

**UNIVERSITY “1 DECEMBRIE 1918” ALBA IULIA
THE FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY**

**LOGOS, SYMBOL, ICON
A PLEA FOR MYSTAGOGICAL PREACHING**

**HABILITATION THESIS
DOMAIN: THEOLOGY**

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SUMMARY

Catechetics and homiletics belong to practical Theology and thus, are forms of materialization of theology in the concrete life of the Eucharistic parish and monastic centers. These disciplines represent an *estuary of theology*, the place where the accumulations of theological culture pour into the ecclesial life. The development of these is the same as the theology coming out of the state of cultural nonage, as it happened in communism, when there was no possibility of applying great public catechetical projects. The revitalization of academic theological education after 1989, in the context of an authentic enthusiasm for faith and for religious life in general, led to a special attention dedicated to catechization, religious initiation and education in public schools, for the condition of theology at the university, and implicitly a good dynamics in the field of the public confession of faith as well.

In such a context, I was integrated in the academic staff of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Alba Iulia in 2003, with the blessing of His Eminence Andrei Andreicuț, the founder of this institution of theological and spiritual culture and I taught and made research as university lecturer for graduate and master programs in the following fields: Catechetics, Homiletics, Logos and Icon, Romanian Ethos, The phenomenology of conversion, Modern catechisms and confessionalism etc. My involvement in the academic education was accompanied by a practical engagement in the eparchial and parish life as promoter of parish catechesis in the Archdiocese of Alba Iulia (2007-2011) and as parish priest (the parish Cartier Nou II Alba Iulia, 2003-up to the present), as well as by the activity of cultural and missionary deaconry in the mediatic area (TV and radio producer) and journalism. My editorial and practical activity was in the area of structuring a present catechetical Romanian model (parish, eparchial, regional, national) and of providing working tools in this field. In this sense I tried to contribute to overcoming the temptation of speaking to buncombe through a gracefulness of communication and through the various and motivated approaches of theology in a framework of respect and appreciation between cult and culture. The condition of theology in the university means nothing else than reacquiring the vocation of

dialogue and of its priority prophetic function and that of stimulating creativity based and inspired by the Revelation.

I consider that the essential elements that represent my contribution in the catechetical and homiletic field are as follows: re-establishing the homily in the liturgical frame of the Covenant; emphasizing the moment of actualization in the sermon and overcoming the passeistic discourse through spiritual effort and expressiveness in comunitary communication; overcoming the apparent dispute in the Romanian space between the exegetic homily and the thematic sermon; overcoming the temptation of the sterile repetition caused by the biblical liturgical lectionary in the Byzantine rite by valorizing the catechetical sermon which should recover the deficit of moral, biblical, dogmatic, liturgical and spiritual initiation; rediscovering the homiliary or the homiletic chrestomathy of patristic origin in a richness and diversity of traditions; using the iconographic patrimony in catechesis by taking into account the local perceptivity and accents, but also the need to create bridges of communication and dialogue (Inter); presenting medieval, modern and contemporary homiletic models in relevant thematic keys, such as that of parrhesia (frankness, courage, boldness), approaching unedited topics such as “the Eucharist in a Romanian liturgical and cultural context” in a thorough and diversified way (the Eucharistic iconography, Eucharistic surrogates, Eucharistic figures, Eucharistic sermon, Eucharistic poetry, liturgical catechesis). The fundamental themes or the directions may be presented synthetically as follows: medieval and modern patristic homiletics of the liturgical cycles; Catechesis and the mystagogical preaching; the relation between theology and cultural anthropology: Logos, symbol, iconic; the search for a patrimonial pedagogy; the catechetical-homiletic heritage of Bălgrad.

I take part in this academic festive event with the blessing of His Eminence Irineu Pop, Archbishop of Alba Iulia, a refined preacher, with the wish to increase and valorize the catechetical and biblical heritage of this blessed centre of the Logos for the Romanian culture which is Alba Iulia!