



**NATIONAL
PRAYER DAY**

COMPILATION OF SERMONS
on Prevention of Human Trafficking



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COMPILATION OF SERMONS

on Prevention of Human Trafficking



Moldovan Orthodox Church



Bessarabia Orthodox Church



Union of Christian Evangelical
Baptist Churches



ELCRM

Evangelical Lutheran Church
in the Republic of Moldova

Foreword

Why do we believe that the Church and its Priests should join us and many others in the fight against trafficking and in our humanitarian efforts to protect and aid those who have become and those who may become victims?

First, we believe that trafficking has its root in social exclusion and private despair. Many young people end up in the hands of traffickers, because they fought alone to secure a future for themselves. They lost hope and they gave in to tempting false offers of an easier life abroad. A few anticipated some hardship, but gave themselves up as a difficult life abroad seemed more attractive than a difficult life at home. The Church is the natural defender of the weak and the meek, the lonely and the despaired. The private suffering of those who are trafficked and those who survived trafficking needs to be recognized and acknowledged by the men of the cloth who perform the ceremonies in our Churches. Many of those who became victims sought the soothing sanctuary of the church before their ordeal, and many silently worshipped icons after they survived the horrors. The suffering of the victims enters the gates of the Moldovan Churches and Monasteries. The Church has open doors for all and provides solace to all. Let us not forget this.

Secondly, the Church is the guardian of our traditions, but it is not a Church which lives in the past, nor in isolation. It is a Church which is alive and being alive means to be active in today's world and being in touch with our times. Trafficking and the horrors of exploitation many Moldovan women have suffered abroad, the shattered dreams, the traumas and nightmares are part of a private reality for many. If the Church and its members have more knowledge about the hidden wounds in these women's soul, it will be better prepared to understand and assist them, it will be more open to reach out to them and to alleviate their suffering.

Regardless in what continent, regardless in what country – economic difficulties and social ills have always resulted in moral decay. Children and adolescents growing up on their own are vulnerable to temptations and easily seduced by the merchants of hope. Often the Church and its representatives are called upon to reach out to their children *in loco parentis*.

Finally, no societal movement is complete without the participation of the

Church, without the participation of those who guide and prepare the congregation for salvation on earth and in heaven, without those who can help to heal hearts and souls.

Martin Andreas Wyss,
Chief of Mission,
IOM Moldova

Where to? Stop the Crime!

God created man “*in His image and after His likeness*” (Gen. 1,26) in the meaning that he planted reasoning into man, bestowing him with free will and enabling him to have feelings, all for the greater purpose of man rising himself to the likeness with God. Man is free to act and decide as he sees fit. The Divine Natural Law inscribed in man, however, asks him not to harm the freedom or dignity of his fellows, making him responsible for his actions to the divine judgment.

No man has the right to limit another’s freedom or to hurt their dignity they hold unique value as a personal gift from God. Likewise, nobody has the right to try damaging the physical integrity of a person since the human body is a “*temple of the Holy Spirit*” (1Cor. 6, 19)

Trafficking in human beings is a grievous sin that encroach upon the integrity of God’s likeness in man. Trafficking withholds from the victim the divine gift of freedom, hurts personal dignity, crushes the power of reasoning, and rapes the will scorning dignity and feelings. Trafficking usurps God’s the Creator’s position in the souls of the trafficked persons, sold as mere objects.

Trafficking depersonalize man since it is blocking the possibility to yearn toward God’s likeness.

Trafficking in persons transforms men into slaves, in merchandise that holds no inner value but only the value of the profit that can be made by using it.

The victims of trafficking are those persons who left their communities with trust in some people’s promises to facilitate finding a job abroad and instead they got to be sold, sequestered, forced to commit acts that were amoral most of the time, coerced by the use of force, threats, psychological terror or other means.

The victims of trafficking are persons who suffered, unable to defend themselves, or to fight those who caused them pain. They deserve all our compassion and support to enable them to return to a normal life.

The victim that has indeed committed amoral acts forced by deception or lack of valid judgment (in the case of minors) does not bear in front of God the moral responsibility of the sin committed under threat, since she has not left her home with the intention of committing that sin, she was not free to

choose whether to do it or not and she could not refuse to act because of the trafficker or the recruiter. She must not be stigmatized since it is the ones who forced her to act like this that are bearing the guilt. To stigmatize the victim, who already suffered because of the trafficker is to double the injustice already done to her.

The only guilt of these persons is, maybe, recklessness and naiveté. To God, guilty is only that person who accepted prostitution freely in the moment of their departure. But they remain victims if they suffered the same bad treatments as the others, being sold, sequestered and thus deprived of the possibility to quit prostitution. Nevertheless God equally accepts these ones, like the others.

In the times of the Old Testament, to kidnap or sell human beings was a harshly punished act. “*If a man is found stealing one of his brethren, the people of Israel, and if he treats him as a slave or sells him, then that thief shall die; so you shall purge the evil from the midst of you.*” (Deut. 24, 7) People used to pray so that their sons might be spared from being kidnapped.

Regardless of the way by which these people got to be trafficked, they are in the desperate situation of the man who has fallen amidst robbers about which speak the parable of the merciful Samaritan. Christ did not intend to tell us how did that person got to be beaten and robbed. What was important there was the Samaritan’s attitude toward his pain. He simply helped, not wondering about past acts but raising the victim from the pain of the present and setting up a good start for the future. (Luke 10, 30-35)

Those of the victims aware of what they were going to do are like the prodigal son. Upon his return to his father he was no longer questioned on his reasons for leaving or on the reasons for his suffering. He was not reproached the feeble judgment or the wasting of his life. He was not rejected when he returned and neither was he scorned. “*He was received by his father in love since the joy of the return had wiped out all sorrow*” (Luke: 15, 11-32)

Christ Himself gave to every human community a lesson about our need to judge and stigmatize the wrongdoers. And the role of the community where the victim is returning is not to judge but to support upon the advice that our Savior gave to the adulterous woman whom he advised, “*sin no more*” (John: 8, 3-11). All judgment must be entrusted to God.

Yet many victims are like Joseph, son of Jacob, the one whom his brothers have sold without any remorse to be a slave in Egypt. (*Gen: 37, 20-28*) These brothers, together with Judas Iscariot (*Matt: 26, 14-15*) are the biblical prototype of the nowadays trafficker.

Regardless of whether the victim endangered her knowingly or not and regardless of her actions we must still rejoice at her return and therefore refrain from harsh judgment and instead offer charity like to any of us who has suffered. It is not fair that she suffers twice: once when she was sold and abused and next, upon return, when her family or community rejects her with hard words.

When watching upon the victims of trafficking God does not consider their acts or the amount of awareness they had on what they were to do once slaves. God sends upon their pain His charity so that they may be healed. He considers their humanity that was scorned, their liberty stolen by deception, their trashed dignity. He loves them before judging them.

For God, the victims of trafficking are the *“sons who fell amidst robbers”*. The truly charitable person does not offer his charity toward his kin only but, despite the injustice he may suffer, is merciful upon all others as well.

Dean Pavel VULUȚĂ,
*Social Centre „St. George”,
city of Drochia*

Lessons for These Days

The Holy Scripture tells us the story of two different persons and both stories are still valuable for us today. The first is the story of Joseph, son of the patriarch Jacob from the Old Testament, who was sold into slavery by his envious brothers. In other words Joseph became a slave against his will and lost his freedom. From the slave market he was taken into the house of a noble from the court of the pharaoh, a noble who was also a high ranking official in the Egyptian empire. Joseph worked hard with eagerness and submission but most of all with strong faith, strongly keeping his hope in God. His work was blessed and flourished and the entire house of Potiphar benefited from that. Quite fast his master made him administrator over the entire household entrusting all matters to him. But, as the devil never sleeps, Joseph was to face yet another test.

Once, as the nobleman was at court with the pharaoh, Potiphar's wife decided to lure Joseph who attracted her with the beauty of his face so much that she was tormented by her desire for a long time. Joseph simply ran away from her and from the sin. The unfaithful wife was left only with a piece of Joseph's garments in her hand and upon the master's return, she used that to blame Joseph that he tried to abuse her. For this reason Joseph was sent to prison for a number of years.

But God never abandon the faithful ones. Due to his skill in explaining dreams accurately, Joseph is invited to the pharaoh's court and appointed prime minister, thus becoming the second person in the Egyptian hierarchy after the pharaoh himself.

So, Joseph the Beautiful (as he is known in history) from a mere slave became the ruler of Egypt having a whole empire bowing to him. Is this not a great miracle?

But a long drought happened in Egypt and the neighboring countries up to Canaan where Joseph used to live before being sold as slave. Since God had warned Joseph, he gathered large quantities of food so not only Egypt was provided for but also the neighboring peoples were buying their food from Egypt.

Joseph's brothers themselves came to buy bread and they were not able to know him. Joseph, with all the power he had could have taken them as slaves, send them to prison or even take their lives. But he chose not to do that and

instead gave them rich gifts and even brought to Egypt the entire family, including his father Jacob. They settled in the most fertile land in the delta of the Nile, so they were safe from hunger. Joseph generosity with his brothers brought him honor with God and the love of his father Jacob.

His ancestor Abraham acted the same to the eyes of God and also the great king and Prophet David who spared the life of Saul repeatedly although Saul wanted to kill him. This is the way of the righteous, of those who abide by our Lord's commands in any circumstances or situations. They will never be forgotten or abandoned by God.

The second lesson comes from the prodigal son who, unlike Joseph, chooses his own destiny. At his son's request, his father gave him his share of the family fortune and his blessing. But the reckless son immediately forgot God's commands and the advice of his loving father and spent his fortune in drinking and debauchery with drunkards and prostitutes. His good life lasted only as long as his money. When he became poor, everyone left him. To be able to make a living he found a job as guardian for someone's pigs. But he was always hungry and could not eat enough even sharing the meals of the pigs. So he was in despair and misery.

Yet, a good thought came to him one day. He remembered that in his father's house even the last of the servants was having plenty to eat and good clothing and decided to repent, to ask that he be allowed to remain as the last of the servants considering himself not worthy to be called a son.

But, as he was approaching the house, one of the servants notices him and rushes to tell the father the news of the return of the son. Filled with love, the father came to meet him and offers his embrace to the prodigal son who was now repenting deeply: *"Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you"*. The father, joyful that his son *"was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found"* forgave him and dressed him in good clothes and gave him a ring, restoring his position as son.

Meanwhile the older brother was saddened since he never got the same honors despite the fact that he used to work very hard. The joy for his brother's return vanished because of the envy that darkened his heart and soul. Seeing him sad, his father comforts him by saying that the return of the wandering brother has not diminished his position or share of the fortune and urges him to rejoice

with the entire family for the return of the one *"lost and resurrected"*.

What good can we gain from the two stories mentioned here? First, we must not forget that the man that sets his hope in God and abide by His commands will never be lost, and, no matter how desperate the situation he is in may be, God awaits for his return. With repentance any human being may start a new life.

We urge you not to take advantage from somebody else's misfortune and not to judge those of your brothers who became victims of the trafficking in human beings but to offer them support so that they may start again, a new Christian life.

Priest Vasile CIOBANU

*Parish of Costești,
region Ialoveni*

Sermon on the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost of the Compassionate Samaritan

“And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? How do you read?” And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have answered right; do this, and you will live.” But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed mercy on him.” And Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

Gospel from Luke 10: 25-37

Dear Brothers and sisters into Christ, Our Lord,

This parable tells us about a certain person who has “fallen amidst robbers” who have beaten him, robbed him and left him nearly dead. In other words we speak about someone’s trouble. Why or how he has come to this we are not told.

We can surely think that maybe he has attracted the interest of the thieves because he was traveling alone or maybe he was carrying something precious and this is why he was ambushed.

All these are yet just our assumptions; we cannot tell that they are either true or false. The only clue we are given is that he was descending from a town to another, in other words he was traveling. This man was traveling on the

Sermon on the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost of the Compassionate Samaritan path of his life. And the thieves and robbers guilty in this story have but one motivation: to gather richness not by work but by their devious ways which do not consider at all the value of the human being created “*in the image and likeness*” of God (*Gen. 1:26*)

The words of Jesus Christ, our Savior in the Gospel are eternal and the subject of this two thousand years story turns to be real to us.

All of us are travelers on the path of life. Sometimes exterior conditions make us stop, leave our families and homes and communities and descend into an unknown “*city*”.

The unknown may seem fascinating or just a new reason for hope but it also calls for reticence. The life of other nations on our continent and their way of being urge us to try and solve our regular problems in the same way they do. This urge reveals the dream of success. In other words, the basic needs of life are pushing us to “*descent*” from the straightness of our way of life.

This “*descent*” may last moments or decades. It is moments when we imagine our desire to leave for just a short time and decades when we want to return home but we are stopped by various reasons. Important in this is that we desire to return to the place of departure, in the “*city*” that is most familiar to us.

Nowadays, beloved brothers, we are witnessing thousand fold the departure abroad of our brothers and sisters. In each of the holy services of the Church we hear plenty of traveling names spoken by the priests: “*We still pray for God’s servants Ion, Maria, Vasile, Ana...so that the Good Lord will accompany their voyage with guardian angels and grant them safe return to their homes*”. And hearing this we all answer: “*Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy*”.

Sometimes still... we hear the names but we cannot even imagine the tragedies connected to them, the number of “*robbers and thieves*” who ambushed them or their pain and suffering. Their tragedy has now a common name: Trafficking in human beings.

We, from the safety of our homes are not aware of the reasons for which this tragedy has befallen a person. We may be wrong in arguing over the reason for their departure abroad. We may be wrong trying to guess what is their occupation there but still we may condemn them with no mercy.

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But God said, *"It is mercy I want, not sacrifice"*. (Hos. 6:6)

Dearly beloved, it is with pain in our hearts that we must say that our mothers and daughters have become slaves in a demonic game. Though born free they become slaves, mere toys for the satisfaction of those enslaved by sin and for those who love unholy gain of money.

From brides and wives they are turned into the mockery of the robbers who steal away their clothes and leave them on the ground barely dead, in body and soul. What a capital transgression, what a wrath in the eyes of our Lord who created us in His *"image and likeness"*. Where is the Christian mind? Where is our brotherly awareness and where is our national moral consciousness?

Anyone may say: *"I am a good person! What do I have to do with the trafficking in human beings?"* The answer is: INDIFFERENCE. And this is precisely the same feeling that the servant of the old Law and the Levite whom passed by had.

It is not pointless that God, the Creator of universe punishes our lands with draught and famine, with rains and floods, with landslides and blizzard.

Indifference, combined with the desire for richness may turn an honest man into a robber. More precisely, may turn him into a trafficker of human beings.

People's sins and transgressions have risen to God. The devil is clouding our minds and lures us into a game of death. This *"demonic game"* dear brothers, hurts not only our mothers and sisters but also our parents and children turning them into victims of this corruption.

Too many honest men and workers are lured into trafficking. They leave to work abroad and accept the hardest labor in the hope that this will help their boy or girl to go on with their studies, to get married, to build a house or purchase a flat. What do these people end up with? Destroyed health, no money, shattered families and sometimes their faith and kindness lost.

The children, the purest of beings, turn into beggars on alien streets, mere spare parts for the trafficking in organs.

This is the way some people use to take advantage of children's purity and gentleness: they display for the by passers a child so that honest people would sacrifice bits of the little they have and these bits turn into an income for the

Sermon on the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost of the Compassionate Samaritan trafficker. The trafficker wagers on the pure feelings of the people whom show mercy to the children obeying the words of God *"And he took a child, and put him in the midst of them; and taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me"*. (Mark 9: 36-37)

"The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a fleeting vapor and a snare of death" (Prov. 21:6) These robbers and thieves that turn our brothers and sisters into a mean for unholy gain are in fact gaining physical and spiritual death not only for themselves but also for others. They are like Judas who sold our Lord Jesus Christ. He sold Him for thirty pieces of silver and earned eternal damnation. He sold his Teacher and gained the devil. He sold innocent blood and got himself hanged.

But let us return to today's reading.

I want to highlight that the Gospel says that "a certain person" has fallen amidst robbers. We are not told that it is a man, a woman or a child but a living human being. And we are not given its name so that we may understand that the name is universal, it is the name of anyone in trouble.

A Samaritan passed on the same way and seeing this person he was moved with pity. He pitied the person because he saw himself in the position of the one that was suffering beaten and naked. He may have thought that would he passed there first he may have been the one beaten and robbed.

Orthodox brothers, our pity to the suffering must have as model the pity that our Lord Jesus Christ has shown upon us, the human beings that were dead in sin. The pity of the Samaritan is an act of God's plan with us, of God's *ikonomia*.

In explaining this parable the Fathers of the Church see in the merciful Samaritan Jesus himself.

God chased Adam, who sinned by transgressing the divine command, from heaven and therefore Adam was *"descending"* from the Heavenly Jerusalem toward Jericho. This town is located in a very hot area therefore we may take it as a symbol of hell. By cheating Adam and Eve the devil stripped them of their heavenly garment and after stealing their likeness to God left them under penalty of death, down upon the earth.

Compilation of Sermons on Prevention of Human Trafficking

But, the Son of God, as one consubstantial with the Father comes upon earth incarnated of the Holy Ghost and Virgin Mary. This means that he raises the human nature from sin and unites it with the divine in his hypostasis just like the Samaritan took the fallen man and placed him upon his mule. And the oil and wine the Samaritan pours over the wounds symbolize the Sacraments of the Church as well as the guesthouse is the Church itself. We are all but travelers in this world and it is only in the Church of Christ that we find rest. Then the Samaritan gives to the host two denarii for the cost of the caring. These two coins are the two Testaments that guide us into our knowledge toward God, the host being the hierarchy of the Church. In the end he promises he shall return. He shall return again in glory to judge the living and the dead, the thieves that robbed the fallen one, the wounded one that got healed in the house of God and also the host who takes care of the tired and weary ones.

Christ our Lord is Himself an example of mercy. He said: *“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”* (Matt. 11:28)

These words of our Savior are explained this way by Saint John Chrysostom: *“Not you, or you but all come to Me, all those who are heavy laden, all those who are grieving, all those in sin! Come, not for punishment but for forgiveness! Come, not because I want you to glorify me but because I want to save you. For I shall give you rest!”* He did not say *“I will save you”* only but much more: *“I shall give you complete rest!”*¹

Brothers, we may all see ourselves in the person that was beaten and robbed. We ask and wait for mercy from God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. And while asking for mercy we must also show mercy to those who are waiting for this mercy and compassion from us. We must have compassion for the ones that are grieving. Saint Paul the Apostle tells us: *“Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort; Who gave us comfort in all our troubles so that we may comfort those who are troubled by the comfort with which God comforts us.”* (2 Cor. 1: 3-4).

The persons who passed through the trafficking in human beings are still the same people who used to live in our homes, in our cities, in our society. They are indeed our kin, living on the same earth, seeing the same sun, breathing

¹ St. John Chrysostom, Omilies to Matthew, translation, introduction and notes by Rev. Dumitru Fecioru IBMBOR, Bucharest 1994 pp. 469

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the same air. They have the same God as creator and are called by Him to the same salvation, in the same Heavenly Kingdom, in the same place of eternal rest.

Sometimes yet our attitude is one of contempt and repulsion. Not only we don't show mercy to those in pain, but also gather sins for us by our evil thoughts and cruel words.

We must be compassionate since by doing well by the ones in suffering we ourselves become happier. As such is the word of God in the Holy Bible: *“He who despises his neighbor is a sinner, but happy is he who is kind to the poor.”* (Prov. 14:21) and *“He who oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is kind to the needy honors Him”* (Prov. 14:31) and again, *“He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord and He will repay him for his deed”* (Prov. 19:17)

We must show compassion to the ones imprisoned and persecuted: *“Remember those in prison like you would be imprisoned with them; remember those persecuted since you also are in body.”* (Heb 13:3)

At the end of this time filled with sins and deceit our Lord Jesus Christ will come to judge us. He will ask from us, the hosts, since he paid for us dearly with His blood on the Cross and will say: *“I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me?”* (Matt 25:36) This means: have we paid attention to the ones troubled? We know they are His image. And will inquire us more: have we pitied the suffering ones? Since he commands us by the word of Paul, the Apostle: *“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.”* (Rom. 12:15). And will say again: Have you eased the pain of those in poverty? Since he commanded us saying: *“You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in the land”* (Deuter. 15:11). In this verse the command, being repeated three times, is strengthened. *“Your brother, the needy, the poor”* means that God wants that we take the pain of our brothers like our own, to share his suffering, to share his burden.

God encourages us to open our purses to do charity for the poor. And we also have a duty to open our hearts and souls toward the ones in pain, even if we lack the means to help them otherwise. Sometimes the people near us do not expect our money or alms but they simply need our understanding. We will

surely be asked: *“what have you done for your brothers sold as slaves as I released them?”* We know this from Saint Luke who is quoting Isaiah the prophet: *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”* (Luke 4:18-19)

Dearly beloved, let us raise our hands to the Heavenly Father and pray Him to guard this living flock, liberated by our Lord Jesus Christ by His precious blood. Let us pray the Good Lord to grant us the courage to visit those in pain. Let us pray the Holy Ghost who is comforting us to grant comfort and rest to the souls of those who suffered the trafficking of human beings.

Let us urge our brothers who are tempted to *“descend”* upon the roads to foreign countries to be cautious and not to leave until they are fully informed and insured up to the smallest details. Let us ask those who want to leave abroad to work to weight their values to consider what they may win and what they may lose. Since our Savior Jesus Christ is telling us: *“For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life?”* (Mark 8:36-37)

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.

Rev. Ioan Cosoi
Holy Trinity Parish,
Prometeu High-school, Chisinau

In the Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Beloved Christians, brothers and sisters!

Each and every Sunday the Holy Bible urges us toward the eternal life, toward salvation. Today as well, the reading from the Gospel raises us to the heartfelt decision of staying on the right path to God and away from sin. One may say that the Sunday Gospel readings are obsolete and not appropriate to the days we live but even if it would be so still, today's reading remains the most significant. We can see a real exodus of the people of Bessarabia toward all the corners of the world, an exodus that ends sometimes in success, sometimes in trouble. The prodigal son from today's Gospel who squandered his father's fortune shows us two possible states of mind: on one hand, the bitterness of the life of one who departed away from God and on another hand, the peace and joy that are granted by God to the ones who repent. Watching this sinful one's fall and ascension it is my belief that we will remember also our own history with both the dark and the shining parts.

Imagine the pain and sorrow endured by that son who, although he knew his father was rich and living in plenty, was forced to live as a servant and eat the leftovers of the pigs after squandering his share of the fortune. We, ourselves, are not too far from this situation today. Many of our Christian brothers are leaving the country and go seeking work abroad in search for a decent living accepting willingly to become servants. From these, some return home with their fortune increased but there are many more that return penniless, scared, and sick and even some who no longer return. Christ awaits them all in His Church in the same joy, the same shelter, the same Eucharist. Are we not scornful to the work of God? Are we not filled with disdain toward our brothers? Are we not overwhelmed with pride even before accomplishing a good deed? Indeed like us was the prodigal son who deserted his father and took a life of selfishness and debauchery for as long as he still had the resources taken from his father. We may not be able to even grasp the full depth of his unhappiness.

Our departures today are not oriented to squandering our parent's fortunes but to building fortunes of our own, to building what we call a *“humane”* living, anything but to build a Christian life for ourselves.

News about trafficked persons has started spreading and these persons are in

fact people who have worked without being paid, who endured beatings and torture who were turned into simple merchandise being sold and re-sold. The prodigal son was a servant as well but it was upon his own decision when he saw that he squandered his father's fortune, while in this case, with the purpose of building a fortune, one turns into a slave unknowingly.

This exodus brought upon our country much evil. Children remained orphans, parents remained childless, and families were shattered. How many of us have repeated the story of the prodigal son? Let us try remembering... have we not so often considered leaving abroad trying to make our life easier with no regard to the cost? In the minds of us all there is this image that we are entitled to live comfortably and rest, like a right we earned by enduring the hardship of our regular life. We do not even consider that this reason for leaving is actually surrender in front of the temptations of the pleasures of these days. We only think that we want to work for earning a better life for us and our children and don't stop to also see the consequences. But this parable teaches us something, which is that our voyages must be undertaken with a Christian mind so that we may not repeat the error of the prodigal son. As well as all our actions must be crowned with the golden rule *"You shall love thy neighbor as you love thyself"* or the liturgical command *"Loving each other with one mind confess the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost"*.

This exodus is also visibly marking our souls and shatters our Christian, pious ways. The Church continuously prays for those traveling *"by sea, by land, by air"* and sometimes we gather to pray at the beginning of something important so that it brings good results.

I would like to ask you to set a day when we would pray God to bring relief to the souls of the persons that were or are still victims of trafficking. Since our Orthodox Church has never been indifferent to the ailments of the society it is our duty to bid you pay attention in your voyages, to be cautious whenever you hear of a possible better job abroad but mostly never forget that God loves us all and is waiting for us all.

Dearly beloved, especially when fallen we can use the opportunity to grasp God's everlasting patience and gain heart to the labors of penitence. Surround your hearts with all the truths that can bring repentance. Even if you failed, rise again and walk. Walk toward the Heavenly Father who loves us and is

waiting for us, nay, not just waiting but seeking for us and giving us plenty of ways for our return, always ready to help us in the work of turning into penitence.

Let us wish for each other and encourage one another that this return to God may not happen for one of us at a time but for all at once so that we may become one with Him, into His house with the kingdom of those that are saved, happy now and happy forever! Amen.

Priest Viorel Cojocaru

Parish „St. App. Peter and Paul”,

city of Chisinau

“For the Son of Man Came to Seek and to Save the Lost”

Luke, 19:10

Why did Jesus come to our world? Why did He give His life for us? How great is God’s love and what are His expectations for us?

I would like today to try finding answers for these questions while discovering new motives for serving our brothers while keeping faith in God.

1. The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost

God has set upon us a thriving for communion with our fellow Christians and Himself. Our ability to interact and establish relationships with other people is a gift from God. That is why we permanently need both God and one another.

However, our sins destroy this gift. So, in moments of hardship and crisis, instead of getting together we grow distant from each other. Much like the pieces from a broken magnet, instead of attracting we reject each other. We isolate ourselves trying to get through life alone. The very reason for communion is dividing us, the very reason for togetherness is tearing us apart. As a result we get lost amidst a lost world. Nothing is safe in our world. In our world we are losing our jobs and homes, losing our friends and colleagues, parents and relatives, husbands and children, in this world we are losing ourselves and we are losing God.

Apparently everything seems to be still normal. Walking down a street one can see dozens, hundreds of people whom are looking well and seem to be contended with their lives; none is wailing, no lamentation is heard. We try looking well, we don the newest and most expensive clothing, and we use tempting perfumes. But underneath all that we are completely empty. If only we would pay attention and listen we could hear our lost, naked soul cries for help. And all we do is trying to cover it with clothes, things to have or things to do but all these are nothing more than rags set to cover an invaluable pearl. No one and nothing can quench the thirst of our soul but a divine sparkle, the Grace of God. Once, Moses prayed to God saying: *“show me your Glory!”* In that dire moment only the light of the Divine Glory, only God’s own presence gave him confidence and trust. In the New Testament we have another case of

a disciple who addressed Jesus by saying: *“Lord, show us the Father and it will be enough for us”* Jesus has answered *“whoever saw me, he has seen my Father”*.

Our lost soul can only be found again when we come close to God. *“Amazing Grace saved me from sin, as I was lost and now I’m found, and I am free from death...”* as the song goes.

2. The Son comes to show us the Father

Being a Christian has become so normal that many of our actions are a mere habit or routine. It’s a routine to pray before eating or before going to bed. Baptisms and marriages have also become a routine. And most often we fail seeing God behind the routine.

Mircea Eliade has written about a legend from the mountains of Nepal. This legend says that somewhere on the top of the mountain was a huge wax God. People from the around villages were climbing the mountain to pray to their God. One day someone came with a suggestion; *“Why should we should we keep climbing the mountain, all of us, when we can bring the God down to the village and install him on the central square? This way, whoever will want to pray, will be able to do it anytime and with no trouble. You go shopping, you can pray, you go visiting a friend, you can pray.”* And so they did but after a while the wax started melting because of the heat. One of them got to the statue and changed its face. Now the God no longer looked harsh but friendly, with a large smile upon its lips. In a while the wax got completely soft. Someone dared taking a piece of it to make a candle. And more and more of the people did the same until there was no wax left. The wax was over, and so was their God.

Both in the Old Testament and the New Testament the mountains were the places where man could meet God. So there is a reason for the tradition of building the churches in high places. The true prayer involves a rising of the spirit to meeting with God. Climbing a mountain is not easy, but once you did it you feel really special. A mountaintop is not a place where one can build a house. Most of the time one cannot even raise a tent there. But you go on the mountaintop to see and experience something special there. That something may even change your life. Just like meeting God, which was made possible by Jesus Christ’s coming into body.

St. John the Gospel writer says: *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,*

full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John: 1:14) No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made Him known. (John: 1:18)”

3. The son of God came so that we may love each other

Isolation and being apart from one another really make us poor. And one can see that especially in a large city like Chisinau. In the morning, on the way to work, you climb the bus and stand in the crowd, all so squeezed into each other that they barely could move a leg, feeling others breathe and sweat but in fact so far from each other, so complete strangers. Each tries to gaze to such a point as not to meet anyone else's eyes. And yet, behind each one there are loads of stories, of interesting confessions. One may be joyful, another one sad. Someone may be happy to get married soon, someone else is sad because they're going to be alone soon. Some woman may be happy she is pregnant and another may have not slept the night because she has a pregnancy she does not want. Some may be happy their child was born and someone else may be sad because they have lost somebody. One is happy to have found a job, another is sad because he's just become unemployed.

The saddest part in all this is that we no longer find the time to tell our story to someone else. We run from dawn to dusk without making any time for the others. This pace we set during the week is kept even on Sunday. We simply forget that is the day of the Lord. We no longer have time to listen to each other, to comfort each other, to encourage each other, to bear each other's duties, to forgive each other, to love each other.

I once heard a story, which seems very relevant to what we should be feeling toward each other: “In a snowy winter night daddy placed me and my brother on a sleigh, thoroughly wrapped in a blanket and we set road toward the church. This is what our father used to do in the winter when there was a lot of snow. It was a wonderful Sunday evening and the noise made by the sleigh runners dashing through the snow seemed to be a fine angel flight. It was snowing. Around every lamp on the street the almost compact snowflakes barely allowed a thin light to spread around. The blanket kept us warm. I don't remember falling asleep and, at a bump, I slipped noiselessly. I was startled at first but the snow was so beautiful and soft that I started playing with it though I saw the sleigh getting away. Then I started crying after them but they were far and no longer could hear me. I tried to get up but it was too cold and

all covered in snow. Finally I saw my father and my brother running back and calling me. I was covered up in snow and my tears were frozen on my cheeks. Father grasped me, shackled me well and placed me back on the sleigh, near my brother wrapping us again in the blanket and tying us up with his belt. “How did you realize I fell?” I whispered to my brother. “My back got cold” he whispered back. When we got to church, the old pastor was speaking about unity and about the warmth of brotherly love. I grasped my brother's hand. He was crying. I was crying. And I guess father was crying as well, yes he was. Do we feel cold? It means our brother fell. It means he needs us. It means we need him. We must let Father know at once!”

Valeriu Ghiletschi

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God, Where is My Society ? Society, Where is Your God ?

Every thinking person from the very birth gets to know the surrounding world. We are interested in what is going on around us. The age of 4-5 years old is known as an age of kids who always ask “*why*”, being interested in everything, starting with “*why the sun shines*” till “*where is the grandmother after death?*” Even though growing up people stop asking these questions in public, nonetheless they remain in their consciousness. The man is interested with both the material world that can be touched and spiritual world, about which one can just guess about or believe in. A lot of things in our lives depend on the way we get to know the surrounding world; this is because, in many respects the method determines the result. I would like to note two paradigms of the perception of God and society.

I. Perception of God through society.

Each culture throughout the history strived to build up its own ethical and moral values. Often the morality and ethics were connected with the religious worldview. People tried to penetrate the mysteries of existence, to understand the reason of everything that exists, to know the Creator through creation. Such a God-search was justifiable. Alexander Meny, in his seven volumes on religion history, tried to justify even pagan religious cults that tried to reach the knowledge of God. The society that raised up above the instincts and creating its own culture was imagining the Creator to itself, starting from the schemes that were understood only by this given society. For an example we can look at theology forming methodology in Ancient Egypt (although such opinions can be found, practically, in all ancient religions). Throughout its history the society was a witness of many palace revolutions, dynasty changes, love affair and political intrigues. At a certain point of history turn the pharaoh was being proclaimed as one of Gods. Trying to answer their own question “*what are the highest Gods alike?*” simple people, as well as priests were thinking in according to analogy. Having the knowledge about their history and studying the life of Gods-pharaohs, the society was inevitably coming to conclusions about similarity of divinely life and human life. In myths of ancient nations we see the same squabbles among Gods, the same ambitions of lower Gods to bring down the higher ones, the same intrigues and love affairs.

Thus, the understandings about God were formed out of the knowledge about their society and culture. Unfortunately, many people who don't deny God today continue to form an opinion about Him based on those social and cultural stratifications, of which they are the contemporaries. As a result of such a perception – disappointment with God, faith; and this disappointment goes back to people, society and culture. This is reflected in the losing of hope, low morality, the lack of ethical core, and finally – in atheism, in which the strongest survives. As a bright example of such an approach is the ligament of Darwin-Nietzsche-Hitler in the last century. Darwin brought the so-called scientific foundation to atheism, and, among others, defined the law of the natural segregation in which the strongest survives. Nietzsche, on a philosophical level suggested aiding the development of civilization, getting rid of the weak. Hitler put this in practice. And we face highly pitiable results of attempts to know God through the elements of society and culture.

II. Perceiving society through God

The second methodological approach is the attempt to realize the processes of society through the perception of God. For this, it's understood, supernatural revelation is needed. Scriptures that would not be the results of personal anthropological search, but The Scriptures that would be the Word of God to people. The Word that reveals basic understandings about God Himself, His goals and norms. For Christians such Scriptures are the Bible. One probably cannot take into all seriousness the position that says the cultural surrounding doesn't influence in any way the interpretation of Scripture. Its influence is clearly noticeable; otherwise there wouldn't appear so many Christian traditions. Our culture influences the understanding of many cultural elements in the Scripture, like the form of prayer, the structure of the church and several others. But the nature of God always and everywhere was understood in one course. First of all, I mean the Trinitarian nature of God. God – the Trinity: The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This is that fundamental truth that any Christian will sign for. And on the opposite, not accepting this truth puts a person beyond the limits of Christianity.

The perception of Trinitarian God involves in itself the re-comprehending of human personality in particular, as well as of the whole society as a whole. It is a serious mistake to think that the teaching about Trinity – is only a dry doctrine for theology classes. The doctrine about Trinity is the key to understanding the society. And here I'll proceed to the main part of my sermon.

1. Trinitarian nature of God.

We see the ideal harmony in the teaching about The Holy Trinity. In many sermons of Jesus Christ we can note that He (as The Son) and The Father had different opinions on certain issues. The most famous passage on this topic is the prayer in Gethsemane Garden. There are counted seconds till the arrival of executioners, Jesus is praying for this cup to pass Him and adds: *“But not My will, but Yours be done”*. Now is not the time and the place to discuss exactly what kind of cup He was praying about. I just want to take notice that they have different wills, different desires. So what is here the harmony and perspective for the self-understanding and society? Exactly in the obedience to the will of the Father while having a personal one. If Jesus wouldn't have His own will, then there wouldn't be any place to talk about harmony, because harmony – is what basically can become a cacophony, but with goal orienting actions becomes a harmony. This is that paradigm which Christianity offers throughout the centuries, but the one that is so little paid attention to.

2. Perception of man through the prism of the Trinitarian nature of God.

There maybe a question: *“What is the connection here with human trafficking?”* This is exactly where I'm going now.

The harmony with selves.

A person, who gets to know himself/herself from the perspective of this paradigm, starts to view him/herself differently. In every person there is a constant battle going on of different desires and interests. Every one of us is under the constant process of ethical choices, reconsideration of already made decisions, evaluating of one's actions. A person who doesn't accept the Trinitarian teaching about God, who doesn't see in it the practical meaning, will never find the harmony in him/herself, because all of his desires will be in the state of cacophony, in other words – in the state of unordered sounds, thoughts that satisfy one of his/her parts and contradict another. The Trinitarian paradigm implies with itself, on the other hand, collateral subordination of all of desires and wills to the one perfect will of the Father, about which is said that it's good, pleasing and perfect (*Rom. 12:1-2*). Having such an internal core, a person develops in harmony in all the areas of his/her life: physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. The Trinitarian paradigm gives a person that structure, without which it's difficult to talk about the stability of personal world, about a goal oriented life, and more than that – about unchangeable ethical values. A person living in harmony with him/herself,

based on The Trinitarian paradigm, will not sell him/herself out, because he/she understands that there are higher values than just physical needs. A person who has this core will never put him/herself in the position to sell or to buy another person.

The harmony with the surrounding world.

Such a person will never buy another one, because the harmony in his/her own world will be reflected in the harmony with the surrounding world. The Trinitarian understanding of God is being reflected in my attitude towards people around me. God's model is an example for the society. All of us need to clean exactly to this kind of God's model. 'Duhobors', one of the first evangelical movements in Ukraine of the 18th century, were saying: *“when you'll see a person – bow before him, because God lives in him”*.

3. Society perception through the prism of God's Trinitarian nature.

The Trinitarian paradigm changes not only the view upon oneself, another person, but on the whole society.

A disharmony in society Let's pay attention to that disharmony in which our society lives. The numbers we hear about people trafficking are screaming at us today, that our society lives in a chaotical paradigm, which is atheistic in its essence.

The rejection of the weak ones.

Basically, the laws of Darwin are operating in our society to the full. The strongest one survives. The society rejected the weak ones. Weak physically, morally, psychologically. The women and children of our society are kicked out to the mercy of fate. A society, in which traffic of human *“merchandise”* is being done in such dimensions as in ours, and that doesn't raise the alarm to the highest level, shows that its not just degrading, but dies out. Maybe the 21st century in our country won't give birth to its own Hitler, but our worldview is our Hitler. A woman who saves herself in Moldova or travel abroad to do that; a man who buys this woman – these are the signs of the lack of core values, the signs of cacophony. What can we do? Criticize the society? Criticize women and men? This will be an additional note in the total confusion.

Church – is the reflection of Triune God.

The first and the most important - is to reflect the great harmony of God in the churches. To subordinate collaterally one's desires and wills to the unified

will of God. When Jesus was praying about unity, when He was asking the Father to keep us in peace but not to take us from the world, what else can it mean, if not the co-crucifixion of oneself with Christ for this world? To give oneself for the sake of this world, not judging it, not pointing with a finger at “unclean”, but to pray as Jesus: “*not our will be done, but Yours!*”. Yes, we don’t want to go to the rejected ones, yes, we don’t want to be laughed at. These are normal desires. Yes, we are much more comfortable in our churches during the worship service than being outside and in dens. Tell The Father about it and carry out His will.

Conclusion: from my perspective, this is the answer to the problem of people trafficking. In conclusion I’d like to paraphrase a well-known verse from *John 3:16* “*for God-The Son so loved this world? That He gave the most precious that He had – His Bride-Church, for her to proclaim that anyone who believes in Him will not perish, but has eternal life*”.

Vladimir Ubeivolc,

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Trafficking or Illegal Human Trade - a Form of Slavery of the 21 Century

Part I

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people”.

(Proverbs 14:34)

“You are the light of the world”.

(Matthew 5:14)

Much of that is happening in the world and our country not as it should. For example, the killing of the unborn babies, single women having children, divorces, drug addiction, alcoholism (including among children), the spreading of pornographic materials.

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people”.

The topic of today’s sermon is “Trafficking or illegal human trade, a form of slavery of the 21 century”. Together with illegal gun trade, trafficking is on the second place after drug trade, and the fastest in its development in the area of the world criminal business.

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people”.

How true are these words! God doesn’t exaggerate when He promises through Solomon blessings to people and nations that follow His will, and at the same time, threatens with disgrace to those who reject His will. When a nation rejects and forgets about God’s ways, after all this nation can expect only to be ashamed, decreased and destroyed.

The summary can be done by one word, said by Solomon. In the small word “*sin*” are contained all the problems of human race.

So what is the solution of the trafficking problem?

Some may shake their shoulders, raise their hands and say: „*There is no solution. More than that, we should stay away from these kinds of problems and people, so that we won’t get dirty, so that their problems won’t become ours.*” Others will say: „*we should at least try to do something if not to solve the problem*”.

So what is the solution? From what or who should we start? I consider it will be correct to point at you, me and many other Christians in our country.

Only the children of God truly know and want to follow God's will. They are justified and saved by their faith in the Son of God; they are washed from all their sins by the blood of Jesus Christ that was shed on the cross of Golgotha. The Hairs of Father's house want to spread this jewel to other people who live in our country. The more Christians are there, the more external righteousness in the world and merciful God will exalt our country.

No matter how paradoxical it may sound, but the solution of the problem of trafficking starts with you and me, from people who seem to be very far from it. Jesus told His disciples: "*You are the light of the world*". You are the light, shining in the sinful darkness of the world.

Light is something what can be seen. Christianity should be seen not only in the church. Christianity, that doesn't go farther than the entrance of a church, can't bring good to anybody, even to those who are already within the church. That's why we say that church isn't tolerant, indifferent to the problem of trafficking.

Light is the guide. How difficult it would be even to walk on the streets of the city if there would be no lights. Light should point the way. A Christian should point the way to other people. Bring people out of dangerous and perverted companies to the only and true path – Christ and His Church: "*I am the way, truth and life*".

"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.

Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."

Psalm 1.

Light can serve as a warning sign. Light often warns us and points to where we need to stop if there is danger ahead. Light on the red light in front of the eyes of your friends, acquaintances, relatives, anyone who will want to listen to you, who stands on the edge of the abyss and is ready to pay any price for an imaginary wellbeing. Often it's difficult to do, but it will be even worse, if we'll have to hear the words from people: "*I would never get into this situation, if you would at least talk to me at the right time*".

For those who were able to avoid or to get out of the sexual slavery, forced labor, the church doors should be open and a place on the church bench should be waiting on them. These people shouldn't be judged by us as the greatest of sinners. Because who is "*without sin*"? They should be accepted with evangelical sympathy, pity and mercy. It was said about one teacher that whenever she had to scold her students, she was doing it embracing them. If we warn a person while we are not in anger, not with an irritable tone, not with a curse and critic, not out of desire to put down and cause pain, but with love – this is much more effective.

We live in a poor country, but there are "*poor among poor*", as a rule, these are women and children, who became victims of organized criminal trafficking. Let the Lord free all those illegally hold in slavery. Let the Holy Spirit bring through the preached Word of God comfort and forgiveness to all those who are deceived by Satan. And let the Lord Jesus Christ clean each human lie with burning fire of His truth. Amen.

Part II

“Cold or hot?”

There are letters addressed to the seven churches in the beginning of Revelations. In each one of them Christ identifies Himself and points out that He knows and cares for how things are in the church. In Christ's words there is praise, promise, judgment and warning. Although in regards to the last church, located in the city of Laodicea, Christ doesn't say anything good.

The basic problem and guilt of that church was the sin of apathy, being warm

“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”

Revelations 3:15-16.

Laodicea was founded by Antioch from Syria in the middle of the 3rd century BC and named after his wife. The city was a flourishing financial and trade center, was known for its medical school. But the basic strategic weakness was in the lack of reliable and comfortable water source. Water was coming in through viaduct from the nearest cities – Ierapol and Colossi. The enemy could easily break the water system of the city and conquer it. Besides, going through viaduct water was losing its quality.

The neighbor city Ierapol had healing hot sources. The inhabitants of nearby Colossi would quench their thirst from the cold mountain stream. The inhabitants of Laodicea drank warm mineral water that was causing the emetic reflex. The Lord uses this special feature and says to the church of Laodicea that it causes Him to have a similar sickening action.

A cold person is the one whose heart is warmed up by the fire of the Gospel. A hot one is the one who follows the Lord in a hot faith and burning love and enthusiasm. The used image should be very clear to those who have to deal with warm water that has a bad smell to it that runs through their pipes.

A Christian should be either cold or hot. The middle position is hypocrisy. The saving faith is hot and full of enthusiasm and acting love. The true enthusiasm for the Lord is characterized by true righteousness, general love, and

sincerity in reaching the goal, actions aiming at the spread of the Gospel.

Hot Christians are like the healing sources with hot water of Ierapol. They bring healing and help to people who suffer. Cold Christians refresh people, like the water in Colossi. The refresh those, who are out of their strength, walking though life; that need somebody to rely on, those who were wounded by a careless word or deed. Oh, only if you'd be cold or hot, zealous in regards to your faith and deeds in the church. If you would experience and apply your faith in life. If you would be spiritually useful to Christ and His church. If you would...

Instead you are warm. You taste unpleasantly. You don't do anything bad to anybody, but you don't do anything good either. Your faith is on the edge of destruction. You are fully absorbed by your own self and judging others. You think that your riches, external wellbeing will solve all of your problems.

Indifference in the issues of teaching of faith, involvement with gentile philosophy, indifference to those living near you, unrighteous ways to earn the living – all these suppress the truth. You became neutral. You don't fight with evil. You don't love anybody, as well as don't hate anybody. You make me sick just as your water that tastes awful.

Empty religiosity makes Christ sick! The Lord doesn't need empty religiosity. He wants to see in our hearts passionate faith that does good and kindness that reflects His own unlimited love to the fallen humanity and Sacrifice for our sins. Passionate, active faith is what He wants to create in us through His own Holy Word and Sacraments. The faith that is created by Him is the one that hears Christ who stands by the door of your heart and knocks. This faith opens the door to greet Christ and the neighbors.

So what will the Lord do with those who are not against Him, but are also not passionately for Him? *“I'm about to spit you out of my mouth”*. I will spit you out of My mouth, just as you spit out warm water with a bad taste to it from your water pipes.

So what happened to the Christian church in Laodicea? Today there is no Christian church, and Islam is the basic religion. From all seven churches the most mercilessly judged was the one from Laodicea.

Within the limits of the seminar *“Trafficking or illegal human trade, a form of slavery of the 21 century”* we got to know the work of “Hot line” in Moldova.

Maybe the person who thought of this name was a Christian and he read the book of Revelation. The name of the organization completely reflects the essence of “hot” goals that it has: averting the illegal migration, the opposition, analysis and monitoring of the problem of trafficking, supporting poor families, orphans who suffered from the domestic violence and trafficking. In the same way the church and its members cannot be “warm” and this problem is in also our care. The world in the persons of governmental structures, public organizations came to church. It is expected that church people will help, provide new initiatives aimed at decrease of trafficking phenomena.

Healing, hot water of Ierapol. Cold, refreshing one in Colossi. Warm, with a bad taste water of Laodicea. Indifference or faith that acts with love, aimed at revealing, warning, and help to the victims of trafficking. What out of these describes personally you and the church you belong to?

Resurrected Lord, You created hot faith in You for us as well as the proper deeds for it. Jesus, True and Faithful Witness, beginning of God’s creation, keep us in hot faith till the day of Your returning. In Christ’s name. Amen.

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