
**William A. Bleiziffer, *Disciplina sacramentelor și cultul divin. Considerații canonice referitoare la sacramentul botezului*,
Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj Napoca, 2016, 242 p.**

With great joy we salute the appearance in the academic and cultural space of the Romanian Church United to Rome, Greek-Catholic, of the first analyses and considerations in the field of the Oriental Canon Law, after the emergence of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church from the shadows of the catacombs.

No illusion should be created as referred to this aspect, it is obvious that a great number of articles and papers have been written and published in the spectrum of the Oriental Canon Law in different periodicals and series of academical works, however the publishing of a book which starts a systematic canonic analysis of some clear and fundamental topics, from the canonic point of view, for the life of the Church and as a support of pastoral activity, is materialized through the publication of this book: *Disciplina sacramentelor și cultul divin. Considerații canonice referitoare la sacramentul botezului*.

Pr. Dr. William A. Bleiziffer, a greatly appreciated and esteemed colleague in this field of the Oriental Canonical Law, begins through this study, in a first stage about the Sacrament of Baptism, an essay of great courage but, at the same time so necessary for the clergy of our Church, which should outline towards the end a clear image of the ritual, sacramental and liturgic identity of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church, a *sui iuris* Church, a catholic Church of Byzantine rite having from its birth an

affiliation to both Eastern and Western culture and tradition.

It is possible that most of our clergy and believers are looking forward to an analysis/commentary of the canons of the divine cult and of the sacraments that are found in the Code to Oriental Churches however, at a first reading of this canonic study, this expectation does not seem to be found in what the author presents the reader. This study is actually a preamble of a well organized canonic commentary. We could not understand the value of canonic rules and the importance of their effects until we understand their own disciplinary identity. What the author does is to demonstrate the contribution of our own clerical discipline to the disciplinary inheritance of the Oriental Catholic Churches. The canonic difficulties, the challenges of disciplinary and pastoral nature of the clergy and believers of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church, have determined it, due to its social status as an institution of divine law, to create in its turn laws and rules necessary to a good development of the pastoral and sacramental activity whose main goal remains *salus animarum*, the salvation of the souls entrusted to be pastored and served.

Although some critical analyses, including from inside the Romanian canonic law, stated the lack of the existence of a discipline and rules specific to the Romanian Church

United to Rome, this study demonstrates once again that the Romanian Church United to Rome has always had such rules or norms of its own, derived from the pastoral, liturgical and social difficulties which this church has faced on a local level throughout its history.

This beautiful canonic study is structured in three fundamental chapters. The first chapter, called *Rit și Disciplină Sacramentală în izvoarele de Drept român*, introduces the readers to the theme and role of the Romanian particular law with the mechanisms specific to our Church for the achievement and promulgation of its own canonic norms: the Code of Canon Laws, the Enchiridion, the three Provincial Conciliums and the Diocesan synods and conciliums. All these legislative organisms appear to be the determinant sources for the creation and implementation of this *ius particulare* be it on a local/diocesan level or for the whole metropolitan province.

The second chapter, *Observanța Riturii și competențe în materie liturgică*, reveals hierarchically, based on the structure of the Code of Canons of the Oriental Churches, the institutions endowed with legislative and executive power which, according to the hierarchic status and the competence in exerting of this *munus* (power), are entitled by the canonic law to promulgate, modify and implement the liturgic subject and books. It starts with the highest hierarchic structures like: the Roman Pontiff, the Roman Cury or the Patriarchs, the Major Archbishop, getting to the eparchial Bishops or protopresbiterians who were responsible with the careful implementing and supervizing the rite and liturgic traditions of their own Church *sui iuris*.

The last chapter, *Sacramentul Botezului*, is the centre of this unequalled research work, explaining based on the norms of the particular law: the form, subject and way of administrating this Sacrament inside the Romanian Church United to Rome, also based on these very different canons or liturgic provisions created *ad Christi fidelium bonum et salus animarum*. This presentation of the status and of the practical and canonical content of the Sacrament of Baptism demonstrates once again the careful endeavour that the priests took for the good and correct implementation of the way to celebrate the Sacraments in the young Church *sui iuris* on the whole territory of Transylvania. In this respect, it is important to point out again that this book is not a commentary on the canons stated for the Divine Cult and sacraments, but an original collection and exposition of norms of particular law in our own Oriental Church the aim of which, in a personal interpretation, is that of demonstrating the existence of an internal autonomy of administrating the liturgic, cultural and spiritual patrimony that our Romanian Church United to Rome has had for centuries.

As a concise conclusion, we can assert that, in itself, this book is a good working tool both on academic level and in the field of research, offering good premises for searching deeper into the rite and sacramental discipline of the Romanian Church United to Rome. The study offers all the canonic sources necessary for developing a clear and real image of our Church which throughout its existence was constrained to continually reaffirm the status of Church *sui iuris*, a church whose autonomy, together with the common Right

and the doctrinal patrimony of the whole Catholic Church, is not subordinated to any influence of liturgical or disciplinary nature except for the one it has inherited, created and developed since the moment of the union with the Roman Church up to present days.

TRAIAN-RADU COSTE-DEAK

English translation: ADRIAN SOLOMON

