparative method, noticing the existing categories of Christian mission, as shown: informative mission, educational mission, the mission of apologetics and the proselytizing mission or converting. In evangelical terms, this latter approach is the real Christianization mission as our Savior complies the command to baptize in the name of the Holy Trinity<sup>58</sup> (Mt 28 , 18-20). He didn't just ask us to inform people about His existence (informative mission), He didn't just ask us to teach people about Him and the Christian moral life (educational mission), He didn't ask of us only to ask for recognizing these things as true by the people (apologetic task), but rather to be fishers of men, to convert them. Therefore the mission of Christians can only be total, and those that force the co-existence, on the European realm, of all religions must recognize this, without which Christianity would not be the same.

From this point of view, the "re- evangelization" must fit, by the components that make up this concept, in this fourth category. If the "re- evangelisation" wants to bring something new into the souls of those who are slaves to ignorance, it should not only be confined to informing, or to educating people morally, not just to asking them to recognize these values (most Christians who need to be "re- evangelised" already fall into this category, but we know that the devil also knows and recognizes the full content of the Gospel), but to return them to their fold, as practitioners and as living witnesses of those truths.

Considering what has been said in this conclusion, I think that this is how today's missionaries be, for places where the Romanian Orthodox Church is present and this is the context in which the "re- evangelisation" is an imperative for us also.

For the Orthodox, this is what should be brought by the new "re-evangelisation" - a renewal of pastoral and missiology, sincere and gentle, done by the own testimony of the people under the slogan "missionary mornings" who calls for us

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<sup>58</sup> Petros Vassiliadis, *Mission and Proselytism. An orthodox understanding*, in *International Review of Mission*, Nr. 85/1996, p. 259.

all to act. No Christian is avoided by this mandate to be a missionary<sup>59</sup>, but theologians and clergymen particularly require a certain conduct their mission, each of them being always associated with the image of the whole Orthodox Church. This is what Rev. Professor Ion Bria called "re-discovery of Orthodoxy in Europe"<sup>60</sup>.

And for Catholics - "the liturgy after the Liturgy"<sup>61</sup>, the preaching of one's own testimony, meaning letting go of that conquering attitude in missiology and centralizing all missionary approaches and initiatives of the believers in the concept of "Vicarius Filii Dei". Besides this, it is essential that the evangelisation must be accompanied by the Eucharist, without which it is useless. Luke and Cleopas were intensely evangelized the Saviour himself, but only at the end were they enlightened and understood everything, they, who before did not understand anything<sup>62</sup>. I showed that this problem exists, as catholic theologians do not consider it a tragedy that they are losing their churches, as long as there still are social services in what was once a parish.

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<sup>59</sup> Professor Karl Rahner called the Christians who carries with them the Christian Grace, but who are not aware of it, by the term "anonymous Christians" in Fr Prof Dr. Dumitru Popescu, *Orthodoxy and ...*, p 112 .

<sup>60</sup> Pr. Prof. Dr. Ion Bria, *Ortodoxia în Europa. Locul spiritualității române*, Editura Mitropoliei Moldovei și Bucovinei, Iași, 1995, pp. 233-235.

<sup>61</sup> an exhaustive study of this size is Rev. Dr. Valer Irimia, *welfare of the Church. Christian philanthropy in action* COSAL Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009, pp. 142-147 ff

<sup>62</sup> Idea expressed by Prof. Michael Himcinschi International Summer School "witness and missionary service in contemporary society" held from 1 to 5 July 2013 Oașa Monastery.