

RESISTING UNTO BLOOD

**Sixty-Five Years of Persecution of the
True (Old Calendar) Orthodox Church
of Romania (October 1924–December 1989)**



by
Constantin Bujor

CENTER FOR TRADITIONALIST
ORTHODOX STUDIES

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OF ROMANIA (OCTOBER 1924–DECEMBER 1989)

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Constantin Bujor

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With a Preface by
Metropolitan Vlasie

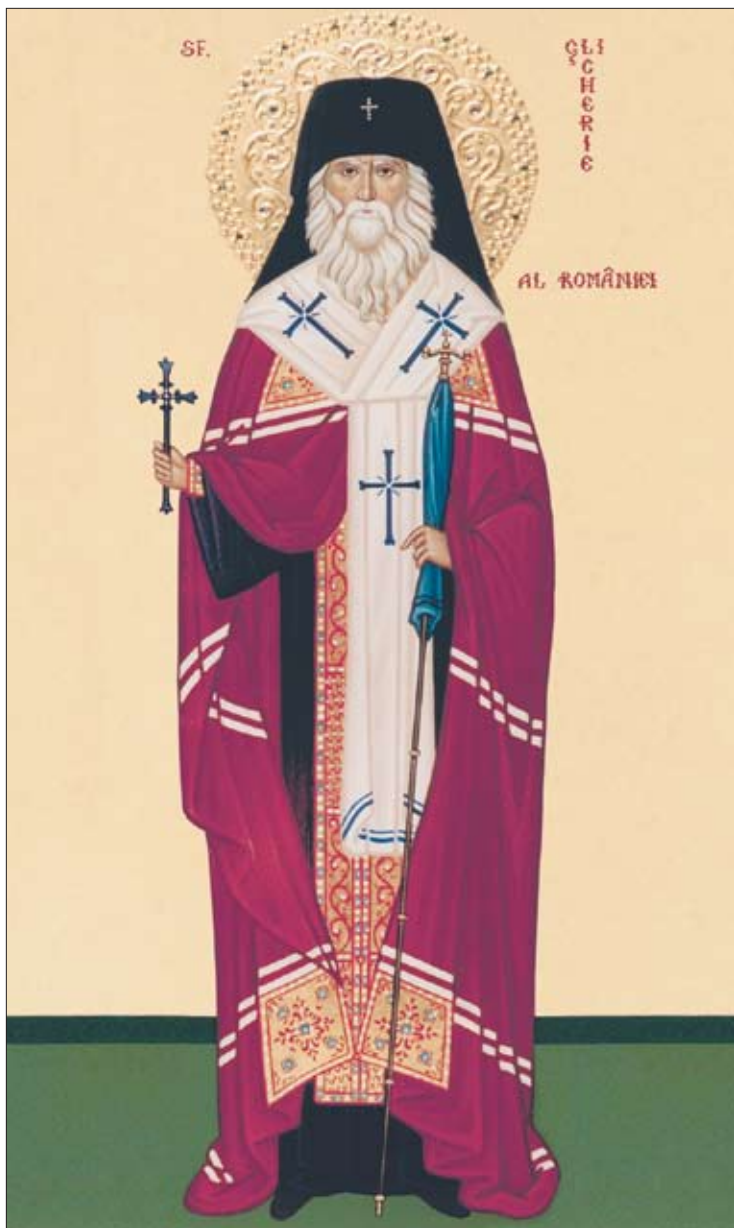


Etna, California

2003

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SAINT GLICHERIE THE CONFESSOR OF ROMANIA
February 9/21, 1891–June 15/28, 1985

DEDICATION

We dedicate this book to the memory of the Hierarchs, Priests, monks, nuns, and all of the Faithful believers of our Church who were persecuted for defending the traditional Orthodox Faith during the sixty-five years of persecution between 1924 and 1989.

Apolytikion of Saint Glicherie, Tone 3

Serving as a Hierarch by the Divine Spirit, thou didst disdain the insolence of the ungodly, being a zealot of Orthodoxy; for having struggled valiantly, thou didst cast down the decree of the innovators. Wherefore, we all now honor thee, O Glicherie, thou adornment of the land of Moldavia.

Kontakion of Saint Glicherie, Plagal of Tone 4

O all-blessed Hierarch of the True Faith and champion of the Church of Christ, protect all the Orthodox who ever chant: Rejoice, O Hierarch of Christ, Glicherie, and wondrous Confessor of the Lord!

Megalynarion of Saint Glicherie

Rejoice, O new Confessor of the True Faith; rejoice, thou staunch defender of Tradition and piety; rejoice, thou who didst suffer with valor, O Glicherie, in warding off rapacious wolves from thy Godly flock.

PREFACE

by Metropolitan Vlasie

“It is good to praise God, and exalt His Name, and honourably to shew forth the works of God; therefore be not slack to praise Him. It is good to keep close the secret of a king, but it is honourable to reveal the works of God.”¹

The entire history of the Eastern Orthodox Church has been marked by Her unceasing and vehement struggle against the many individuals and groups who desire to destroy the True Faith. As long as unity prevails in the Church, this struggle is effective, but it becomes more difficult whenever the Church is divided and shaken by fratricidal quarrels. Nonetheless, genuine virtues and more devoted strugglers frequently emerge amid such difficult conditions.

This is what happened after the Great Schism of 1054, when a rift developed between the Eastern Church and the Western Church. From that time onward, the Western Church became secularized and continued its efforts to subjugate and dominate the East by introducing its innovations into all areas of Church life. A result of this activity was the calendar reform instituted in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII (1502–1585), which he attempted to impose on the Eastern Church. These efforts were decisively rejected at every step, since they were viewed as deviations from Orthodox Tradition and, moreover, as deviations sternly condemned through anathemas issued by the Holy Apostles and the Holy Fathers of the Œcumenical Synods.

The Romanian Orthodox Church was not spared this turmoil instigated by the West. Thus it was that in 1864, Prince Alexandru

¹ Tobit 12:6–7.

Ioan Cuza (1820–1873)² convoked a Church Synod at which he recommended that the Romanian Orthodox Church change from the Julian Calendar to the Gregorian Calendar. Also present at this Synod was Saint Calinic of Cernica (1787–1868), one of the most dauntless strugglers for the triumph of the truth and for the preservation of the True Faith. He was categorically opposed to the calendar innovation and exclaimed as he was leaving the hall in which the Synod was meeting: “I will not be reckoned with transgressors!” Thus, the Prince did not succeed in implementing this recommendation, which had been imposed on him by Freemasons.

Owing to opposition from the Hierarchy of that time, another, more effective strategy was devised: it was decreed that all Hierarchs were to be licensed in theology at foreign institutions. Thus, Miron (Cristea) (1868–1939), the future Metropolitan Primate and Patriarch of Romania,³ was



Saint Calinic of Cernica

² A colonel elected both as Prince of Moldavia and as Prince of Walachia in 1859, he established the United Romanian Principalities on December 11/23, 1861—the birth of the modern nation-state of Romania. Under Cuza’s leadership, the Romanian Orthodox Church unilaterally proclaimed its autocephaly on December 3/15, 1864, which the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople only formally granted on April 25/May 7, 1885.—*Trans.*

³ During his tenure as the first Patriarch (1925–1939), he also held positions of secular authority, serving as Regent (1927–1930)—a three-man Regency ruled during the minority of King Mihai I (r. 1927–1930, 1940–1947)—and as President of the Council of Ministers (1938–1939).—*Trans.*

sent to study at Károli Gáspár Protestant University in Budapest, and Pimen (Georgescu) (1853–1934), the future Metropolitan of Moldavia, was sent to Paris. Such was the training given to all candidates for the principal Sees of the country.

In this way, the true champions and defenders of Orthodoxy were eventually eliminated, their place being taken by these special cadres trained to betray Orthodoxy's cause. This accounts for the success of the "Pan-Orthodox" Congress in Constantinople in 1923, which decided in favor of the change from the Julian Calendar to the Gregorian Calendar.⁴ The sole purpose of this patently Masonic endeavor was to divide and weaken the power of the Orthodox Church. The only Romanian Hierarch to disagree with this reform was Visarion (Puiu) (1879–1964), Metropolitan of Bucovina, who was forced into exile and died in Paris, vilified by those whom he left behind in Romania.

Such was the beginning of a lengthy Calvary for our ancestral Church, which was transformed from a national Church into an object of oppression and bloody persecutions, slandered with the aid of certain epithets unworthy of the purity of those who sacrificed themselves for the sake of scrupulously maintaining Orthodox doctrine and tradition. Because there were no longer any Hierarchs who opposed this evil, the good fight was carried on by monastic clergy, the nucleus of the resistance movement being the Neamț Monastery, under the leadership of Hieromonk (later Metropolitan) Glicherie (Tănase) (1891–1985).



*Metropolitan Glicherie
of Romania*

⁴ For a full account of the "Pan-Orthodox" Congress of 1923, see Bishop Photii of Triaditza, *The Road to Apostasy: Significant Essays on Ecumenism* (Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1995), pp. 9–37.—*Trans.*

Thus it is that we have considered it a matter of paramount importance to publish this work on the history of the True (Old Calendar) Orthodox Church of Romania, which has, in fact, become synonymous with unremitting persecution. It is our desire that Christians in particular, but also all of those in general who are interested in learning the truth, should have a clearer image of Orthodoxy and be convinced as to how much sacrifice was needed for its preservation and how much hatred was directed against us by those who, in the name of the Gospel, killed and committed abominable acts, thinking that they were “[doing] God service.”⁵

This desire of our clergy and Faithful has been realized through the generous and voluntary efforts of Mr. Constantin Bujor, who has fulfilled a difficult but noble task: committing to paper some of the most tragic moments and sufferings of those who sacrificed themselves on the altar of our Church. It was an enormously difficult task, because he lacked the archival materials that were destroyed during the persecution and devastation of various places of worship belonging to our Church. It was necessary for him to appeal to the State Archives, since the newspapers of the time related some of the tragic events in the life of the Old Calendar Church, and also to eyewitnesses who preserved the memory of these veritable crimes and transmitted them orally. We wish to augment this first edition of the history of the persecution of our Church with future editions, complete with additional facts and information, which we hope that those whose sensibilities are aroused by this work will pass on to us.

I want to conclude by stressing that the goal of this book is not in any way to spark a flame of revenge—a feeling that we have never harbored—, but simply to recount events that should never be repeated. It is the same approach that has been used many times to expose and divulge all of the abuses and crimes committed by the Inquisition, Nazism, and Communism, so that today’s generation will be aware of these crimes and abuses and will not tolerate the reappearance of the conditions that permitted them to occur.

⁵ St. John 16:2.

We paraphrase, here, the words of a notable political personality of our modern history, Iuliu Maniu (1873–1953),⁶ who maintained that neither he nor those who shared his political beliefs should become “the exploiters instead of the exploited, the oppressors instead of the oppressed, or the persecutors instead of the persecuted.” Through the disclosures made in the present work, we desire that the truth be brought to light in memory of those individuals, known and unknown, who sacrificed themselves for this cause, lest, having been exploited, we become more exploited, having been oppressed, we become more oppressed, or having been persecuted, we become more persecuted.

With Hierarchical blessings and gratitude to all of those who labored on this publication,



*Archbishop and Metropolitan Vlasie
Slătioara Monastery
May 17, 1999 (Old Style)
Feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit*

*Archbishop and Metropolitan
Vlasie of Romania*

⁶ Through a merger of his Romanian National Party of Transylvania with the Peasant Party founded in 1918 by Ion Mihalache (1882–1963), he co-founded in 1926 the National Peasant Party—the main rival during the inter-war period of the National Liberal Party founded in 1926 by Ion Ionel Constantin Brătianu (1864–1927)—; served four times as President of the Council of Ministers (1928–1930, 1930, 1932–1933, 1944); and, sentenced to lifetime solitary confinement by a Communist tribunal, ultimately perished in prison.—*Trans.*

RESISTING UNTO BLOOD



To us Orthodox Christians for whom freedom of conscience is part and parcel of our sociopolitical milieu, Saint Paul the Apostle offers a humbling reminder: “Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin” (Hebrews 12:4). We learn from these words, firstly, that the Orthodox Faith is in essence a resistance movement, a firm stand against the Devil and his wiles, and, secondly, that we must measure our own small spiritual struggles against the standard of the great spiritual struggles of the Confessors and Martyrs, for whom resisting unto blood was a defining characteristic. We have just such a standard—and a contemporary one, at that—in the present book, which tells the story of the religious persecution suffered in the not-too-distant past by the Faithful of the largest Orthodox Church in resistance to the errors of modernism and political ecumenism—the True (Old Calendar) Orthodox Church of Romania—at the hands of both the pre-Communist and Communist Romanian State and, sadly enough, not a few of the collaborators in its official Church. An oral history gathered from interviews with individuals who personally experienced or witnessed these sufferings, including many whose youth and old age bracket the entire sixty-five-year period of persecution of the Romanian Old Calendarists, it is an insightful exposé of the hollow value of “officialdom” and the extremes to which its pursuit can lead people, while at the same time being a moving and irenic appeal to genuine Orthodox *rapprochement* based on “a renunciation of vain-glory, mutual respect, and an acceptance of reality.”

*Archbishop Chrysostomos
Former Executive Director of the
U. S. Fulbright Commission in Romania*

ISBN 0-911165-53-3