

**The Life of our Father among the Saints,
Father Nil Dorobanțu, the Fool for Christ
of Romania and Holy Theologian and
Confessor, together with the Akathist to
him in English**

Starting with the short introduction from the official Father Nil Dorobanțu [website](#):

Former second lieutenant in the Mountain Hunters in the Guard Regiment in Predeal, graduate in Theology, Philosophy, and Literature (all faculties graduated with Magna cum Laude, considered a genius), PhD student in Theology under Fr. Dumitru Staniloae, graduate of 4 years of Law, graduate of the School of Stenography, he entered monastic life at the Cernica Monastery, taking the name Nechifor.

In 1948, he was ordained a hierodeacon at Zaclău (Tulcea), in 1949 a hieromonk, and on August 5, 1952, he was tonsured a monk at the recommendation of Father Benedict Ghiuș at the Sihăstria Monastery,

taking the name Nil, and was tonsured by Hieroschemamonk Daniil Sandu Tudor.

He was diocesan secretary, director of studies at the monastic seminary, abbot and confessor at the monasteries of Tarnița (Vrancea), Măgura Ocnei and Bogdana (Bacău), Nechit, Tarcău, and Văratec (Neamț).

On January 3, 1956, he was arrested and held in prison for 120 days without trial, subjected to mockery and torture. On April 24, he was tried and acquitted after being examined by 20 doctors and declared healthy.

The reason for his imprisonment was "mysticism." His confession of Christ, his apostolic work of preaching the true faith, traveling the length and breadth of the country with the Church on his back, celebrating the Holy Liturgy daily, preaching, converting, confessing, and communing the people, in those times of communist persecution.

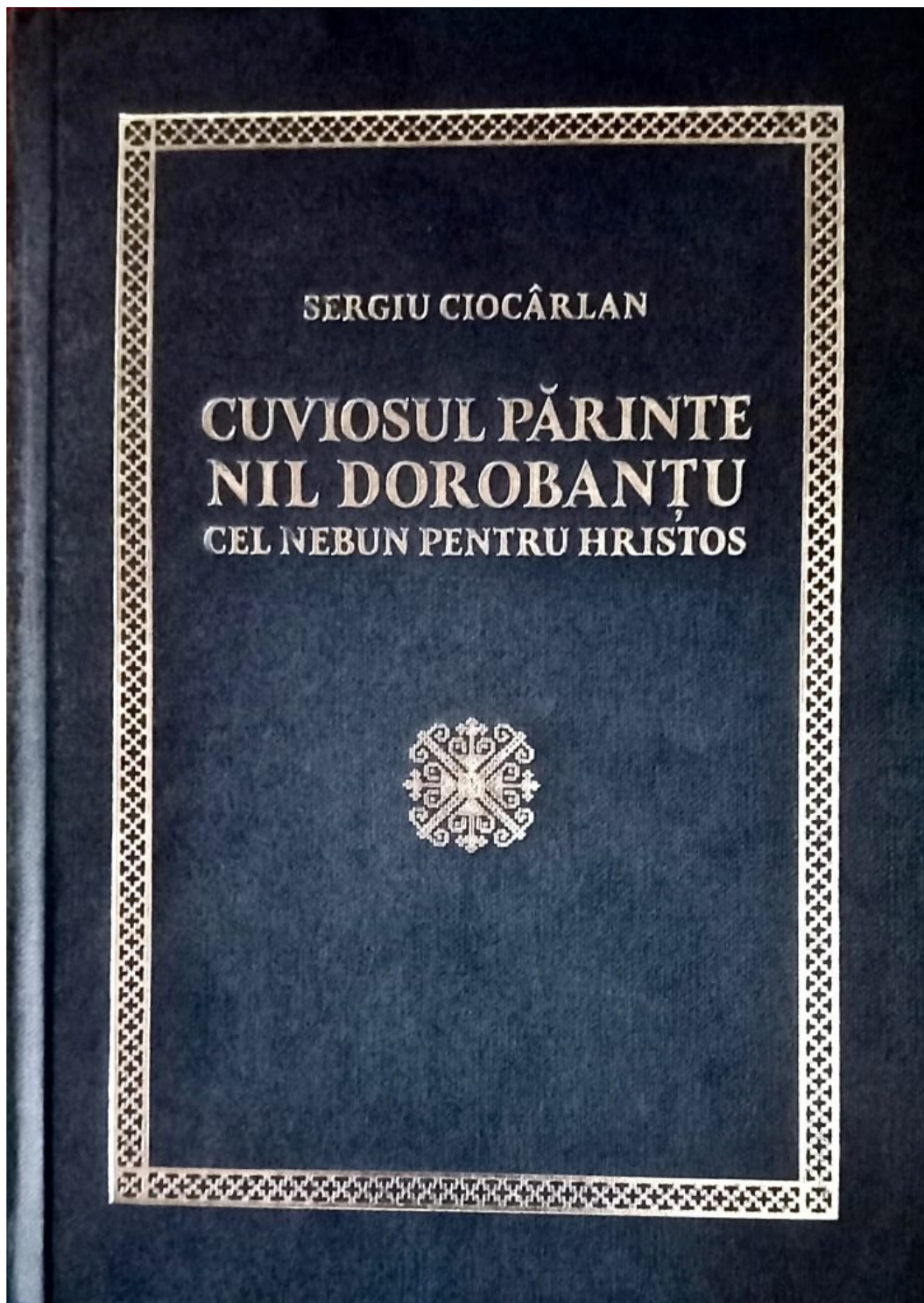
This "famous monk, great ascetic, deeply spiritual, renowned for his struggles and ceaseless prayer of the mind" (brochure of the Tarnița-Buzau Monastery, 2009, p. 8)

He retired to his native village (Crainici, Mehedinți County) for intellectual study, where he lived in seclusion, humility, and severe asceticism.

On March 27, 1977, he quietly passed away.



Sergiu Ciocârlan about the Holy Father Nil Dorobanțu the Holy Fool for Christ from: <https://limbaromana.org/revista/sergiu-ciocarlan-despre-parintele-nil-dorobantu-cel-nebun-pentru-hristos/>



I received from the writer Sergiu Ciocârlan, along with his hagiographic work dedicated to the Saint of Transylvania [1] and an admirable effort to reveal the truth in order to enlighten minds open to Christian understanding and veneration of another exceptional figure of Romanian Orthodoxy, the Reverend Father Nil Dorobanțu, the fool for Christ[2]. As the motto of the book, he chose the formidable priest's confession: "I cannot do without the Holy Liturgy, no matter what", which prompts me to comment in the introduction to these notes, convinced of the convulsive reality of lawlessness (some of which even baffles atheist or free-thinking spirits!) that we are experiencing, that all evil comes to us precisely because the majority[3] of my fellow human beings can live without even taking part in the Holy Liturgy on Sundays and holidays, even though they declare themselves Christians...

As he has accustomed us in his other writings, Sergiu Ciocârlan systematically organizes the vast documentation at his disposal, presenting readers with two parts, the first comprising The Life of the Reverend Father Nil (A. 1920-1946 with 13 chapters, including: 1. The Spiritual Legacy, 2. The Family of the Reverend Father Nil (...), 5. Seeing the Divine Light (...), 8. Student of Theology, Law, Literature, and Philosophy (...), 10. The Influence of Saint Justin Martyr and Philosopher. Concern for the theology of the Incarnate Word, 11. The providential meeting with Father Arsenius. Towards the prayer of the heart. The decision to become a monk, 12. The Book of the Prophet Joel. Nicolae enters the Radu Vodă Monastery as a brother, 13. "Lord, what will become of this child?" A new spiritual guide – Father Benedict Ghiuș, B. 1947-1954 with twenty-one other chapters, including: 14. The tonsure in monasticism (...), 16. The two dimensions: Eucharistic and Theophanic, 17. The spiritual image of the monk who loves Christ, 18. Abbot at Tarnița Monastery (...), 24. At Slatina and Rarău Monasteries (...), 32. In the Diocese of Cluj. Detained and investigated by the Securitate, 33. At the Monasteries of Sihăstria, Horaița, Horăicioara, and Almaș, 34. In the Diocese of Râmnic and Argeș. In the Metropolis of Banat and C[4]. 1954-1956 with fifteen chapters, including: (...) 38. "The Persecuted Church of Blachernae," 39. The Suffering of Father Nil, 40. The Trial, 41.

The Release. The order for internment at the Neuropsychiatric Hospital No. 7 Iași-Socola, 42. Defrocking (...), 45. The Securitate's plan to compromise him (...), 47. The order for compromise. Portrait of a happy madman for Christ, 48. The last years of his life. Passing to the Lord, 49. Not found in the grave. Controversies surrounding Father Nil.

The second part of the book includes: A. Virtues: 1. Non-possessiveness, 2. Insatiable asceticism, 3. Daily celebration of the Holy Liturgy, 4. Love of toil, 5. Wealth of humility; B. Charisms: 1. Transcending the laws of nature, 2. Befriending wild animals, 3. Returning sectarians and old calendarists to the true faith, 4. Madness for Christ, 5. Healer, 6. Clairvoyant, 7. Attracting young people to monasticism, 8. Prayer of the heart and C. Other deeds: 1. With sorrow and love for the confessors of communist prisons, 2. Forgiveness of enemies, 3. Raising man from the unnatural state of sin to the natural state: the "insane" canons, 4. Confessor before the state authorities, 5. The struggle against unclean spirits, 7. Love for the Church.

In the Bibliography, those interested will find conclusive references to unpublished documents from archives (Archive of the Archdiocese of Roman and Bacău, Archive of the National Council for the Study of Security Archives, and Archive of Father Ionel Adam), to published documents, studies and articles, journals and memoirs, general and special works (e.g., Cornel Boteanu, Nil Dorobanțu, pustnicul din Crainici [Nil Dorobanțu, the Hermit of Crainici], Craiova, Autograf Publishing House, 2020), printed texts from the manuscripts left by Fr. Nil Dorobanțu, such as: Teofaniile din Pateric [The Theophanies of Paterikon], Zemeș, Floarea de aprilie Publishing House, 2016, Cuvinte cerești [Heavenly Words], Zemeș, Floarea de aprilie Publishing House, 2016, Rugăciuni în prigoană (Prayers in Persecution), Zemeș, Floarea de aprilie Publishing House, 2016, Mistica (Mysticism), Zemeș, Floarea de aprilie Publishing House, 2017, etc., to recordings with Victoria Perișoară, Elena Gârbuleț, nun Anatolia Dodiță, Fr. Proclu, Fr. Ghelasie, Hieroschemamonk Serafim Măciucă, electronic references, etc.

The necessity of Sergiu Ciocârlan's journalistic endeavor is evident from the Introduction: This work is part of a series of projects aimed at restoring the authentic image of spiritual fathers who have been abandoned, willingly or not, in the murky waters of controversy. Because they represent the axis of the Romanian people's identity, it is necessary that their lives and deeds be made known to the general public through honest research that focuses not only on their biographies but also on their writings (p. 15) and especially in chapter 49. He was not found in the tomb. The controversies surrounding Father Nil: (...) today, when we have the opportunity to project a more comprehensive and even innovative perspective on the context (...) of restrictions and the confinement of ecclesiological works to a direction accepted by the communist regime (...), we can recover the authentic image of Father Nil without any fear that he might be accused of disobedience (p. 346).

The spiritual formation of the one who came into the world in 1920 through God's care in Terra Zeurino (Banat Severin), the former land of the free Dacians, which had undergone a history torn apart by various interests hostile to Romanianism, was decisively influenced by General Gheorghe I. Dorobanțu, a paternal uncle, by the work of Fr. Prof. Ioan G. Coman, *Theology of the Logos in the Apologies of St. Justin Martyr and Philosopher*, published in Bucharest by the National Printing House in 1942, by Fr. Grigore Pișculescu (Gala Galaction), his first spiritual father, by Nichifor Crainic, his professor of theology, who in his lectures had introduced him to St. Dionysius the Areopagite, St. Arsenius of Prislop, who initiated him into the prayer of the heart, Fr. Nicodim Bujor, his godfather in monasticism, who gave him the obedience to roam the country, and Fr. Benedict Ghiuș, his second spiritual father.

Since the pious Father Nil Dorobanțu is attributed above all with the charism of madness for Christ (cf. the title of the book and especially the chapter *Madness for Christ*, pp. 409-434), I felt the need for a quick investigation to clarify this phrase, which not only common sense tends to reject, but also some esteemed servants of the altar such as Father Teofil Părăian:

"You should know that I have never laid the foundation for a fool for Christ. I want to follow a wise man in Christ, not a fool, even if it is for Christ. I don't like this style of serving God. The Holy Apostle Paul—if there really is a style, if it is not really madness, which could happen—speaks of madness for Christ [We are fools for Christ (I Cor. 4:10)—my note], but in the sense that he who is foolish for Christ fulfills God's commandments without thinking [about] what consequences this has for those who do not believe and for those who despise the fulfillment of God's commandments and whom we would consider foolish."

Ioan Kovalevsky expresses another opinion: We cannot fail to recognize [...] the historical fact that the emergence [of Fools for Christ] was determined by the state of public morality at that time, that it was a time that could be considered, to a large extent, one of moral decline and decay, when moral lessons could not have a significant influence, when negative action was required, when the moral ideal was fading, when passions had to be denounced in all their emptiness, when virtue had to be learned by rejecting vice, and when good deeds had to be learned by exposing wickedness. All those seemingly strange activities seemed to be directed in this direction. It was not just a matter of individual asceticism, but of social asceticism, which required a profound knowledge of life and extraordinary moral self-control. Seen from this point of view, the asceticism of the fools for Christ appears to us not only very rational and judicious, but also of great value before God.

St. John Chrysostom said: I do not care if I am considered a fool for Christ. I am even delighted when I am treated as such, as if I had received a crown of laurels (...) If I, who am considered a fool and a preacher of folly, have defeated the wise, it means that victorious wisdom is not folly, but wisdom [...] perfect, surpassing external wisdom to such an extent that it seems like folly. [8]

Common sense uses the expression "to act like a fool" to refer to someone who, rightly or wrongly, deliberately violates certain customs or

boundaries. I confess that I do not possess the atrophied sense of ridicule or the impulsive temperament necessary for such behavior. This does not mean, however, that I do not empathize with people such as Cezar Cătălin Avrămuță, nicknamed Stegarul dac, a graduate of the faculties of Mathematics, Management, Finance-Banking, and Law.

As for Father Nil Dorobanțu, here is how he describes his conception of life in Mistica (Mysticism):

"You find fault with us in every situation, just as you found fault with John the Baptist for fasting, with Christ for eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners, for giving Himself as eternal food and drink. In all things you are mistaken.

That is why Christ sends you today only madmen for His name, because you are all mad and fallen, so that you have nowhere else to fall, as you are. You can only laugh at our madness, which we do for Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven. You remain with your laughter and mockery, while we work even in the middle of the night, in the midst of bitter persecution, until finally we fulfill our righteous mission, paving the way to Christ, so that divine wrath does not come upon the cosmos. You are mad for Satan and for the world, we are mad for Christ and for heaven.

So there is something modern and current about being mad today. But how wise and happy is madness for Christ! Wiser than all the sciences and wisdom of all ages. (...)

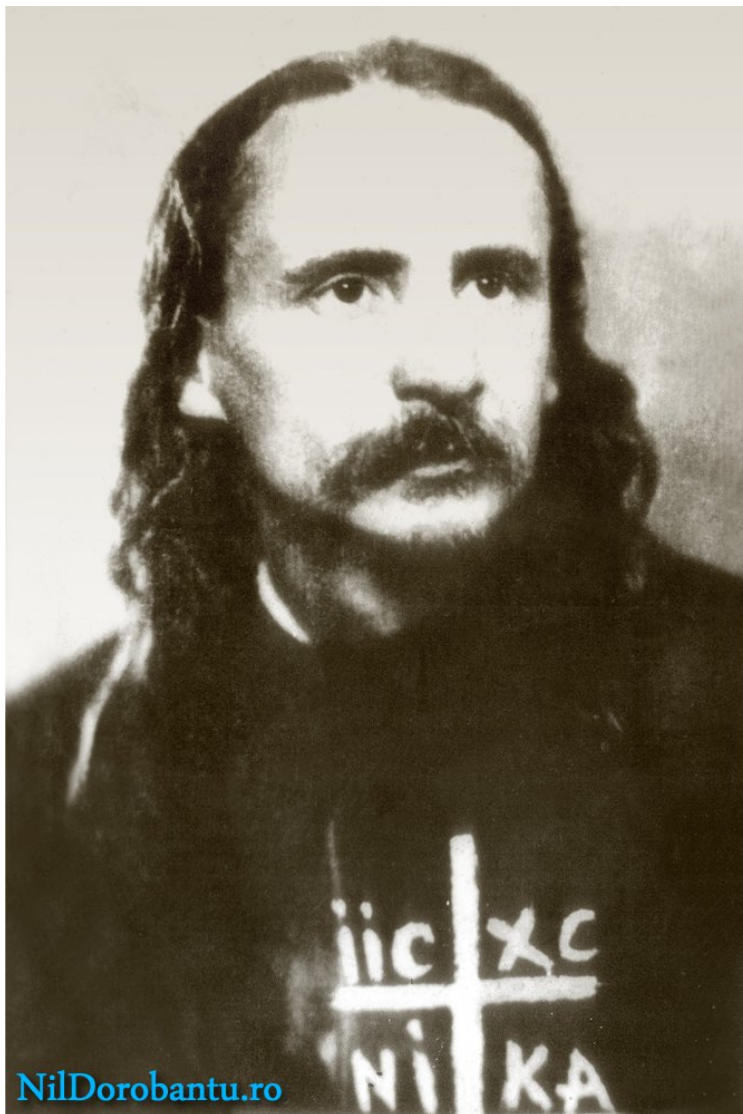
You have made me mad, so that I may boast about myself, preaching what I have suffered for my God, while you revile me and consider me a plague. But I boast, in pain and suffering, for the God Who suffered so much for me and still suffers so much and still endures to the end. Every day I die for Christ and climb the Calvary far from Your altars, Lord, which I have loved so much. (Cf. pp. 410 and 411)."

The attitudes and deeds attributed to Father Nil Dorobanțu by the hierarchy of the time were the rebuke of the inhabitants of monasteries who, in his opinion, did not walk well in the way of the Lord[10]; stealing a pot of second-course food from the kitchen of a monastery that was awaiting a patriarchal inspection, the food being given as alms[11]; the fact that he preached freely throughout the city [Galați] (...) dressed poorly, almost in rags, barefoot (...) His sermons lasted for hours and began to attract more and more people (pp. 120, 121); the abbot being driven out of a room in Sihăstria where Securitate officers from Tîrgu Neamț had gathered: "Behind me, Satan!" (...) After the abbot left, I stayed in the room for a few minutes with the Securitate officers, explaining to them that God does exist and that all abbots are exploiters, because they perpetuate the old state of slavery, illiteracy, bourgeoisie, greed, and hypocrisy (p. 230); helping the poor in the villages of Nechit and Borlești during the famine with three tons of wheat, one hundred liters of oil, sixty liters of wine, and fifty pieces of hemp and wool clothing found in the storerooms of Nechit Monastery (cf. p. 243); the "crazy" penances given to those he confessed (Those people who wanted to kill themselves and came to me to confess were given the penance of fasting on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays until the ninth hour of the day, working on these days for the poor, for free, not to drink brandy, to think about the horrors of death, God's judgment, and the torments of hell, to count the blades of grass within a palm's length to realize the eternity of punishment in hell[12], etc.); erecting wooden crosses wherever he went: he walked through the mountains, climbed fir trees, and placed large crosses on top of them so that those who followed him could see that Nil had passed through there; refusing payment for his services (many abbots and abbesses were angry with him and even threatened him or expelled him from the monastery for this reason, because he served only for "Christ's treasury" (...); when he was 27 years old and at the Radu Vodă Monastery, he had a bucket full of money by the door, which he looked at as if it were garbage – according to the testimony of Father Nicolae Bordașiu. Cf. p. 366; "On April 25, 1953, I was beaten and expelled from Nicula Monastery because I did not take money"[14]) and so on.

The security forces also said they were baffled by the priest's behavior and statements. During a demonstration imposed by the regime on August 23, Father Nil Dorobanțu took an icon and joined the demonstrators carrying portraits of Gheorghiu Dej, Teohari Georgescu, Ana Pauker, etc. At the end, he took the icon back to the church, while the demonstrators threw their posters into a truck. The "madman's" explanation was: To show them and to show you that they are not true communists! Well, if you left with Gheorghiu Dej, you shouted "long live Gheorghiu Dej, so-and-so, and there, at the car, you throw it like this"[15]. The informant "CIB" tells him that a girl who had fallen in love with him hanged herself, feeling unwanted; that is why he decided to become a monk, wearing the rope with which the young woman had hanged herself (cf. pp. 418, 419); in an investigation by the security services in Bacău, he states: I mention that I wish with all my heart that the authorities place the icon and cross of the "proletarian" Christ God, first at the Security, second at the Militia, third in prison, and fourth on all the streets, fences, [in all] forests, and everywhere in the dominion of Christ, Who is everywhere[16]. To these manifestations and statements I add the publication in the newspaper "România liberă" no. 6941 of February 10, 1967, of the following obituary referring to him: Colleagues from the Faculty of Theology convey their sincere condolences to the family of priest Nil Dorobanțu (p. 313); in May 1953, while at Sihăstria Monastery, he responded to a provocation by leaving the altar dressed in [priestly] vestments, taken from the Holy Liturgy to the judgment of the security forces in Neamț (...) "I sprinkled holy water and anointed the atheists with holy oil. They fled, along with the devils[17]".

Interpreted in a secular key, all the actions, behaviors, and statements of the monk who was left without a monastery and ultimately defrocked led the authorities to decide to send him several times to hospitals with psychiatric wards. This happened on April 23, 1956, during Holy Week, when a medical team led by Dr. Brânzei Petre, chief consultant at the Socola Neuropsychiatric Hospital, began a professional examination of the "patient." In the end, they told him that they would like to save him, but his file contained too much incriminating evidence for anything to be

done [18]. Father Nil, however, responded with sincere compassion: "I don't need your salvation, because Christ will save both me and you, for you are in a more difficult situation." [19] The doctors correctly analyzed the situation and ordered the release of the "patient." The secret police still tried to recruit him as an informant: "It was Holy Saturday. Bells could be heard ringing somewhere in the distance. But there were still enough obstacles to prevent me from escaping. I had to be taken in a death van to the insane asylum. But Christ worked miracles once again, for Christ never abandoned me, but took me to other rulers, who would teach me or make me give who knows what statements. But I would have fought back, for what could a madman possibly give?"



What escaped both those who administered the Church in those troubled times and the laity—especially security personnel and doctors—did not escape ordinary Christians: the beauty of the inner man, purified and enlightened, striding resolutely toward likeness to Christ. This attracted them in a special way. “And you would never have left,” confessed Mother Zorica Manea, “you would never have wanted to leave him. No. He had a magnetism, something divine[21].” Therefore, Sergiu Ciocârlan concludes: it was truly grace that made the people follow him (p. 451).

Another charism of the pious Nil Dorobanțu was the forgiveness of his enemies. Enduring beatings and injustices, culminating in periods of imprisonment, he noted: “I felt that I still loved my enemies. I even met the investigating magistrates with joy. And the guards, it was as if they had been my friends since the beginning of time. How good God is and what wonders He performs in all His Mysteries! He gave me the comfort of loving my enemies.” He even composed special prayers: “I love you forever, sweet Jesus! You have given me so much love that I love even my enemies and sacrifice myself for my fellow men.” Advancing under the protection of the Holy Spirit, he confesses: “it was revealed to me to pray for my enemies and even for my persecutors, both clergy and laity.” A scene from the Paterikon cannot be omitted from any reference to this man of God: On the night of January 3, 1956, Father Nil was arrested in Buhalnița. By the light of a flashlight, blows rained down precisely on his head, neck, and shoulders. Father Nil twisted the finger of the man holding the flashlight, managing to extinguish the light, otherwise he would have been in danger of being killed. In the darkness, he continued to be beaten, but the blows no longer had a precise target. They struck with the butts of their weapons and their fists wherever they could, and Father Nil clung to their hands and kissed them. The Securitate and the militia beat him severely until he fainted[25] (p. 464).

The reverend Father Nil Dorobanțu was aware that our nation is chosen through martyrdom, faith, and suffering (p. 459) “and that I am like a symbol for the times to come, the vanguard of sacrifice, and you will come by force. We are climbing the hard road of Calvary (...) We are

destined for sacrifice, many persecutions await us (p. 462)." His words sound painfully relevant today.

The lifestyle of the priest described by Sergiu Ciocârlan was in bell towers and stables, in rooms that others did not accept (p. 361).

Metaphorically, his cell was everywhere, but especially inside. He carried his cell with him, there he struggled unknown to anyone, and he valued the unseen cell so much that the visible one lost its meaning. Few understood this total form of struggle, this complete departure from the monastic order, because having a cell is natural for any monk. Father Nil, however, was not just any monk, but one who lived beyond the limits of our usual understanding, a monk so zealous that he could not become a model of monastic life in a community, but only an example of spiritual zeal. Having the charisma of madness for Christ, Father Nil was not normative. Living beyond norms, beyond monastic organization, he was as monastic as possible. This is precisely where the paradox lies (p. 363). Like other great ascetics, Father Nil had detached himself from all comforts, from all conveniences of life. He walked barefoot, slept on the ground, wherever he was, whether in the forest or in his cell. "He only slept on the ground," confesses Mother Heruvima Petrea. And he says, "Don't tell anyone how you find me!" He only called me to make his bed there" (p. 374). His role models were Jesus Christ (who fasted for 40 days and drank only vinegar and gall for us), St. John the Baptist (who ate only locusts [note: not "grasshoppers" as erroneously written in the Gospels!] and honey), Mary of Egypt (she ate 3 ½ loaves of bread for 47 years), (Saint Mark of Athens from Mount Francis did not eat for 90 years) and Saint Paisius the Great (he ate only the Holy Sacraments for 70 years), the pious monk ate very little (in 1952 at the Măgura Ocnei Hermitage, "every day at 3 p.m. I brought him a piece of bread and a cup of holy water, and he told me to tell the abbess that he was eating, but he ate almost nothing"[26]; "During the entire period I lived as a hermit, from September 9, 1955, until the date I was arrested (January 3, 1956), neither I nor Mother Maria Cojocaru, known as Acojocăriței, were fed by anyone, nourishing ourselves only with the Holy Sacraments we had with us."[27])

In attempting to approach this exceptional biography through Sergiu Ciocârlan's well-documented hagiography, I confess to having experienced feelings and thoughts that are difficult to put into words. How can one not attribute to a saint healings such as those testified by Cecilia Hîrnea or Nicușor Grosu (cf. p. 435)? How can one not accept the work of God's grace through the one about whom Mother Paula Robu of Suzana Monastery testified: Many women came to the monastery. The Father saw those who had had abortions in a vision, covered in blood, from afar (p. 441)? Did not the Reverend Father Nil Dorobanțu act like any other beloved apostle of God or like the other saints listed in the calendar: (...) "I did not finish my sermon until Satan had disappeared from everyone. The word chased away the devil, for it was a heavenly word spoken in wakefulness, standing, with a well-defined, clear beginning and end. They were all transformed before my eyes. I confessed them individually and absolved and admonished them. I performed exorcisms and curses against demons, I performed Holy Unction, I sprinkled them with holy water, etc. Not one remained with demons or darkness"[28]?

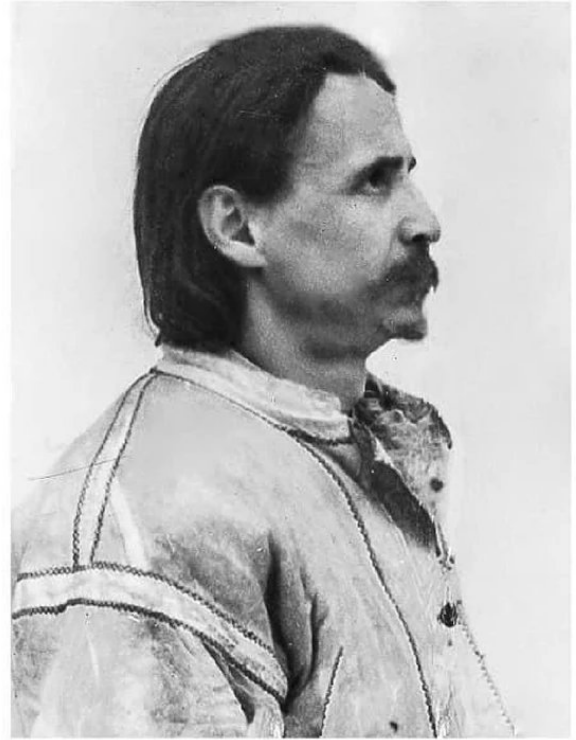
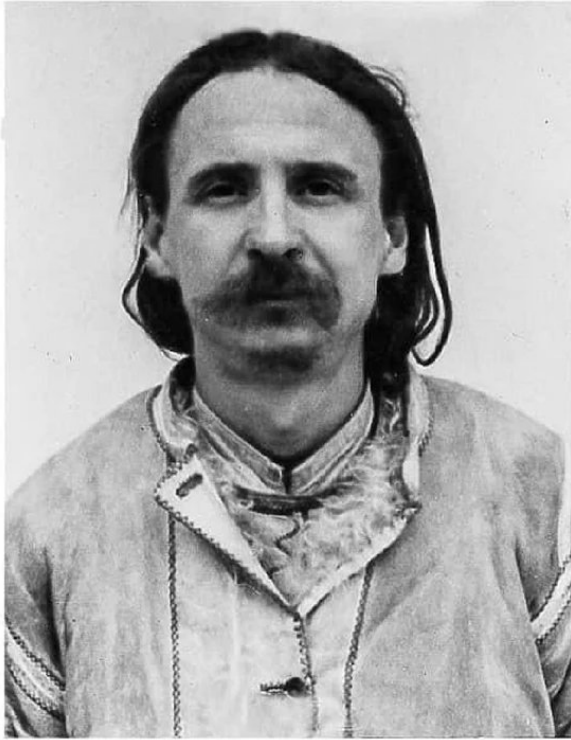
The sufferings of the Reverend Hieroschemamonk Nil Dorobanțu, similar to those of martyrs, and the countless public confessions recorded by awakened consciences, to which are added those written by him, will probably soon be taken into consideration by those who have the power to proclaim a canonization.

I believe there is no more fitting conclusion to these lines than a page from "Mysticism" left in manuscript form by the blessed fool for Christ, illustrating his writing talent:

"That is why the thief is forgiven today; as well as the Eucharist from the Cross itself, mixed with sweat, tears, and mud; among executioners, thieves, Pharisees, and Caiaphas. This is why Christ allows Himself to be served today behind bars, in the catacombs, in the cracks of the earth, amid a thousand grave dangers. The thief's words, "Remember me, Lord, when you come into your kingdom!" receive Christ's direct response:

"Today you will be with me in Paradise!" It is therefore no wonder that they have become precious to us sinners today. The cry of the thief on the right holds the key to the gates of Heaven. And truly they are the key to the Kingdom of Heaven,[30] that we, the last thieves, who struggle with Christ on the Cross, believe in Christ as even Christ's disciples no longer believe today,[31] that Peter has denied Him again, Judas sold him, Nathanael said that there was nothing good in Nazareth, Thomas did not believe until he saw,[32] and the others fled. But today it is worse, for there are false disciples, simoniacs and Nicolaitans,[33] in Christ's house.[34] But we, the thieves of the end, defend This[35] Christ, rejected by all; we love This tortured One; we carry this Stranger in our bosom, He who carries us with the entire cosmos in His palms; we embrace this Crucified One and give Him to all to share, taking Him down from the Holy Cross and removing His thorns and nails; We place Him in a new shroud and in the tombs of our crushed hearts, so that He may rise among the guardians of the senses, at the midnight hour of sin; this One[39] nailed between evildoers, we preach as the[40] best: "taste and see that Christ is good!" This[41] One, rejected even by the Father: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani!", we take as a divine treasure. We recognize as innocent the One accused and cursed by all; we call God and Lord the One cast out by the rulers of this vain world. We pray to the One who knocks at our door: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock... Do you have anything to eat?... I am thirsty... The Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." We ask the One who is not welcomed in any kingdom today to remember us in His Kingdom. This is why we put our lives on the line for Christ, because we know for sure that He is God. We hear Him speak, we see Him, we feel Him, we taste Him, we love Him passionately. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. (Cf. pp. 376-378)."

Strîmbeni, 23 May 2025



With Father Nil Dorobanțu, in the military prison in Iași

“I was transferred back to Iași, the citadel of Moldavia, the citadel of great Romanian achievements and, from 1919, the beginning of the national student movements that would gradually spread to all the student centres of the country. I was embarked from Pitesti, via Jilava.

It was the middle of June 1951. [...]

I entered the building accompanied by two guards. From the first moment I realised that I was in a military prison. After all the formalities of handing over and receiving the “package” had been completed, a guard took me to my room.

I am alone! [...]

After a while I got up and began to walk around. My steps were light, but my forehead was getting heavier. I didn't know why I was being taken to Iași.

Suddenly I heard movement in the lock. The bolts were being pulled. It was the crowing of roosters.

I jumped and looked over. The door opened!

A saint appeared in the doorway, bathed in the contrast between the light of the hall, which was brighter, and that of the interior, which was dimmer.

His face a deep pallor, his forehead slightly furrowed and his cheeks soft, he paused in the doorway to orient himself. He looked like a living icon. He came towards me and held out one hand, the other touching my shoulder.

– I’m the priest Nil Dorobanțu.

– Petru Baciú from Bacău, I reply.

I thank God for this gift whenever I think of it. I felt the need for a confessor and when I was in the company of a priest I experienced a state of euphoria and peace of mind at a high level.

Father Nil Dorobanțu was put in the same room by mistake or in haste.

We were sure that the political officer would not separate us the next day.

We were two people with the same beliefs. But we had to be isolated.

We didn’t go to sleep and talked all night. Father Nil Dorobanțu served in the Vladimirești monastery with Father Iovan and Mother Mihaela, who died in Miercurea-Ciuc after ten years of imprisonment.

That night I received Communion from him in the form of small pieces of prosphora, which I would take to Aiud and multiply with bread. The priests there would give Holy Communion to many who were thirsty for the Body and Blood of the Lord and waiting for peace of mind.

Father was warm from the journey and there was much sorrow and breathlessness in the room, so he took off his cassock.

He remained in a hemp shirt, the kind used by farmers to make sacks of grain.

On the back of the shirt was a large cross made of black material and on his feet were sandals.

In this simple and rough outfit, with the cross in his hand and a hornwood stick, Father Nil Dorobanțu went around many villages, preaching the divine words of the Holy Scriptures: “God is present everywhere, in

heaven and on earth, in the depths and in the boundless space of the universe”.

At the trial, Father Nil Dorobanțu, who refused to answer the tribunal, shouted from the dock: “Away with you, Satan! Unclean skins!”. Beneath that hemp shirt beat a great Romanian heart. His father was a general and he was an officer who had fought in the Holy War against Bolshevism. It was dawning, the opening was approaching and we were about to leave. A sweet silence enveloped our hearts all night, as if we were the only two in this “fortress”. We end the beauty of these moments with a prayer for the sleeping, for the living, for us, perhaps even a farewell prayer. And so it was, after the morning prayer, we were separated forever, because during the long years in prison we never saw or heard anything more from the holy father Nil Dorobanțu. Before we left, we knelt down and Father said in a quiet voice: “O Lord, remember all our dead, our departed spiritual parents, our physical parents, who created us, brought us up and educated us in the world, helped us in our difficult life.

O Lord, forgive our brothers... our sisters... our comrades, our relatives in spirit and in body, known and unknown, remember, O Lord, all those who have fallen asleep in the hope of resurrection and eternal life. Amen”.

In the morning the lock is opened and the bolts are pulled. A count was taken.

- How many of you are here? asks the first guard.
- Two! I replied!
- Only two?!

The door closes and I hear them whispering in the corridor. It was our situation, of course. When we came, from where, etc.

A moment later the door opens and a guard appears in the doorway giving orders: “Dorobanțu, pack your bag!”.

We were both prepared for this step when we met.

Father blessed me, made the sign of the cross on my forehead, embraced me and left with the guard waiting in the doorway.

We parted forever. Having sanctified my ears, my heart and my whole being with the warm words of the “messenger” – a great servant of the Word of God – I was left alone again, I remained waiting.”

(Petru Baci, Hidden Crucifixions. Testimonies, Vol. I, Buna Vestire Cultural Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, pp. 253-256)

Father Nil Dorobanțu and his prophetic vocation – by Father Al. Stănciulescu-Bârda

(<https://armonii culturale.ro/pr-al-stanciulescu-barda-nil-dorobantu1920-1977-si-vocatia-lui-profetica/>)

August 1, 2020 marked the 100th anniversary of the birth of Nicolae (Nil) Dorobanțu in Crainici-Mehedinți.

Nil Dorobanțu is a colossal figure in the Romanian Orthodox Church and to the Romanian people. Until a few years ago, almost nothing was known about him. Only a few relatives and acquaintances whispered his name and talked about him. Otherwise, there was silence. The freedom of speech won with much bloodshed during the Revolution made this unique personality appear as if from another world in the Romanian cultural and ecclesiastical landscape. After 1989, there was talk of "drawer literature" that would be brought to light in the coming years. There was some, but much less than we expected. Nil Dorobanțu surpassed everyone and everything in this regard. Over ten thousand pages covered with his small, cramped handwriting have been discovered. God knows how many more will be forgotten in who knows what corner! About thirty books have been published so far, and it is still unknown how many more will appear. And what books!

Nil Dorobanțu had a fascinating life, unusual for the 20th century. In Christian literature, there has been much talk of "fools for Christ," and many saints have been placed in this category. Nil Dorobanțu was called by others "fool for Christ," and he himself, not only did he not get upset, but he gladly accepted this label. His deeds and writings amply prove that he deserved this "foolishness."

A nephew of General Gheorghe Dorobanțu, Nicolae was raised and educated at the Royal Military Court in Bucharest. A graduate of the Military School for Infantry Officers within the Military Academy, he became an active officer with the rank of second lieutenant in the mountain infantry. He had his whole future ahead of him. After several meetings with Father Arsenie Boca, he deserted the army and turned to monastic life. With great difficulty, resorting to false medical documents, his uncle, the general, managed to save his nephew from the Martial Court.

He applied to the Faculty of Theology in Bucharest and was accepted, but that was not enough for him.

Based on this success, he enrolled in the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters. The law granted this right to those who were accepted into a faculty. He graduated from all three faculties with top marks. He enrolled in a doctoral program in theology under Professor Dumitru Stăniloae. Not just anyone could do a doctorate under Father Stăniloae! In the meantime, he had learned to speak several languages fluently, including English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. That's all! He worked with the writer Mihai Ralea and the sociologist Henry Stahl, became the secretary of the sociologist Gheorghe Vlădescu-Răcoasa, and Gala Galaction was his spiritual father. With his abilities and studies, he could have had a brilliant career in university education, but he became a monk at Cernica. He held minor positions in Bucharest and in the Diocese of Lower Danube. He was ordained a hierodeacon in 1948 and a hieromonk in 1949, then, in the same year, a hieroschemamonk.

He roamed the hermitages and monasteries of Moldavia, getting to know monastic life up close. Everywhere he went, he stood out from the crowd with his particularly rigorous lifestyle and his sermons. People found out about him and sought him out. Wherever he went, crowds of people came to listen to him, to confess, to talk to him. He bluntly criticized the anomalies of monastic life in the monasteries where he stayed. Nowhere was he well regarded by the monks, because his life and his preaching were like a "thorn in their side." He was driven out of some monasteries,

while he left others of his own accord. His sermons had something of the thrill of the sermons of the great prophets of the Old Testament. It was as if you were listening to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, or John the Baptist. Although it was a particularly difficult period, when people were shackled by their mouths, hands, and feet, Nil Dorobanțu courageously criticized the new political and social order, atheism, Marxism-Leninism, dialectical and historical materialism, social pressures, and injustices. He was a cultured man and a deep thinker. He did not make gratuitous statements, but based everything on concrete data and logical arguments. Nil's discourse was unbeatable and was eagerly absorbed by his listeners. Many traveled great distances to see and hear Nil Dorobanțu. Even church institutions and authorities did not escape Nil's criticism. He could not accept the Church's collaboration with the atheist state, the political power's interventions in the Church and in monasteries.

He accuses the church hierarchy at the highest level for this "pact with the devil," for pastoral letters that also had political content, for purges in monasteries, for defrocking, dislocations, the expulsion of valuable priests, and many, many other things.

Nil led a life of austerity that was difficult to understand. He fasted almost all the time, rigorously, most often fasting completely. Those who were close to him said they never saw him eat. He walked around scantily clad, in old, torn clothes. He celebrated the Holy Liturgy daily in churches and monasteries, and when he did not have access to places of worship, he celebrated it in forests, in Christian homes, in caves, and wherever he could. This frail man had the crazy courage to attack a political system, an empire even. Complaints and reports about Nil Dorobanțu's life, activities, and sermons flowed daily to the security services, the militia, and other state and church authorities and institutions.

Nil roamed almost all of Moldova, from monastery to monastery, even reaching some in Transylvania, Banat, and Oltenia. Thus, he knew the smallest details of monastic life and the realities of monasteries. Some admired him, others denigrated him, some were fascinated, others were scandalized. Many considered him completely insane. Only he considered himself insane for Christ and was ready at any moment to give his life for

Christ and the Church. He had rare abilities, such as levitation, that is, floating in the air, moving quickly, lightning fast, without touching the ground. He had the gift of clairvoyance. He could read everyone like a book.

Nil Dorobanțu was constantly under the scrutiny of the authorities. Crazy or not, he was too disruptive. His surveillance files prove it. It was the height of the Stalinist period. Starting in 1956, the arrests, beatings, torture, and imprisonment began. He was imprisoned several times, but he prayed for the forgiveness and salvation of his tormentors. Also in 1956, he was defrocked. He was not afraid, he was not intimidated. Every time he was released from prison, he continued his missionary work with even more passion.

Hunted everywhere, banned from churches and monasteries, he retreats to his native village and for 14 years hides in a barn, supported by his mother. There he will write thousands and thousands of pages, meditate, pray and fast, and officiate the Holy Liturgy daily. When he left his shelter, after things had calmed down, he continued to visit churches and monasteries, continuing his work. Two of his uncles, one the rector of the Agronomic Institute in Timișoara and the other the rector of the Dental Institute in Bucharest, even promised him a university career, but he categorically refused. He had another mission in the world, other plans.

He died in 1977, brutally beaten, and was buried without priestly vestments in the cemetery of his native village.

Naționalitatea: <i>Romina</i>		Starea civilă: <i>Necăsătorit</i>		Expunerea rezumativă a infracțiunii
Cetățenia: <i>Romina</i>		Tata: <i>DUMITRU</i>		
Religie: <i>Ortodox - Crestin</i>		Mama: <i>ANA</i>		
A fost fotografiat de: <i>da</i>		Sot (ie): <i>-</i>		
Clișeul Nr.:		Copii:		
Dactiloscopia de:		Rude:		
Studii: <i>Doct. Teologie, Fac. Lit. și Filozofie</i>		<i>DOROBANȚU Paul/1942</i>		
Limba ce posedă: <i>Romina, elveică, grăsea</i>				
Situația militară: <i>Sotist. lit. retrogr. 1942</i>		Specialitatea ca infractor: <i>-</i>		
Formula dactiloscopică:				
FOTOGRAFIA				
				

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Nil Dorobanțu's work is posthumous, meaning it appeared after his death. We do not know if he published any articles during his lifetime. He wrote with crazy passion, convinced that this was how he served Christ. Reading Nil Dorobanțu's books today, anyone can see that the author took a huge risk. If his manuscripts had been found by the authorities, Nil Dorobanțu would have been sentenced to years in prison, perhaps even to death. We know of no other author of Nil's calibre and no other writings of the same calibre and level as his.

It is difficult to analyse Nil Dorobanțu's writings. They do not fall within a single theme, but cover a wide range of topics, as did the author's culture. However, we will attempt to group his books in relation to higher theological education, which influenced everything he wrote. He focused on the Systematic Section, where he also wanted to obtain his doctorate,

but he also addressed disciplines and themes from other sections. So, we had:

I. The Biblical Section is represented, as far as we know, by several exegeses of parts of the Bible or even entire books. These are Interpretations of the Lord's Prayer and Psalm 50 (2016, 102 pages), as well as the Apocalypse (vol. I, 2018, 518 pages; vol. II, 2018, 522 pages). Nil takes each chapter and each verse of the last book of the Bible, the Apocalypse, and argues that the times humanity was going through in the middle of the last century were specific to the approaching end of the world, communism being nothing other than the apocalyptic beast. The persecution of Christians, priests and monks who did not betray their faith, moral debauchery, injustices, abuses of all kinds, communist symbols, the open and fierce struggle against Christ and His teachings are described in detail in the last book of the Holy Scriptures. These were times of great trials, and true Christians endured them with the conviction that evil is tolerated only as much as God allows, being a test, the elevation or downfall of many. Just as Dimitrie Cantemir's treatise, The Rise and Fall of the Ottoman Empire, restored hope to the peoples oppressed or threatened by the Turkish colossus and at the same time sounded the death knell for the empire, so too does Nil Dorobanțu's work from a religious point of view.

II. The Systematic section includes those writings that delve deeper into the truth revealed in Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition. This section includes disciplines such as Dogmatic Theology, Fundamental Theology, Moral Theology, and Christian Philosophy.

Nil Dorobanțu addresses dogmatic themes in all his writings, but in Apologetics (vol. I, 2017, 490 pages and vol. II, 2017, 400 pages) he draws a parallel between the theses of dialectical and historical materialism and dogmatic teachings. Each of his arguments is based on biblical, patristic, scientific, and rational grounds, so that by the end of his argument, the atheist thesis is dismantled and shattered. I have never encountered such a competent and well-documented indictment of materialism and atheism. Nil does not throw words to the wind or make gratuitous statements; everything is based on evidence. He uses scientific language and proves that he has read numerous works of atheist and

Marxist propaganda, as well as theology. We could say that his argument takes the form of thesis, antithesis, and, finally, synthesis. Nil does not treat atheist and materialist authors as enemies, but as fallen, deceived friends whom he would like to recover, according to the messianic principle: "God does not want the death of the sinner, but his correction!" In the major dogmatic chapters, he approaches cosmology through God in nature (2016, 326 pages), arguing the correctness of Christian teaching on creation and the Creator, as well as the fragility of materialistic theories on the origins of the material world. The cosmological argument for the existence of God is developed at length. God reveals himself to the world through his creation, the material world and the spiritual world, which he brought to life and which He protects and guides. He also addresses anthropology in his exegesis in the work "Man – Unknown Being" (2019, 186 pages). He draws on biblical references, patristic exegesis, and the writings of French physician Alexis Carrel. He highlights in great detail the greatness of man's origin, the divine meaning of human existence in the context of creation, the unfathomable mysteries hidden within the human being, and then goes on to discuss Darwinist theories and dialectical and historical materialism, demonstrating how childish and baseless they are. The verdict is harsh: "You have degraded and counterfeited civilization, culture, science, and art, and you have degenerated through the antagonism between physical and mental development. You no longer have the tension of the spirit or the will; you are not capable of becoming an elite endowed with imagination, courage, wisdom, and fear of God, but rather cowards and monsters." Fundamental theology is represented by "Mysticism" (2016, 220 pages). It is the most profound discipline of theology, which studies the moments of human elevation and encounter with God in prayer, ecstasy, and theophany (the manifestation of God). Nil Dorobanțu also gives it a definition: "Mysticism, as a science, is based on observation, experiment, introspection, discussion, analysis, and synthesis of the works of the great mystics." He tries to raise Mysticism "to the rank of true science, indeed the highest of sciences, the center and basis of fundamental theology, the queen of science..." From Nil's biography, we learn that God revealed himself to him from childhood, and after he devoted himself entirely,

body and soul, to serving and preaching Christian teachings, he had countless moments of revelation and theophany. He speaks less about these moments that he himself experienced, but speaks at length about the theophany of Petrache Lupu of Maglavit, defending the memory of such people. See Petru of Maglavit. Theophany (2016, 76 pages). He speaks of Veronica's theophanies, see Veronica of Vladimirești. Theophany (2017, 180 pages). He dedicates a special volume to the phenomenon of theophany. See "Theophany" (2016, 142 pages). To prove that these moments of maximum spiritual elevation were also experienced by other Christians, whether lay people, priests, or monks, he writes "Theophanies in Paterikon" (2016, 296 pages).

Moral Theology is represented by a work of great value: Ethics (2017, 150 pages), in which he draws a broad and pertinent parallel between Christian morality based on the teachings of the Savior and the Holy Apostles, on the writings of the Holy Fathers, and the ethics of various philosophical systems, but especially materialistic ethics. The final conclusion he reaches is that materialistic ethics is a caricature of a moral system, without solid foundations.

Christian morality remains valid, its purpose being to instill Christian virtues in the life of society and the individual, to live in the spirit of Christian teachings, with a view to achieving salvation of the soul and eternal life.

Sociology (2017, 316 pages) can also be included in this chapter. This work is a pertinent analysis of the concept of society in materialist philosophy and Christian teaching. Numerous first-rate Romanian and foreign authors are quoted, giving the work substance. From beginning to end, it seeks to expose official sociology and extol the principles underlying Christian society. "From the outset, sociology is flawed, plagiarizing the lies of paleontology, biogenetics, and physiology. You want to falsify society, making it communal, in a nefarious experiment, on the backs of living human beings, as if they were all guinea pigs and good for the morgue. You still claim that people have associated on an economic basis, and with this you deceive even today, spreading the arteries of hatred and commerce throughout the globe (...)."

In the spirit of Christian teaching, Father Nil Dorobanțu argues—and rightly so—that salvation is possible even for the most sinful, including atheists. All of man's struggles and searches to know the mysteries of the universe prove to be "chasing the wind" if he lacks faith and does not use science for the glory of God, the creator and ruler of the world. The theme is discussed at length in "Faust – the saved atheist."

Christian philosophy is represented by "Logic" (vol. I, 2020, 380 pages; vol. II, 2020, 360 pages). Using scholarly terminology specific to the discipline, Nil demolishes the precepts of dialectical materialism in the field with logical arguments, reaching the amusing conclusion: "Why are you wasting your time with labyrinths of paralogisms without a shred of logic and without practical results? O, you modalist logicians and scrupulous casuists, why don't you put as much zeal into the divine Logos? You find yourselves demonstrating negation with all the necessary rigor, as well as other syllogistic modes, when you do not apply and do not even know the classical ones, so that you may find Christ, the True Logos." Here we can also include another work of great value, "Psychology", in which an extensive comparison is made between Christian psychology, which is clearly superior to that taught in atheistic schools because it has a known object of study, the soul, God's creation, the image of God in man, while atheistic psychology gropes blindly for its field of research. It is quite hilarious to argue on the one hand that the soul does not exist, and on the other to establish a science to study the soul, that is, something that does not exist.

III. The practical section is represented by disciplines such as: Canon Law, Liturgy, Homiletics, Catechetics, Music, Pedagogy, and Sectology. Nil Dorobanțu is no stranger to this section either. He has written two volumes on canon law: Interpretations of the Canons (vol. I, 2016, 360 pages; vol. II, 320 pages). In them, he analyzes each canon issued by the ecumenical councils and traces how that canon was put into practice by hierarchs, priests, monks, and laypeople. It is a unique work, a true fresco of Romanian society in the middle of the last century. Sometimes he is too harsh on certain categories, because he starts from particular aspects and cases, which he knew well, and generalises. He accuses the entire

hierarchy, led by the patriarch, of failing to defend the monasteries and allowing the purging of monks, of defrocking, displacing, and eliminating a number of clergy and monks because they carried out intense pastoral and missionary activity, because they collaborated in one way or another with the political power and state institutions. Nil proves to be unusually intransigent and does not allow for even the slightest compromise.

Reading these volumes, one gets the impression that those in prison are saints, while those outside are antichrists, incarnate demons, etc. The truth is not so. The hierarchy, led by the patriarch, collaborated with the political powers because there was no other way for the Church to remain within the law. Not all the priests who were imprisoned were accused solely of intense pastoral and missionary activity. Some were convicted on political grounds for their political activities. There were also honest priests who were not convicted or displaced. Their situation was largely due to the relationships they had with the locals. As long as the locals did not report them, they were left alone. Perhaps this is Nil Dorobanțu's weak point. He sets himself up as judge of all social classes, people, and institutions. The natural question we ask ourselves is: By what right? Perhaps this is precisely what will cause Nil Dorobanțu to be accused of "falling upward," as the lack of humility is called in Christian morality.

However, if his intention was to paint a fresco of the era that was as faithful to the truth as possible, he has succeeded admirably.

Liturgics is represented by two particularly laborious works:

"Commentary on Euchologion" (2019, 344 pages) and "Commentaries on Akathists" (2019, 136 pages). Carefully analyzing the two service books, the author highlights the importance that the Church gives to Man and the ways and means it uses to rehabilitate man before God, to sanctify and ennoble him spiritually.

To these is added "Prayers in Persecution" (2016, 112 pages), a volume containing prayers composed by Father Nil, which are deeply moving and reflect the feelings of any soul that is grieving, persecuted, and wronged. It seems that most of them were written while he was hiding in his native village, unable to go to church or monastery. One cannot remain indifferent to fiery words such as these: "I love you forever, sweet Jesus. The sky weeps over the thirsty and empty earth and clothes it in flowers

and food. It is sunny and there are tearful flowers. Foreign birds have come and greened the garden and the forest. How glorious you are, Lord, for all that you do. It thundered. The seals of thunder are breaking. I love you, Jesus. Have mercy on me, Lord, do not forsake me. For I am considered mad for Your eternal love. Glory to You! Everyone is at the Holy Church, but only I lie hidden in pain!" And there are several hundred such prayers, true jewels of the troubled soul.



We cannot fail to mention "The Book of Akathists" (2018, 414 pages), which contains numerous akathists composed by Father Nil Dorobanțu. Some are dedicated to persons of the Holy Trinity, others to crucial events in the history of the salvation of mankind, some to the Holy Apostles, others—and most of them—to saints. There are well-known saints and lesser-known saints. The model of classical akathists found in religious books is respected.

Homiletics and Catechetics are represented by three volumes of "Heavenly Words" (vol. I, 2016, 160 pages; vol. II, 2016, 140 pages; vol. III, 2017, 100 pages). They consist of poems addressed by God to monasteries and to the Theological Institute in Bucharest. In them, the recipients are rebuked for the negative aspects that Father Nil knew were happening within them, and they are reminded of their purpose in the context of a secularized world, in which atheists persecute Christ and His witnesses. The sermons themselves will probably appear soon.

Pedagogy is represented by the work "Christ in School". Here he presents the superiority of Christian teaching in the formation of the child.

Christian pedagogy gives meaning to life, shapes a future human being, destined to face the hardships and thickets of earthly life and who knows how to use this life to gain salvation and eternal life. The removal of religion from schools and the introduction of subjects designed to indoctrinate children in the spirit of historical and dialectical materialism are real attacks on the moral and religious health of society.

Sectology is not absent from Father Nil Dorobanțu's concerns either, but is represented by a special work, "Stil" (2017, 106 pages), in which he combats those who have remained on the old style, according to the Julian calendar, thus dividing the Church. To this end, he makes an extensive foray into the history of world calendars, with images and astronomical sketches, like a true specialist in the field. His conclusions regarding the superiority of the new Orthodox Christian calendar are well-founded, and his arguments are irrefutable.

We could conclude our presentation with an autobiographical book, *Nebun pentru Hristos* (Fool for Christ) (2015, 190 pages). Here he recounts his life and deeds, or rather part of them, focusing on his time in detention and the torments he was subjected to in prison. The second part

of the work contains testimonies about him from his contemporaries. There are impressive accounts of the sometimes superhuman abilities enjoyed by Father Nil Dorobanțu.

All the books presented above, with the exception of the last one, which was published by Editura Babilon, are published by Editura "Floare de april". Publishing continues, and we will certainly have many surprises from now on related to the work of Father Nil Dorobanțu. The editors have seen fit to add to each work a set of photographs related to Father Nil's life and work, personal documents, official documents, many informative notes, and reports from the security services. We also find official correspondence between church institutions, and even statements that he himself made to the investigating authorities. An interesting and comprehensive statement is made in a letter from Bishop Teofil Herineanu of Cluj to the Bishop of Roman and Huși: "... he could be characterized in biblical terms: he has much of the dove's skill and little of the serpent's prudence. However, if closely supervised and not allowed to do anything without the approval of his superiors, he could be of great use to the Church through his culture..."

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Nil Dorobanțu remains a masterful figure of the Romanian Orthodox Church through his life and work. I have not encountered a single statement in his books that contradicts Orthodox Christian teaching. He deepens Christian teaching, and all his statements are based on Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition. His dogmatic writings, and others, follow several guidelines: Christocentrism, ecclesiocentrism, and soteriology. He preaches with great conviction the intensification of liturgical services and pastoral-missionary activities. He calls for the daily celebration of the Holy Liturgy by hierarchs and priests and the daily communion of priests and parishioners. Like the Cappadocian Fathers, he uses secular learning, which he acquired in secular schools, to understand and combat philosophical and religious systems foreign to Christian teaching. There are pages in Nil Dorobanțu's works which, when read, bring to mind the writings of Father Dumitru Stăniloae. The dozens of books that have appeared so far, and probably those that will continue to appear, are

chapters from the Work. Proof that each one, regardless of how many pages it has, is not divided into chapters and subchapters, as we are accustomed to. From one end to the other, from one cover to another, Nil Dorobanțu barely has enough hundreds of pages to develop an idea, a theme. He writes it in one breath and draws you in as a reader so that you don't interrupt your reading.

What can be attributed to Nil Dorobanțu today is that, starting from the negative cases of people and situations that he himself has known or heard about from others, he moves on to painful generalizations that damage the memory of hierarchs, priests, and monks, but also of the Church in general. He does not criticize or expose in a hostile, vengeful spirit, but considers himself the conscience of the entire Church, martyred both by political power and by opportunistic people, unsuited to the times they were living through.

Nil Dorobanțu is a puritan of religious and moral life. He was completely uninterested in material goods, public office and dignities, or worldly pleasures. He dressed very poorly, fasted for long periods, prayed almost constantly, preached with or without time, and was dedicated body and soul to his mission in the world as a preacher and liturgist. He was gifted with a brilliant mind, an overflowing memory, and a rare capacity for synthesis. He had superhuman gifts, such as the ability to rise from the ground, to move without touching the ground, to know people and their souls at a glance, and to heal the sick. He joyfully accepted injustice, beatings, torture, imprisonment, and everything else, convinced that in this way he was serving the Lord Christ. He constantly felt that he had not done everything he should have done for God, for the salvation of his soul. He suffered more than for his own wounds at the sight of the suffering of many, at the sight of the injustices and abuses committed by the new political system. He suffered because the hierarchs and priests did not rise to the height of their mission in those times of great trial, because they were always looking for a "modus vivendi" in their relations with the political authorities. Reading his books, you agree with him, but, as a person living in the present, you wonder: Could they have done otherwise? Perhaps it was precisely because of this tactic of patience that they were able to save the Church and avoid many other misfortunes and

losses. Nil Dorobanțu wrote from his home barn and judged everyone, from the bishop to the peasant, convinced, probably, that his manuscripts would be found many years later, when the people he incriminated were no longer alive. We cannot agree with this harsh judgment he makes of the clergy as a whole, without taking into account the times they were going through during the Stalinist period.



Nil Dorobanțu's voice was like that of the great prophets, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Elijah the Tishbite, John the Baptist, and others, who took the risk of publicly criticizing political and religious authorities for their moral and religious transgressions. Like the great prophets, Nil Dorobanțu urged repentance in all his sermons and writings, because "the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Nil Dorobanțu can be placed among the great Christian apologists who, from the early centuries, when the persecution of Christians was relentless, defended the Christian faith and exposed the pagan religions and ideologies of the time.

Regardless of when Nil Dorobanțu will be rehabilitated and possibly canonized, his writings remain a document of their time, perhaps the most virulent attack on a political system, an atheistic ideology. I know of no other writings that are harsher, more combative, more involved in social life than his.

It is interesting that some books are signed with "schiarhiereu," which would mean a bishop or archbishop retired from public life in monasticism. From Nil Dorobanțu's biography, we do not know that he was ever ordained a bishop, but only a priest, being a monk.

We do not believe that Nil Dorobanțu will soon be rehabilitated and, moreover, canonized. Perhaps another generation or two will pass, but his writings will have to be edited and reissued so that he and the teachings he promoted can be disseminated as widely as possible. Nil Dorobanțu's books are an asset to the Romanian Orthodox Church in particular, but also to Romanian culture in general. Nil Dorobanțu proves to be too great in posterity to be camouflaged, kept on the index for one reason or another. The signs of a thaw are already visible: about 30 books have been published, articles and studies about him and his work are appearing, entire issues of magazines are dedicated to him, and various thematic symposiums are being held, at which papers about him and his works are presented.

The beginning is difficult, but promising.

Signed, Father Al. Stănciulescu-Bârda

And now Father Macarie Banu's Foreword on the Akathist to Holy Father Nil Dorobanțu:

Former second lieutenant in the Mountain Hunters in the Guard Regiment in Predeal, graduate in Theology, Philosophy, and Literature (*Magna cum laude*), doctoral student in Theology under Prof. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, graduate of four years of Law, graduate of the School of Stenography, Nicolae D. Dorobanțu entered monastic life at the age of 22, in 1952, at the Monastery of Cernica, taking the name Nechifor.

In 1948 he was ordained a hierodeacon at Zaclău (Tulcea); in 1949, he was ordained a hieromonk at Huruiești (Bacău); on August 5, 1952, he was tonsured in the great schema at the recommendation of his spiritual father, Archimandrite Benedict Ghiuș, at Sihăstria Monastery, taking the name Nil.

He was diocesan secretary, director of studies at monastic seminaries (Galați, Vrancea, Neamț), abbot and spiritual father at the monasteries of Tarnița, Sihastru, Troțușanu, Mușunoaiele, Brazi (Vrancea), Măgura Ocnei and Bogdana (Bacău), Nechit, Tarcău, Văratec, Sihăstria (Neamț), Nicula (Cluj), Râmeți (Alba), Izbuc (Oradea), and Bogâltin (Timiș).

There are testimonies from monks and laymen (Archimandrite Melchisedec Suparschi; Monk Valerian Grecu; Archimandrite Serafim Măciucă; Prof. Dr. Anghelescu Gheorghe, etc.) who saw him dressed or serving as a hierarch, but his ordination as bishop remains a mystery.

On January 3, 1956, he was arrested and held for 120 days in prison where, without trial, he was subjected to mockery and severe torture. On April 24, he was tried and acquitted after being examined by 20 doctors and declared healthy.

The reason for his imprisonment was "mysticism." The charges: confessing Christ, the apostolic work of preaching the true faith, traveling the length and breadth of the country with the "Church of Blachernae" on his back, performing the Holy Liturgy daily, preaching, converting, confessing, and communing the people, during times of communist persecution. He was defrocked in November 1956, under pressure from Minister Petre Constantinescu-Iași and the Directorate of Envoys. He retired to catacombs and Christian homes, living in hiding, in humility

and severe asceticism, writing tens of thousands of pages of theological studies and exegesis. On March 27, 1977, he passed away, his martyrdom shrouded in mystery.

Rumors about the alleged theft of his body convinced the priest's family to request his exhumation in order to clarify the situation. This was done legally, in accordance with Law 102/2014, Art. 9, Para. 5. On September 28-29, 2015, the family tomb was excavated, but the coffin was empty, without a lid, and the body of Archpriest Nil Dorobanțu was not found in the tomb, which astonished everyone.

The testimonies about the monk Nil are moving: a consummate ascetic, a tireless preacher of repentance, unyielding in the fight against sin, he celebrated the liturgy daily, deeply spiritual, renowned for his struggles and ceaseless prayer of the mind (brochure of the Tarnița-Buzău Monastery, 2009, p. 8), gifted with special charisms, a seer with the spirit, "he appeared and disappeared like a meteor" - quote from the archives of the Securitate; he was seen not touching the ground, praying in light, knowing people's thoughts and the future.

We believe that these testimonies, together with the publication of his work, will bring light to the darkness and reveal the great spiritual personality of this worthy fighter in the vineyard of Christ.

Akathist to Father Saint Nil Dorobanțu the Fool for Christ, Confessor and Holy Theologian

written by [Father Macarie Banu](#)

Kontakion 1

In the persecuted Church of unstable Blachernae, you served your entire life, chosen by God as prophet and archpriest; you shepherded Christ's flock, always preaching, celebrating the liturgy, absolving and

communing, giving rest to the Lord of the Cross as said in the Gospel,
you Confessor of the catacombs, Nil.

Being very wise, you showed yourself to be mad, you shamed the atheists,
you rebuked the hypocrites, you visited the monasteries, and through the
heavenly Word you called us all to receive the Risen One, Jesus the True,
the Righteous Judge, the Lamb and the Good Shepherd, in the Eucharist.

For this reason, we sing to you, Father:

Rejoice, Holy Nil, you God-speaker!

Ikos 1

To the Creator of angels and Lord of powers, from birth you were devoted
to Him, Father Nil, that you were born in the field and had no place
among men to lay your head, but only under the shelter of the God of
heaven, your Support, under whose wings you hoped and whom you
loved greatly. And we sing to you:

Rejoice, for you were born in the village of Crainici and became a herald
of the Lord's will;

Rejoice, for you were not born in expensive palaces, but in a flowery
field, and throughout your life, poor and naked, you served the Lord;

Rejoice, for you were born a eunuch, but for the Kingdom of God you
became a eunuch once again;

Rejoice, for you tended sheep in your childhood and sang to them from
the Liturgy;

Rejoice, for your voice resounded in the glades and valleys, and the
mountains and waters and fruitful trees praised the Lord with your voice;

Rejoice, for in the wilderness, on the rocks, in the caves, in the dense
forest, and in the place chosen by the Lord, you will celebrate the Liturgy;

Rejoice, for your pure voice will stir up the people and prophesy the will
of the Lord;

Rejoice, for you were sent to guide the clergy and the people to
Orthodoxy;

Rejoice, divine preacher of the grace of the Eucharist;

Rejoice, apostle of the love of our Lord Jesus Christ;

Rejoice, rebuker of apostasy with a sharp voice;

Rejoice, beloved son of the Mother of God, and protected by Her;

Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 2

He who enlightens every man who comes into the world, O Father of Fathers, has sanctified you too as a chosen vessel of the heavenly Word in the persecution of the last days - for His poor flock that is surrounded. You were carried away to the divine Light and enveloped as in a fiery sun, and you sang to the Lord Sabaoth: My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready—Alleluia!

Ikos 2

The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, anointed you as a prophet to speak the Word of the Lord, and to fulfill the series of theophanies sent to our oppressed people, called with repentance to salvation and to continuous communion, in times of persecution. The fire of the Logos was kindled in you, to pour it out like wine and oil everywhere: over the wounded man fallen among thieves and over the thief who repented bitterly.

Lord Jesus Christ, Savior, You are good and forgiving to all, and for Your love, we praise Nil, the ecstatic one, thus:

Rejoice, for at 14 years of age you had your first theophany and were reborn in the uncreated Light;

Rejoice, for the Holy Light visited you twice more in your parents' house;

Rejoice, for from that moment your soul thirsted only for the Lord;

Rejoice, for you attended many schools, but worldly wisdom did not steal you away;

Rejoice, for through your great learning you became a great apologist for Orthodoxy;

Rejoice, for you amazed your professors at the Faculties of Law, Philosophy, and Theology;

Rejoice, for you spent the whole day in the Church of the Holy Trinity, writing theological works while sitting in the choir loft;

Rejoice, for at night you struggled in vigils, prostrations, and prayers;

Rejoice, for you did not allow your eyelids to sleep until your mind learned the philokalic work in your heart;

Rejoice, for you obeyed Christ perfectly, proclaiming the Gospel with zeal;

Rejoice, for at every step you were guided from above and covered with the omophorion of the Mother of God;

Rejoice, chosen, beloved, and sent by the Lord to carry Him as a living antimension;

Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 3

The Lord of Theophanies called you, and you deserted the earthly army, Holy Nil, to fight in His monastic army; you became like a madman out of love for Him, and on Golgotha you set out for your own crucifixion, saying to the Heavenly Bridegroom:

Do good, Lord, in Your goodness, to Zion, for You are the Son of Man, and let Jerusalem be built in Your Name, Jesus, Son of God, crying out to You forever: Alleluia!

Ikos 3

Receiving the angelic image, you strove ever more for the grace of the Crucified One, and with the pataphyr you worked well, preaching the Word of the Lord unceasingly, writing thousands of pages at night and confessing Christ.

And when you came to Vladimirești, you tasted the grace of heavenly Zion, blessed threefold in Theophany, in the Eucharist, and in Martyrdom. And so, with many tears, the people returned to God, partaking of the sacraments, and they praised you:

Rejoice, for during your monastic life, the monk Damian had a vision and saw you lifted up from the earth in light;

Rejoice, living testimony of the states of Philokalia: of the divine Grace that revives us;

Rejoice, for grace carried you to the monastery of Vladimirești, the holy land where the Mother of God walked;

Rejoice, for in a theophany the abbess Veronica knew you;

Rejoice, for Veronica said of you that a chosen one of the Lord would preach the word from above for three years;

Rejoice, trumpet that proclaims to the world the heavenly theophanies of Vladimirești;
Rejoice, for you learned the Hesychast breathing from Avva Arsenie Boca;
Rejoice, for Father Ioan Iovan gave you his blessing;
Rejoice, for when you received blessed bread from Avva Arsenie, a mystical thrill immediately overwhelmed you;
Rejoice, for that thrill transformed you on the spot, and since then, you have felt as if you were carried above the entire globe;
Rejoice, for your word burned sin as fire burns, for you worked with the spirit and power of Elijah the Prophet;
Rejoice, crystal-clear bell that announces heaven coming to earth;
Rejoice, Holy Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 4

By teaching the Word of truth, you became everything to everyone, so that Jesus' sheep might be cleansed of their sins, washed in tears and united in the Eucharist. Barefoot and from a high place, you preached the Gospel, Father Nil, with your head uncovered, with a rope tied around your waist, you appeared in monasteries and villages like a prophet from afar, a wonderful sign of the times for the wooden Cross, the giver of life even to the bearer, who cries out: Alleluia!

Ikos 4

"You have come out of your mother's womb and are running towards the grave, but stop for a moment at the feet of Christ, on the threshold of eternal life, to listen to His heavenly Word. O world, world! You are all thieves, but come to Christ, that the word may be fulfilled for you too: Today you will be with Me in Paradise!" - thus, Father, you preached for three apocalyptic and sorrowful years, and you gathered much fruit. For this reason, hear from us:
Rejoice, for you rebuked the decadent clergy and shook the lukewarm;
Rejoice, for you preached night after night in Secu, Văratec, and Agapia, as at the Resurrection, so that even the walls wept with sorrow;

Rejoice, for you passed from Moldova to Transylvania, from monastery to monastery, to ignite everyone with your enthusiasm;
Rejoice, for when you preached at Nicula, Christ Himself worked with you; many souls were changed for the better;
Rejoice, for people came in such numbers that there was no room for them, and you distributed sacks of money to all the poor;
Rejoice, for dressed in sackcloth, barefoot and girded with a rope, you brought the sectarians back to Orthodoxy;
Rejoice, for you wept spiritual tears for the people, and one night a nun saw you praying, raised from the ground;
Rejoice, for while you stayed in Bogdana, you raised crosses everywhere, forgave sins, and continually gave communion to the monks;
Rejoice, for in Râmeț you served in the underground church, perfuming the Church with divine odors from the relics of Saint Ghelasie;
Rejoice, for under your omophorion, with bare heads, under the snowflakes, thousands of Christians came to confession, and after washing their souls with tears, they all immediately received communion with longing;
Rejoice, for on Mount Tarcău—in the diocese of Roman—Bicaz stopped to listen to your lively sermon;
Rejoice, for in Baia Mare, while celebrating the liturgy in the church, 100 people, in a theophany, all saw the Lord and His Mother coming out of the icons;
Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 5

"All of us who love Christ are hated in vain," you said, Father, with a bitter voice, being slandered and betrayed, beaten, struck, and forcibly expelled from the service by the secret police. But you paid no attention to anything and preached the truth without fear, calling even the hardened to repentance, saying:

"Hired clerics and monks! You have gone out against the flock like wild wolves and are killing us, your brothers! Do not forget that in the hands with which you gave us the Holy Body and Blood of Christ, you hold the

sickle and hammer with which you kill and drive nails into us. But your persecution will bring us salvation, and you condemnation."
To the Lord of the Cross, Jesus, Who strengthened your preaching, we sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 5

With the spirit and power of the Prophet Elijah, you labored for the Lord, Father Nil, who was abandoned by evil workers and cut down by persecuting atheists.

And among all their iniquities, the most heinous was the destruction of the Vladimirești Monastery, the imprisonment of Father Ioan Iovan and Mother Veronica, and the expulsion of the 300 virgin nuns into the "new world" of the communists, full of destruction. With a voice like a fiery sword and filled with sorrow, you said: "O, where are the songs and psalms, the prayers, the sermons, all the theophanies and supernatural revelations of the Zion above? O, where are the virgins, the blessings and the celebrations, when thousands of people took communion? All heaven was concerned with the monastery of the virgins, which you atheists have devastated and brutally desecrated. Woe to you!" Hearing these words and trembling, we sing to you:

Rejoice, theophanic heir to the spirit of the Vladimirești monastic community;

Rejoice, for you preached on the mountain tops and in the heart of Bucharest;

Rejoice, fiery witness for continuous communion;

Rejoice, hyssop that cleansed souls through the Word and turned them to the Cross of Jesus;

Rejoice, for you were in ceaseless inner prayer and your heart became a spotless altar;

Rejoice, for you preached in a sackcloth and barefoot, and the hypocrites rose up against you;

Rejoice, new Jeremiah, for you lamented the ruin of monasticism in Romania;

Rejoice, for you prophesied the drying up and destruction of the monasteries that opposed communion;

Rejoice, for you prophesied the fate of the barren and cursed fig tree to those who helped destroy the new Zion;
Rejoice, great apologist of the Holy Eucharist, who received the living Words from heaven;
Rejoice, continuer of the work at Vladimirești, who is our model in the catacombs and persecution;
Rejoice, gentle and silent mystic, that through you the divine Words have prevailed;
Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 6

"Today is the revolution of thieves against saints," you said with sorrow, Father, when you put on all the vestments, the spiritual treasures, and Mysteries of the Church, setting out on your journey, from place to place, as Christ revealed to you in theophany, traveling throughout the country and monasteries, preaching to all souls the Cross, the Eucharist, and Martyrdom, the righteous ways of the Lord.

Vladimirești, the new Zion, was destroyed, but the Light of Christ appeared theophanically and tenderly in the Blachernae of the Resurrection of the catacombs, the undefeated and wandering Church of the two or three brothers in Christ, those who partake of the Eucharist and are martyred for the Truth, singing: Alleluia!

Ikos 6

In the string of theophanies, miracles, and holy, saving works sent by the Lord to us sinners for redemption from the valley of tears, you have strung yourself, Father Nil, like a ruby stone, lit up in the grace of the Holy Chalice, shining brightly and sweetly speaking of the "Holy One," Christ Jesus, the Great Shepherd.

"At Maglavit bodies were healed, at the new Zion souls were healed, and at the Unstable Blachernae of the Resurrection everyone is spiritually resurrected," you taught, Father, those who love holy things, who even now praise you wisely:

Rejoice, Living Antimension, sent by the Lord to dozens of monasteries;

Rejoice, renewer of monasticism, for you have convinced young people to live an angelic life;
Rejoice, for you zealously sought out every Christian, and were carried from house to house by Christ;
Rejoice, for your mission was for the clergy and monasticism, redeeming souls from atheism;
Rejoice, for the tears in your eyes did not cease, walking through the mountains, you were continually in inner prayer;
Rejoice, for when you arrived at Bistrița Monastery, Saint Gregory the Decapolite carried you away in ecstasy;
Rejoice, for when you served at Turnu, Frăsinei, and Cozia, you wept unceasingly for your people and monasticism;
Rejoice, for you performed holy unction, blessings, and exorcisms among the people;
Rejoice, for you communed and healed many, but you did not bow down to the apostates;
Rejoice, for you toiled in animal pens and lived in rags, hunger, heat, and cold for the Divine and Holy Name that you confessed among the people;
Rejoice, for years, from city to city, you became everything to everyone, and they sold you to the Securitate as a deceiver;
Rejoice, for they knocked out your teeth, but they could not separate you from Christ;
Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 7

It seems as if you came from another age, Father Nil, and with the full measure of the Gospel you taught and measured our age, weak and dark, characterized by madness. Your madness among the "wise" was a symbol for all—let those who will understand, understand!—of the reversal of times, full of wonder: the mystery of lawlessness worked in secret, even penetrating the chosen ones, who let their heads be anointed with the oil of sin against the Holy Spirit...

And the eschatological sign is the Church on the wood of the Cross, the members united in crucifixion and nourished by the Eucharist, The Body of the Lord, crucified and risen, entering through sealed walls and doors

with "Peace be with you!", as the dewdrop and the ray of grace appear in the soul of everyone who sings to Christ the Lord: Alleluia!

Ikos 7

"Even the clergy and monasticism and the most faithful Christians are accustomed to pray to Christ with the portion, with the typikon, with the spoon, with the ration. But Christ is everywhere and eternal, He shows Himself to the poor, the orphans, and the illiterate," you taught us, Father, showing the meaning of Theophany and the Eucharist in the time of Martyrdom.

When the beast wages war on the saints, only the mad will confess Jesus, to the scandal of the wise; only the mad for Christ will be able to live decently in the new sodomitic and bloody Babylon, in the catacomb of their conscience worshipping in Spirit and Truth.

And you, Saint Nilus, full of wounds and suffering, model of resistance and our forerunner, you have become so in the final persecution, which has already begun!

Rejoice, for day and night, from monastery to monastery, you preached Christ to every monk;

Rejoice, for after you searched all monasticism, the clergy and Pharisees excommunicated you and handed you over to the communists;

Rejoice, for the moment you were arrested, they thought they had escaped from you, but you continued your mission in your Great Sermon;

Rejoice, for the zeal of the Lord's house consumed you, and except for two days, you celebrated the liturgy continuously all your years;

Rejoice, for despite hardship, illness, and persecution, you served the Liturgical Mystery daily;

Rejoice, for though you were behind bars, in chains, and beaten severely, you prayed unceasingly to Christ for the whole world, both the living and the dead;

Rejoice, for once you sang ecphonesis on green pastures, and now, tortured in a harsh prison or exiled in the wilderness, you celebrated the Liturgy with the same joy;

Rejoice, for Christ does not need thick walls, rigid types, and gems, but forgiveness, good deeds, love, and communed souls;

Rejoice, for serving the Holy Liturgy daily, Christ Himself showed you where to place the altar, through theophany;
Rejoice, for at the Holy Liturgy a choir of angels covered you, and at the Great Entrance Christ went out and came in with you;
Rejoice, for after the service, like Philip, you were taken away, and suddenly you found yourself in another place;
Rejoice, for having Christ present at every step, you always disturbed the sinful and limited man who blasphemed with his voice;
Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 8

"God has displayed us, the apostles, as the last of men, as men condemned to death, because we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are honored, but we are dishonored. To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed, we are beaten and homeless. We labor, working with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless. When persecuted, we endure. When reviled, we pray. We have become the refuse of the world, the scum of all, even until now. I am not writing these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have tens of thousands of teachers in Christ, you do not have many fathers." (1 Cor 4:9-15).

Our father Nil, you Apostolic and humble man, pray to the King of Glory, revealed in Bread and Wine, liturgically and praised by us: Alleluia!

Ikos 8

At the Nechit skete, in neglect and long-standing sin, when the abbot fell ill and left you in his place, you gave alms to the hungry and orphans all the abundance of the barns, even the bed beneath you you gave as alms, with all the money that had been collected in buckets and given away, while you preached incessantly.

And when the abbot returned, not loving Christ, he hated you, Saint, and beat you, so that your blood formed a pool, and he drove you out of his

rotten monastery with the militia. But you rejoiced as one blessed, for you fulfilled the Gospel and heard from the angels:

Rejoice, for though the abbot left, you gave wheat, oil, and a cow with a calf as alms;

Rejoice, for in rags all day and even at night you preached, and you did not touch money, but gathered it in buckets;

Rejoice, for with buckets you distributed to the poor who had nothing;

Rejoice, for you fulfilled your vow of poverty and gave rest to the poor of Jesus;

Rejoice, good and pure heart, in which the Lord appears theophanically;

Rejoice, gentle shepherd, for you have inherited the flock of sheep;

Rejoice, for the Lord has entrusted them to your care, sanctifying you as a hierarch, seeing how you have laid down your soul for them;

Rejoice, for you have fed them with the Word of God sent from above;

Rejoice, for you have forgiven their sins and called them to repentance;

Rejoice, for you have delighted them in the Liturgy and given them Christ in the Eucharist;

Rejoice, for you have shown mercy and fulfilled the Gospel;

Rejoice, for you sent the unscrupulous abbot bags of money over the years, if only he would repent;

Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 9

In the depths of late winter, you were captured by the soldiers, climbing Golgotha with the chosen ones of the Romanian people who professed Jesus. Beaten and imprisoned without trial, behind heavy bars, in a small cell full of mice, snakes, and filth, you performed the daily Liturgy, enduring all hell and breaking its threshold, sharing with the saints in chains, who spent their time in vigil, in silence and martyrdom.

Together with them, we too rise from our numbness, singing, shouting, raising our voices to the thrice Holy One: Alleluia!

Ikos 9

"I looked up to the heavens: Christ had forsaken me, just as the heavenly Father had forsaken Him in the most difficult moment of the climax of the

Cross. I no longer heard the heavenly Word, I no longer had visions. But I carried the Cross of Christ on the new Calvary" - thus you confessed, Father, the state of brokenness and terrible abandonment, the living hell from which only Christ gives escape to those who walk in His likeness.

And we weave songs for you:

Rejoice, for you were betrayed, hated, and forbidden before the unbelievers, and your brother in the same garment as yours did not recognize you, nor did he have mercy on you;

Rejoice, for you were often carried away by angels, but from the moment you entered the Calvary of the Cross, the Lord Himself strengthened you;

Rejoice, for even in prison you worked for the Kingdom, untying, comforting, and sharing with Christian souls;

Rejoice, for you sprinkled the atheists armed with rifles and pistols with holy water and holy oil, so that they fled with the devils;

Rejoice, for you prayed for your tormentors and sincerely loved your enemies;

Rejoice, for they trampled you as one tramples mud on the road, and you forgave them anyway;

Rejoice, for they kept you in prison for 120 days;

Rejoice, for in solitude you endured all things with the Lord;

Rejoice, fountain of grace, who drank the cup of bitterness to the dregs;

Rejoice, chest that hid the treasure of the Mysteries from those who profane the soul and kill the body;

Rejoice, for in a garment of mockery, bloodied, hungry, and tearful, you stood as a true witness at the unjust judgment of the atheists;

Rejoice, for they put you on an unjust trial, where you defeated them in word and in truth;

Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 10

The Sun of Rises, Christ, shone beautifully in the hell of communist prisons upon His Saints, innocent lambs, led to slaughter even by their own brothers, for the Name of Him, the Almighty. And their blood soaked the earth, and their prayers ascend to God the Word, the Emperor of Glory, Who gave you a powerful voice to comfort them; a harsh,

victorious word in the face of the antichrists; a word He gave you, Father Nil, prophet of the persecuted, consuming with fire.
We too shed tears of life over such martyrdom at His Cross, saying:
Alleluia!

Ikos 10

After mockery, imprisonment, and torture, they called you to trial to declare you insane and lock you up for life. But when you entered the courtroom, everyone's eyes fell on you, for you looked more dead than alive, and you looked everyone in the eye, crying out in a loud voice, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" - and the whole courtroom, young and old alike, trembled! And we bring you songs:
Rejoice, for while they unjustly accused you, you exorcised them and said to them in secret: "I forgive you!"
Rejoice, for false witnesses accused you, and you endured it, with prayer on your lips;
Rejoice, for they brought you with a mitre on your head and commanded you to take it off, but you refused; then the soldiers seized you;
Rejoice, for by the power of Christ, the soldiers in the hall could not throw you out;
Rejoice, for later you took off your cap, your head bruised, swollen, and covered with wounds for all to see;
Rejoice, for the people who saw you were moved, and the judge ordered you to put it back on your head;
Rejoice, for you did not want to do their unjust will this time either;
Rejoice, for you defended yourself, and your Jewish lawyer admired you;
Rejoice, for the witnesses for the prosecution, when questioned by you, now spoke well of you;
Rejoice, for 20 doctors examined you and declared you mentally sound;
Rejoice, for two hours you accused the communists at your trial of the martyr's blood shed by Christians;
Rejoice, for they themselves, the wicked atheists, declared you innocent and acquitted you;
Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 11

On the eve of Easter, you were freed, Father Nil, when no one expected it, and at midnight you sang "Christ is risen!" with great joy, serving the Holy Liturgy in a gathering of priests.

We also give glory to Him who wipes away the tears from every eye and does not hide the burning torch under a bushel, but sets it high, shining, to light up the distance, saying: Alleluia!

Ikos 11

And even more inflamed by the heavenly Word, you set out across the country like a spring breeze to thaw the people enslaved by communism from their atheism.

Who will follow in your footsteps, Father Nil? With the Church behind you and the Holy Mysteries perfectly camouflaged, you became an anonymous pilgrim in the wide world, serving the Sublime One, Who fulfills all things as He pleases.

You appeared from nowhere and seemed to be one of them, but you worked for the Kingdom, a living testimony to the victorious grace given to the saints in the last days, so that we may praise you:

Rejoice, true shepherd in times of apostasy, for you gave humble souls the Holy Communion to keep at home with the icon;

Rejoice, for the Lord Christ revealed to you to preach the faith in schools, hospitals, and prisons to every thirsty soul;

Rejoice, for in the Ciungi Mountains, under the cover of fir trees, you celebrated the Holy Liturgy, and doves and angels, with Holy Crosses, accompanied you in Theophany;

Rejoice, for in the mountains you fed only on the Holy Mysteries, and the shepherds came and listened to the heavenly Words;

Rejoice, for in your hermitage, where angels assisted you at the Liturgy, the birds of the sky and the beasts were your beloved parishioners;

Rejoice, for while you humbled yourself at the epiclesis, feeling like a worm on the ground, even the Mother of God covered you with her holy omophorion;

Rejoice, for you set out on the great and sublime sermon, where you saw the people in tears as they sighed during the night vigils;

Rejoice, for the news quickly spread that you were a gentle shepherd, so that Christians repented before you even arrived in their village and in their lives;

Rejoice, perfect model for liturgy in persecution, for you served Christ continuously and without reproach;

Rejoice, for being persecuted, you liturgized in a dark house, and outside, Christians saw the Mother of God beside you;

Rejoice, for in Cetatea Albă you preached covered only with a sack, and people came from seven countries to see your face, for the sorrowful people;

Rejoice, for you confessed Christ and, like a madman with an icon in your arms, you set out against the atheists;

Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 12

Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot swallow it up—so you shone, Father, at the communist demonstration, when they marched through the streets with idolatrous banners, shouting false slogans. And you held up the icon of Christ and marched among them like a madman of Jesus, singing: Alleluia!

Ikos 12

You had no place to lay your head on earth, and you prophesied that you would have no place in the tomb either, because of so much persecution, unceasing and bitter.

But the Living God raised you from the tomb of this age and welcomed you to the throne of glory, to sit with Him undefeated, crowned for ever and ever, and blessed by us on earth:

Rejoice, for Christians hid themselves in fear of atheistic communism, and you brought the Church of God into their homes;

Rejoice, for through you great miracles were performed, so that the sick were healed on the spot;

Rejoice, for the priests of Brateș held a council and locked you in the village church;

Rejoice, for when the militia came to arrest you and unlocked the church door, they did not find you;
Rejoice, for you went from house to house with the Church on your back, sanctifying sinners through repentance and communion;
Rejoice, for you were always persecuted by the apostate clergy, but you remained fearless;
Rejoice, for you served the benefit of your people, and the rulers saw in you the priest of Christ;
Rejoice, for you preached diligently for the last three years and traveled throughout the whole country;
Rejoice, for the places where you were not welcomed, the Lord punished them, so that they lay under the waters and perished;
Rejoice, barefoot and poor archpriest, who carried the King of Glory and gave Him for communion;
Rejoice, crown of the fiery logos, mad for Christ and great prophet;
Rejoice, chosen vessel for Theophany, for you had the spirit and power of Elijah;
Rejoice, Saint Nil, speaker of God!

Kontakion 13

Archbishop of Christ's catacombs, who went from place to place in a sack, barefoot everywhere, carrying the Eucharistic Mystery under your poor clothes, and turning people to God with His heavenly Word, we pray: accept our song and bring down upon us the mercy of the all-honored Holy Trinity, to Whom we sing joyfully: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Read 3 times.

Then: Ikos 1 and Kontakion 1

Afterwards...

**PRAYER AFTER THE AKATHIST TO OUR FATHER AMONG
THE SAINTS, FATHER NIL DOROBANȚU THE FOOL FOR
CHRIST OF ROMANIA AND HOLY THEOLOGIAN**

O newly discovered prophet, seer of God, hierarch, you preached the Word to all during the communist persecution.

You confessed Christ in the Eucharist, defended virgins, and rebuked hired shepherds of the flock of Christ.

You received the grace of the Crucified and Victorious One, with Whom you united yourself through your martyrdom, our Father Nil the Fool for Christ, pray to the Lord that our souls may be saved.

You can listen to the Akathist being sung by Father Macarie Banu here: <https://youtu.be/N7V9CqMRhM0?si=bO00om4rgOZ4c0cK>

GALLERY OF PHOTOS:









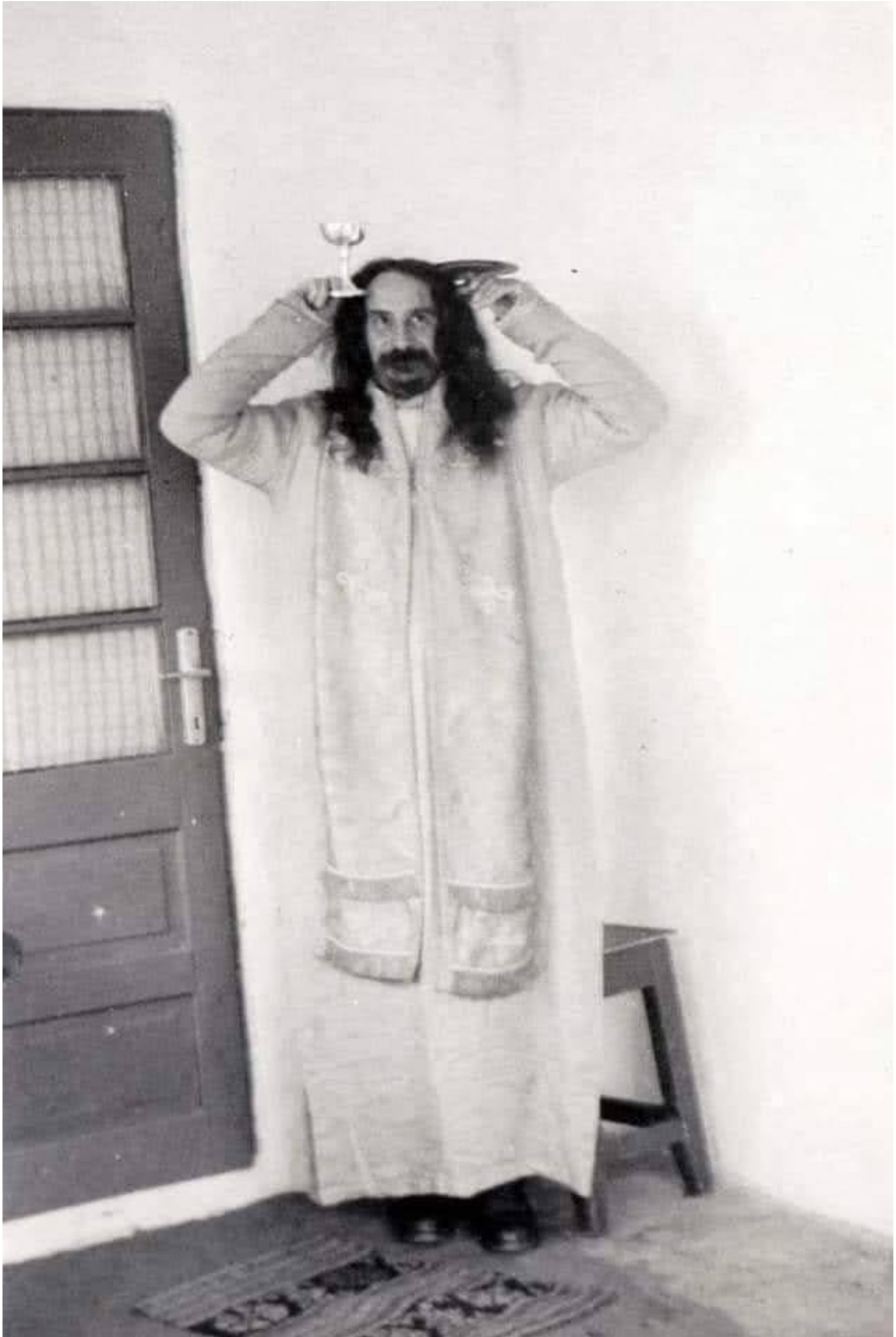
**Părintele Nil Dorobanțu
(1920-1977)**





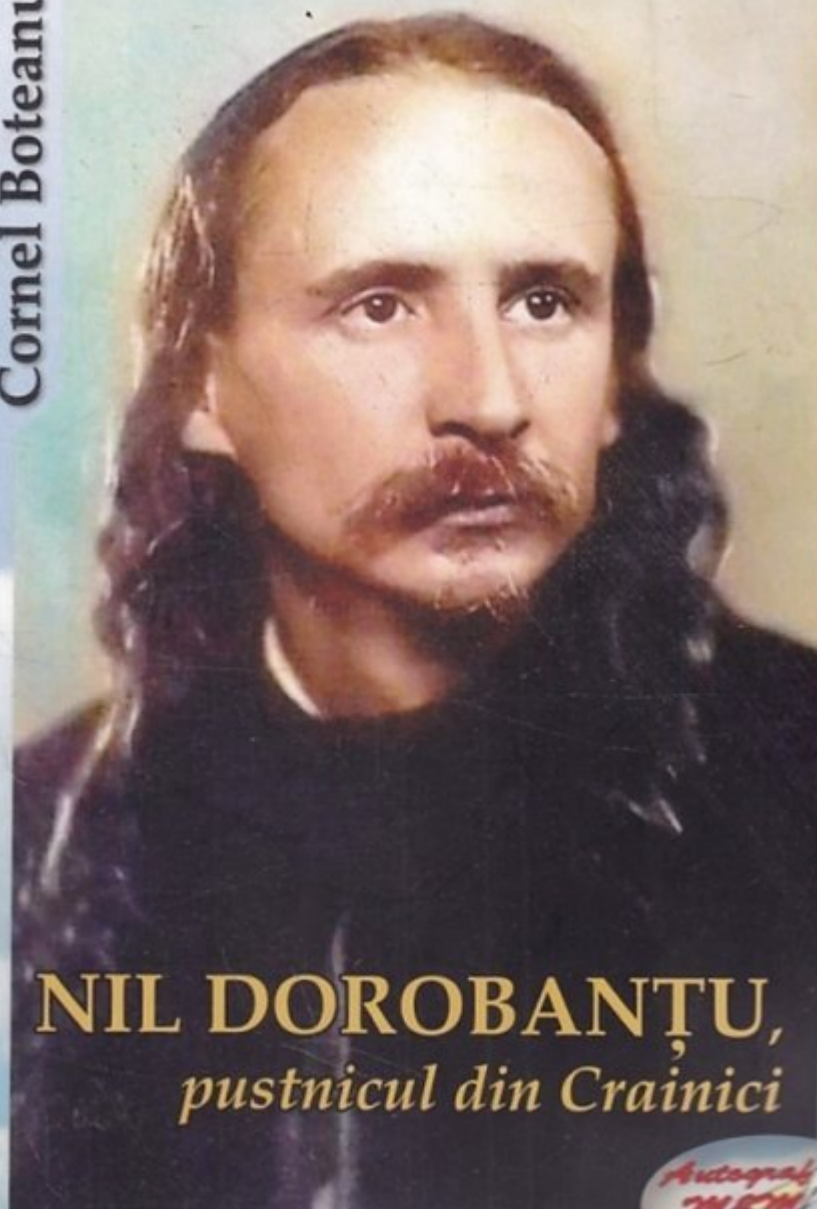








Cornel Boteanu



NIL DOROBANȚU,
pustnicul din Crainici

Autograful
M.F.M.







