

**DIFFERENT ASPECTS ON MERCY,  
FROM AN ORTHODOX PERSPECTIVE<sup>1</sup>**

Preot dr. Marius Florescu

**Aspecte cu privire la milă din punct de vedere ortodox**

*Abstract:* Referatul de față prezintă câteva aspecte ale milei (lui Dumnezeu și creștine) din perspectiva experienței ortodoxe. Pornind de la referințe scripturistice, patristice și liturgice referitoare la milă, textul aduce aminte de Dumnezeu milii și al îndurărilor, de faptele milei creștine și de misiunea proprie mănăstirilor în contextul lumii secularizate. Unitatea de credință fiind un deziderat îndepărtat în relațiile dintre creștini, se propune ca modalitate concretă de colaborare, filantropia. Tema fiind și una eshatologică, la final este amintit un fragment din cartea Apocalipsei, în care cei mântuiți prin mila lui Dumnezeu cântă o cântare nouă și fără încetare Dumnezeului care stă pe tron și Mielului.

*Keywords:* milă, mântuire, Biserică, misiune, mănăstire

There are two expresses that touched me very profoundly, since I have been a child. First is from Psalms (58, 10): „As for my God, His mercy shall prevent me” and second is a popular word: „God’s mercy!”. I have these in mind first when I try to underline some aspects on mercy, from an Orthodox understanding.

I remember that once I have read that any human being finds his fulfillment only when he is useful for his neighbors, for the strangers.

The merciful human being is the one that came to a real understanding and living of the God of mercy.

In the Orthodox Liturgy, several times we affirm that our God is the *God of merciful, graceless and loving of the human kind*.

In the Holy Scripture it is saying that: „You shall be merciful as your Heavenly Father is merciful” (Luke 6, 36). That means that our supreme model in practicing merciful is God Himself. The mercy is an attribute of God that is brough from God by his children on earth.

The item of the 2016 Year of Mercy in the Roman-Catholic Church draws my attention. I see there Christ as the Good Samaritan or the Good Shepherd

<sup>1</sup> Referat prezentat în cadrul seminarului dedicat vieții consacrate, Mănăstirea Santa Agata Feltria, Italia, octombrie 2016.

keeping Adam on his shoulders and what is quite interesting is that Christ's eye and Adam's eye are practically the same.

Being merciful is to behave like a longing of God's hands, like a tool in his hands. A Father of the Church wanted once to pay a visit to another brother, and before living he said to his disciple: „Before we meet him, God was encountering him!”

Mercy is the good deed that has to follow every good Christian. The mercy and the philanthropy or loving of the strangers is a deed that takes a part of God's taking care, through our hands and strengths.

The merciful human being is the true icon that is has been showed up to our eyes in the Samaritan Parable from the New Testament, which is in fact the icon of the Lord himself.

The merciful is the unique work of God in the world. The world is thus shelter through God's taking care.

The way to the unity goes through the valley of merciful and descending the human being to the human being.

The unity of the faith is, for the moment, a tough stage to fulfill of. This is a tough stage even to think of it, in a world that is more and more divided.

The unity of action in philanthropy instead, is one of our visible forms of unity in the service of the people from the margins. This might be a beautiful way of unifying our strengths and efforts to give world a message of mercy and hope.

The world needs hope, shelter, and grace from the people of Christ. If we will not give these, the Christianity is condemned to be only syntagmatic and Christ nothing than a concept.

The monasteries with a social care for the people shall flourish, mainly in the Orthodox Church. But even the monasteries with a predominant work like Mary's are guidance lights for the world, for the testimony in front of the people. They constantly show the mercy of God, are lighted candles in a world that continuously and in a visible way is getting off from God's face. And from this prospective, the world might be „happy”. The lights do not extinguished yet, the penitence is still available, and God is showing his mercy to the world. His believers will give testimonies about his mercy, grace and his love for the human kind, until the end of the ages.

But nevertheless, and especially from the last mentioned prospective, mercy has an eschatological dimension too, because it is the visible sign of the redemption and the ending of the ages. In the book of Apocalypse (7, 9-17) for instance, the writer says that he has witnessed of many crowds, that nobody could account, from each nationalities, populations, languages, etc. standing and singing very laugh: „The saving is from our God, who stands on the throne and form the Lamb”. These are those that are coming from the great supplication and washed their clothes for making them white in the Lamb's blood.

Here there is the testimony of God's mercy for the people from the all world. Here there is the testimony of how those who had mercy for the neighbors will stand united in front of God's throne, into his kingdom.