

DETERMINING AND INCREASING THE COMBAT CAPACITY BY ENGAGING THE MILITARY CLERGY IN DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

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The involvement of military priests in domestic and international missions is considered to be more than useful, by the nature of their training and specialization being leaders for the achievement of unity of combatants, as well as well-known confessional conflicts, in which religious law applies to legitimate war, as we will see in the following.

Keywords: mystic; sacerdot; isihast; combatant; hedonist; missionary; strategic; comrades; confessional.

By reintroducing religious assistance into the structures of defense, public order and justice, the military priest is assimilated as a catalyst among these institutions. The Church has entrusted it with a very special mission, which otherwise draws pastoral strategies towards the parish environment, the military priest being called upon to rediscover the "link between freedom and holiness" in its area of missionary competences¹, in the spirit of the fundamental law on freedom of conscience, religious expression and according to the statutory canonical norms in force, specific to the cult they represent.

With a tradition of military missionary, re-energized for over three decades, through the minister in the military structure, the state of permanent and beneficial connection to the absolute God, without which there is no absolute sense or truth or morality, is maintained, ethics becoming only a matter taste, a mood or at most a whim. For the members of the armed forces, the need for religious assistance is closely linked to the oath of faith by which they engage in the national defense mission, even at the cost of their lives, and as God's help is invoked on the oath in question, it appears that sacerdotal presence to consecrate in the name of the Church military manifestations, most of them being oriented to the noble purpose of Messianic incitement, that of the triumph of life against war-induced death, through a periodical intonation on the state hymns: "Priests with the

cross in the forehead for the army is Christian / The devotee is liberated and her holy purpose / We die better in battle, with full glory / Than being slaves again in our old earth"².

Given the double jurisdiction of the subordination, the military priest does not carry any responsibility for confessional representation, but integrates into the great military family, with all that goes with the rigors of the barracks, being the guarantor of respect for human rights in the armed forces freedom of conscience and religious expression, without distinction between the majority Orthodox and other denominations.

The role of the military clergy in peace, crisis and war

Sacred forces in the armed forces are the ones who teach the militaries their mystical vertebrate in prayer, provide them with the techniques of self-learning through meditation and recollection, which have the beneficial role of oxygenating the inner life of the combatants by activating their own spiritual sensors and making more aware and responsible for their purpose. In addition to proper training, the fighter needs to realize that what he has to do is legitimate, moral, ethical, and exonerating of responsibility after the war, because not always and in all cases, those who were forced to kill, in order not to be killed, return to the seemingly quiet atmosphere of the barracks, from where they left, without their souls being shaded by obvious negative states, and which none other than the military priest can manage. In such circumstances, the members of the armed forces assimilate the spiritual leader as their guiding lighthouse, as their

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own sacrifice priest who illuminates and clarifies their options, instructs them precisely how they can overcome their self-defeating automatisms, how to restart their lives psycho-spiritual and self-denial, how to convert the failures of life into victories, and ultimately understand the call to perfection, and that their noble mission is a holy duty assumed by oath of faith.

In the triad of sacerdotal responsibilities: didactic, sanctifying and administrative, the priority preoccupation of military priests is to prevent behavioral deviations by causing the soldiers to act with "heart-breaking" at peacetime or when facing crises or war. And the priest, like the officer, must fortify his call and the power of struggle through continuous training, centered on four sacramental pillars: theology, theosophy, theophilia, theodology (theology-science about God, theology – experimentation of grace as divine energy uncreated, theophilia – love for God and theodology – fixation in the state of God's service and honor).

The vocal vocations and vocalists of the vocation, perseverance, original and creative, who respect the "canons" of the missionary and professional rows they have assumed, are sought, and the Church and the Army can be proud to have such a guard but their work is at least doubled in view of the need to remodel the profile of the new generations who want their socio-professional registration in ecclesiastical or military structures. The crisis of motivation can be overcome by multiplying professional models, reevaluating the treasure of military and church traditions, creating and legislating missionary and military strategies that will reassemble in the minds and souls of the military the attachment to what enlivenes and sacrifices.

The military priesthood is not limited to conjunctural adaptations, the mission challenges in the military environment being much more complex, hence the need for a close collaboration with the psychological, medical, legal and other factors of responsibility in order to prevent and combat hedonistic skirmishes, motivation, staff flow, and reflux as well as other malfunctions that affect the military.

One of the missionary urgency is to recover the non-practitioners and to stimulate experimental religiosity by fortifying the interest and the awareness

of the importance of spiritual life, moving towards a rehabilitative perception of the relationship with God and marked by the experience of meeting him, because without the understanding of faith as an existential modality can come to the true knowledge of God, but only to the assumption that He exists. When the military priesthood manages to create such an alliance of combatants with God, they come with more certainty and speed to professional performance, increase combat capacity, and lead to more effective victorious struggles.

In the theaters of operations, God is invoked with even more insistence to cognize the instruments of violence and to convert them into instruments of peace, for war is nothing more than "a crazy rush to dominion and an unfair craving for foreign wealth"³, and the spiritual training of the combatants before, during, and after the conduct of the military actions becomes a revitalizing component, absolutely necessary and beneficial in making the most appropriate decisions, thus recognizing that "the attendance of the priests in international humanitarian missions in the NATO framework on the battlefield completes the assurance of religious assistance in our army, for military priests remain not only leaders but become devoted comrades who share with fighters the fatigue, the shortcomings and the danger of death⁴.

Preparation of military clergy for participation in international missions

The involvement of the military priests in the foreign missions of the national army, we appreciate it is more than useful, given that the nature of their training and specialization is primarily very good knowledge of the phenomenology of confessional conflicts, their collaboration with non-governmental bodies, other international bodies deployed in theaters of operations, helping to identify, investigate and discourage retaliatory actions and aggression in various conflict zones of the world.

By the methodology of applying the law of the military clergy in the structures of the national armed forces no. 195/2000, approved by the Order of the Minister of National Defense no. M-2/2014 finds that for the participation of military priests in foreign missions the written consent of the hierarchical / canonical local authority to which they

belong is necessary, as well as their testing by the Religious Assistance Department in collaboration with the organizational entities from the categories of forces where the priests to be deployed in the theaters are framed.

From the pre-deployment phase to participating in international missions, military priests must ensure their cultic needs for holy and sanctified services, usually a campaign shrine, and from among the combatants be assigned a Chapel assistant to update their knowledge on the law of the IUU-armed conflicts, in order to accurately recognize the position, the role and the limits of the sacerdotal actions, as well as the knowledge of the international language, at least English, being absolutely necessary for the purpose of dealing with representatives of the Army Chaplains from the joint system of allegations, the authorities and troops of the partner armies, as well as with other officials of international bodies.

The contingents of military chaplains who have already carried out various missions can help with the experience gained in preparing the predisposed, the lessons learned and transmitted to the latIn missions in theaters of operations, therefore, religious assistance to militant military priests is before any analysis that is absolutely vital, because on the background of a fallen morality, with psychological slippages and pressures inherent in war, military actions can be compromised, with consequences even to the loss of human life. Therefore, even from predisposition, military priests engaged in missions in theaters of operations must initiate mobilizing and motivational procedures for the troops accompanying such missions, because the distance to the home, the long stay on the battlefields, the seas and the world's oceans, engaging in repetitive activities, are designed to generate difficult-to-reach states of mind and must be managed with great care and with utmost responsibility. ter are of real use in the organization of religious assistance.

In the conflict zone, military priests from the land, naval and air forces may organize, within the limits and under the conditions laid down by international humanitarian law, religious services, even with the participation of the religious leaders of the adverse party, thus enabling tensions in conflict states, armed, perhaps even giving up military force.

By similarity to the tactical military-FTX military exercises and the solving of a tactical STX situation, the preparation of the military clergy for missions in theaters of operations follows the same trajectory of checking and updating knowledge, practicing pastoral skills, and adapting to constraining environments to achieve the planned missionary objectives, the usual and unwritten ordinance, from the combatants' consciousness, "such a struggle is to be won, after the instruction has been carried out," finally resolving the pauline prescriptions concerning the mobilization of the military sacerdotal: "In all depicting us as his servants God, with great patience in straits, in labor and in vigilance, in pureness and knowledge, in goodness and long-suffering, in the word of truth and the power of God through the weapons of righteousness ..."⁵.

In the specific assignments specific to the foreign partner chapters, there are four organizational directions: planning, preparation, execution and evaluation. From the perspective of the first direction of planning for religious counseling, it needs to be detailed and integrated to support spiritual requirements in an operational environment. The preparation of religious support takes place in the context of operational planning and preparation of troops and phases of an operation. As long as the mission accomplishes this mission, it focuses on supervising and directing combatants to create a psycho-emotional impact appropriate to the increase in operative capabilities, and through the evaluation stage, validation of the missionary standards reached, while generating new working experiences.

By participating in international missions, military priests must turn their attention to counseling to military leaders, who are recommended to have a flexible and principled leadership of troops and crews, designed to value the capabilities of the military and to limit, as far as possible, eliminates the stress and fear generated by the constraining environment, homogenizes the relationships between the fighters, motivates and maintains the spirit of sacrifice of the subordinates. In fact, even military leaders turn to counseling the priest to provide combatants with spiritual resources, trust and moral strength to overcome the hostilities inherent in missions in theaters of operations.

The need for the sacred war thus becomes equal and directly proportional to the mission level of risk, the faith of peace demobilizes the war "belief", with other weapons that are imposed as a constant of military spirituality proclaimed by the Apostle Paul as follows: "Dress with all the weapons of God that you may stand against the devil's devices. For our struggle is not against the flesh and the blood, but against the beginnings, against the rulers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spirits of wickedness in the air. Therefore, take all the weapons of God that you may stand in the day of evil, and all of them overcome them to stand. Stand firm, having your midst girded with truth, and clothe yourself with the plaque of righteousness. And shoes your feet, ready for the gospel of peace. In all you take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to extinguish all the ardent arrows of the sly. Take also the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, it is the word of God⁶.

Protection of personnel and cultural goods against armed conflicts

Considering the legal norms for the establishment of the right of armed conflicts as a distinctive and complementary part of international law, the great Christian denominations are interested in the respect for human rights that emanates from the very doctrine they preach about the freedom of expression of religious beliefs in the spirit of tolerance and mutual respect, prioritizing the protection of spiritual identity, staff and cultural goods through international legal regulations.

Referring to special situations regarding the army's forces in land, air and naval missions, the right to religious assistance for and in favor of them has been recognized since 1864 in Geneva, where the representatives of 12 states met, the moment marking in fact, the birth of international humanitarian law, with a first Convention of 10 articles adopted in the same year, namely the "Convention for the Improvement of the Fate of Armed Forces In Campaigns", which denies the old beliefs that war and law would not reconcile, but on the contrary, the rule of law governs all the manifestations of the combatants.

Following the Geneva Convention, at the initiative of Czar Alexander II, in 1874, the Statement on the Religions and Terrestrial Warfare

Practices through which religious personnel is protected was elaborated, establishing according to art. 8 of this Declaration, the application of sanctions for the destruction of religious religious sites. By the provisions of art. 17 of the same Declaration, the occupying military authority is obliged to protect the religious objectives, provided it is expressly forbidden to be used for military purposes, and on the other hand it is incumbent on the injured to indicate the place of these edifices by special visible signs.

Later, in 1899, a Second Humanitarian Law Convention was adopted at the Hague Peace Conference on the Protection of Wounded, Sick and Marines, Reformed and Completed in 1906, for the following year-1907, and at the same time The Hague, at the Second Peace Conference and the Fourth Convention, establishes the situation of prisoners of war and non-combatants, beneficiaries of special treatments during captivity. After the first international conflagration, the International Red Cross initiated diplomatic diligence to complete and refine previous legislation, and the 1929 Geneva Convention established respect and protection of military priests and pastors in any circumstance, would not be treated as prisoners of war, continue to carry out their sacerdotal duties, will not be detained and will be redistributed to the adverse side when the possibilities allow them to be identified with a distinctive sign in the left hand (Articles 9 and 12). The Convention on the Treatment of Prisoners of War deals with the status of ministers of a denomination, whatever its name, specifying that they will be authorized to exercise full service, among those of the same religion with them, 16, par. 2, and the natural consequence of this paragraph is to incite proselytism among the wounds and at the same time to avoid discrimination between cults.

The International Humanitarian Law Initiative is being taken, in particular, after the Second World War, under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, when consultations of the Joint Medical Commission of October 1945, the National Red Cross Societies and the Government Experts of 1947, Advisory Committees of 1947, ending with the Stockholm Conference in 1948.

On April 21, 1949, delegates from 63 states meet in Geneva, including the Vatican in the Conference for the Revision of Conventions previously

established in this respect. Under the Geneva Convention of 1949, special attention is paid to the right to religious assistance during armed conflicts, hence the obvious role of the military clergy institution in respecting and assuring the right to spiritual assistance through its own qualified staff, under the protection of international humanitarian law, both the recipients and the cultues concerned with more rights included in the four conventional sections

Concluding from the contents of the presented references and the international legislative regulations it follows that the spiritual assistance in the state of peace or belligerence is supported mainly by the military clergy, having assured the support and protection of the places of worship. As regards the right to respect and protection, they are subject to non-involvement in acts of military hostility, in particular exclusive rights granted to priests attached to the army, to military priests, who can not be considered prisoners of war, and their identification being made by distinctive signs. In another order of religious rights in armed conflicts, such as the right to particular treatment or the right to freedom of conscience, these rights are reflected in the facilities granted for the exercise of sacerdotal duties, of spiritual assistance, without any constraint. Subsequently, other rights, such as the right of free access to authorities, correspondence and property, thus accumulate a series of privileges to travel to members of the religious community, even outside prison camps, for which the transport of religious leaders, recognized as being the best placed to represent the interests of those counseled before the occupation authorities. As regards the right to correspondence, it is found that it is not a right subject to censorship and limitation as in the situation of combatants, and the right to property on personal property and values, on means of transport and on other goods is also a sacerdotal privilege, that this right, as well as all other rights listed, does not affect the military interests of the parties in control of armed conflicts. Much later, through Protocol no. 1/1977, in addition to the Geneva Convention / 1949, on the protection of victims of international armed conflict, concerning qualified personnel recertificates the need for spiritual assistance in armed conflicts by religious personnel. In addition to the international regulations to which we refer, the Council The World Churches has continued

and sustains today an intense activity to defend and promote human rights, both in peace and war, through special organizations such as the Christian Peace Conference, whose agenda includes thematic issues to international humanitarian law. The last ecumenical meeting on "the role of culture and religion and dialogue in peace building and support for migrants and refugees" under the aegis of the World Council of Churches took place on 12-15 September 2017 in Lisbon.

NOTES:

1 Metropolitan Daniel Ciobotea, *Confessing the Truth in Love. Orthodox Perceptions of Life, Mission and Unity*, Trinitas Publishing House, Iași, 2001, p. 179.

2 https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/De%C8%99teapt%C4%83-te,_rom%C3%A2ne!

3 Saint John the Baptist, *Complete Works*, Doxologia Publishing House, Iași, p. 389.

4 General prof. Mircea Mureșan, "The axiological faith, duty, value in the European Union configuration", in *The Orthodox Church in the European Union, Contributions to European Security and Stability*, University Publishing House, Bucharest, 2006, pp.7-15.

5 *The Bible – Epistle II Corinthians*, Ch. VI, 4-7, BOR Bible and Mission Institute Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005.

6 *The Bible – Epistle to the Ephesians*, Ch. VI, 11-17, Publishing House of the Biblical and Missionary Institute of BOR, Bucharest, 2005.

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