

Promoters of Carmelite Spirituality in Romania, Especially Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus

Marius Sabău

The Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology
University of Bucharest
General H. M. Berthelot nr. 19, Bucharest 010164, Romania
Email: mariusabau81@yahoo.com

Abstract:

The history of the Roman-Catholic Dioceses of Romania is not an ancient one. Its growth can be observed within the last centuries. This is the reason why there are not many traditions of spirituality born here and many of the currents present even nowadays come from abroad. Among these spiritual currents, a strong one is that of St. Therese of Lisieux. Her spirituality, like in many places around the world reached even Romanian lands through the hard work of some holy men who took care of the flock here. The list of those contaminated by the theresian spirituality is a long one, but I present you the main figures: Saint Joseph Rafael Kalinowski O.C.D., Blessed Vladimir Ghika, Mons. Anton Gabor, and Mons. Dr. Ioan Coltort. Through them the writings, the cult and the thinking of the Little Carmelite Therese helped Romanian Catholics on their way to God.

Keywords: St. Therese of Lisieux, Theresian spirituality, Joseph Rafael Kalinowski, Vladimir Ghika, Anton Gabor, Ioan Coltort

Introduction

In this article, I set out to present the first protagonists of Carmelites spirituality in Romania, in a special way that of Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus, promoters followed by many priests, be they diocesans or monks, who have effectively contributed to the propagation of the cult and to the knowledge of St. Theresa in this country.

The clear perception that exists is that of a limited but not silent presence. With the strength of their radical testimony of life, the Carmelites arrived into Romanian land long before the friars of the Venetian Province or the Italian Carmelite Province set foot on these lands.

There are several ways in which the Carmelite spirituality reached Romania. First of all, in the area of Transylvania, empress Maria Theresa of Austria, who had her as her patron, founded several churches dedicated to her: for example, the church called Teresian¹ in Sibiu or the church in the village of Orlat, where there was a border regiment. Here for the Roman Catholic officers was built the church of the “Germans”, dedicated to Saint Theresa of Avila.

Secondly, we can remember that coming from Bulgaria, the Passionist monks shepherded the

Catholics from Muntenia. Their founder, Saint Paul of the Cross, was very much inspired by Saint Theresa of Avila. For this reason, in the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Bucharest, built at the end of the 19th century by the passionate Bishop Ignazio Paoli, we find Saint Theresa painted among several other saints who constitute the allspice of the coronation scene of the Mother of God (*Sfânta Tereza de Avila* 2020, 7).

Saint Joseph Rafael Kalinowski O.C.D. (1835-1907)

To begin with, it is worth remembering the example and contribution of Saint Joseph Rafael Kalinowski (1835-1907). In 1902, Kalinowski established a Scapular Friary in Sulina, Romania, through a spiritual daughter, Teresa Moruzi, a member of the secular order, and sought canonical recognition from the General of the Order by sending him the necessary requests, including a request form.

He encouraged the Jesuits working in Iași to promote the devotion of the Scapular, and also wrote to the daughter of the Austrian consul, Fanny Jelinek² of Sulina, asking her to spread the scapular devotion.

To spread the scapular piety, Father Raphael was able to use - as mentioned above - the people he knew and his penitents, spiritual sons. In this way he managed to introduce it far into Romania³, where it developed almost throughout the Diocese of Bucharest, bringing many redemptory fruits, especially in the ecumenical field, because many Orthodox brothers and sisters received the Marian robe, returning at the same time to the Roman Church. The Catholic priests in Romania reported what a positive influence the scapular had on the Christian life. There have been cases of conversions from Orthodox Christianity to Catholicism because of the scapular. Rafael even made plans to establish the secular order of Carmel related to a Carmelite house in the capital Bucharest. This was one of the great joys of Father Raphael who so longed to “work through the Carmel of the Mother of God for the unity of the Church”⁴.

Therefore, with the help of Fanny Jelanek, daughter of the Austrian consul, who lived in Braila, of Princess Teresa Moruzi, the spiritual daughter of Kalinowski and of the Jesuits who managed the major Seminary in Iasi, the first fraternity of the scapular in Romania was founded in Moldova. From Iasi, the fraternity reached to Bucharest, Sulina, and Braila (Galofaro 1988, 313).

The promoter of the unity of the churches. Mother of God, Mother of Unity

In a few words, I would like to emphasize the question of ecumenism in the life of Father Kalinowski. Today, many years after the Council, an attitude of openness characterizes, if not all, at least the majority of Christians. In the early 19th and 20th centuries, an extraordinary intuition was needed to express similar views. Saint Raphael Kalinowski read the signs of the times and did not spare any effort to take initiatives to unite the churches.

Although sometimes lacking strength and health was not always a good sign, the unification of the Church was his only concern, his only desire, his only intention, for which he offered his sufferings and sacrifices: “Please pray for me!” he wrote to a Discalced Carmelite nun in France, “so

that above all God may give me the grace to love suffering and persevere on this path. Although I am at the end of my days – I am already 62 years old – I cannot free myself from the thought that the good God, if I remain faithful to him, will oblige me with his grace to work even more for the unity of the churches through the Carmel of the Mother of God. Not just in Romania, but in Russia too”⁵.

Saint Raphael Kalinowski was deeply convinced that the Union between the Catholic and Orthodox churches could take place through the veneration of the Mother of God, very alive both in the Roman Catholic Church and in the Orthodox Church. We must not overlook this intuition of his inspired by the Holy Spirit. The Virgin Mary gave birth to the one and indivisible Christ, Head of the Only Mystical Body, the Way, the Truth, and the Life of all Christians. Therefore, would it not be good for us in our ecumenical efforts to return to the beginnings of Christianity, to Mary of Nazareth, and through her to rediscover the lost unity?

This insight was taken up by the Second Vatican Council, which, in its Decree on ecumenism, *Unitatis redintegratio*, speaking of the factors that unite us with the Eastern churches, did not fail to mention the worship of the Mother of God. Holy Father John Paul II, in his encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*, also mentioned these aspects.

Saint Raphael confidently wrote: “Holy Unity! Holy Unity!” Only this word already kindles the flame of hope in the suffering heart.

It is the immaculate Virgin who will bring to this Union a people in whose chest many noble and thirsty hearts beat with light⁶.

Joseph Rafael Kalinowski and Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus

The meeting with Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus took place while translating for publication *History of a Soul* in Polish. His first reaction was very negative: he considered her style too sentimental and declared herself frankly hostile to the Polish edition (1901). But he would later tell the Lisieux superior, in a letter he did not hesitate to call “Repair”, that he had experienced a great inner disturbance shortly before, which he had alleviated by reading the poem *Vivre d’Amour*:

I was in my cell about eight days ago, my soul stirred by the waves of a stormy sea, and I didn’t know where to find shelter. My eyes fell on the French book of the life of my saving sister. Equipped with the sign of the cross to banish all the instincts of nature, I opened the book and the place of refuge was in the hearth of a heart united with Jesus, in the flame of the ‘life of love’. Suddenly the storm subsides, the calm returns and something ineffable invades my entire being and transforms me from top to bottom the song was a lifeboat for me. The loving sister offered to guide me. (Letter to the Abbess of the Carmelite Monastery from 9/10/1902, *Congregatio De Causis Sanctorum* 1997, 388)

From that moment on, he became a fervent admirer of the one he called “the Angel of Peace.” We can see in the situation of Kalinowski that the Little Way of St. Therese should be understood as a way for everyone, at the same time easy to follow and hard to comprehend.

Who is Saint Joseph Rafael Kalinowski O.D. (1835 - 1907)?

Discalced Carmelite, he was canonized in Rome on November 17th, 1991, by Pope John Paul II. Born on September 1st, 1835, in a Polish family in Vilnius (Lithuania), he sipped his faith and nurtured his Catholic affiliation in the sanctuary of Ostra Brama: The face of the Mother of Mercy will accompany him throughout his life.

As officer in the Russian army, he took part in the Polish uprising against the tsarist government in 1863. Arrested and deported to Siberia, he was released in 1874 and spent some time in France before joining the order of the Discalced Carmelite, where he was ordained a priest on January 15th, 1882.

Endowed with apostolic zeal, he did not shy away from helping the faithful and assisting the Carmelite brothers and sisters in the ascent of the mountain of perfection. After his ordination, he consecrated his life to the obedience of confessions in the sacrament of reconciliation, lifting many from the misery of sin. It was called the “martyrdom of the confession see”, an expression repeated by pope John Paul II in the beatification speech. He also dedicated himself to the mission of spiritual accompaniment, working hard for Christian unity and the restoration of his order in Poland.

He did his best for the work of reunifying the Church and left the legacy of this mission to the Carmelite brothers and sisters. His superiors entrusted him with many important missions, which he perfectly fulfilled, right up to the moment of his death. Joseph Rafael gave his soul into the hands of God on November 15th, 1907, in Wadowice. He was buried in the cemetery of the monastery, in Czerna, near Kraków. (Sicari 2011, 200; 209-210)

On October 11th, 1980, Pope John Paul II promulgated the decree on the splendor of his virtues, and on June 22nd, 1983, he was beatified. He was canonized in Rome on November 17th, 1991. Its celebration was established on November 19th.

Blessed Vladimir Ghika (1873-1954)

An in-depth study, if it really wants to offer its passionate and free Christian witness, must be aware of the challenges that the Church has had to face in Romania with great courage, creativity and a spirit of communion. To know the recent history of the Catholic Church in Romania also means to know the authentic life of holiness of one of his sons: Blessed Prince Vladimir Ghika, who died in 1954, after a life overflowing with charity, consumed among the harshest persecutions.⁷

Few know of the special devotion that Blessed Vladimir Ghika had to St. Theresa of the Child Jesus. He certainly discovered Saint Theresa during his studies, during his stay in France, where he met philosophers, literates and artists, during which the message of St. Theresa was imposed in all its beauty (Sicari 2006, 123-142).

In 1926, Blessed Father Vladimir Ghika wanted to “live in a corner of the suburbs of Paris, where the absence of God is most sensitive.” Encouraged by Bishop Emmanuel Chatal, auxiliary bishop of Paris, who gave him a small piece of land in the southern suburbs of Villejuif, he moved to a wooden cottage, which was then used as an improvised chapel.

Between 1924 and 1928, at Villejuif, starting from a poor shack in which he carried out his

noble activity, the Monsignor built a chapel comparable to the stable of Bethlehem, where he “put Christ within the reach of a population that needed to be evangelized”. (Novac 2013, 23)

Under the coordination of Bishop Emmanuel Chatal, construction of a church began. Originally planned in the same area, it was eventually erected on Sorrières Street and dedicated to St. Theresa of Lisieux, to whom Father Ghika had a particularly great affection. Inaugurated in 1934, in 1949 it became the parish church and the seat of the parish “Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus and the Holy face”.

The testimony that Marie Antoinette Pardessus Génin gives on the occasion of the beatification of Monsignor Vladimir Ghika is very eloquent, because she had the chance to meet Monsignor Ghika personally. Even if at that time he was only a child, Antoinette confesses, his physiognomy, the gentle expression of his face, his gestures, words and love marked him for life.

My father, Mr. Génin, had a brick in Villejuif, where I was born. He learned that a priest had come to evangelize that suburb and that he lived in an old car, wishing to be poor among the poorest. After contacting him and with his consent, my father, on land that belonged to him, built a wooden chapel with a concrete foundation. It was a large room, whose space was separated by the curtains that my mom had made. Father Ghika often went there to celebrate the Liturgy and the Holy Mysteries... because it was made of wood, the Monsignor, in a familiar way, called this chapel “shack”, a fact which created confusion. Later, at Villejuif, the chapel was replaced with the church “Saint Theresa”, which was then called the chapel of Saint Theresa... they gave my father a relic (a lock of hair) of Saint Theresa to keep until the completion of the works (Genin 2013, 14).

This is a great example of how a simple, but holy priest, could bring out for the Christian he had to take care of, a great treasure of grace, just by naming a little shack upon a little saint who proposed the Christian world the Little Way. A little shack is a great manner of presenting the simplicity of the Little Way.

Mons. Anton Gabor (1883-1936) – promoter of the cult of Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus in the Roman Catholic Church in Romania

Mons. Dr. Anton Gabor is one of the pioneers of devotion to Saint Theresa in Moldova and also the most illustrious personality in the history of the “Presa Bună” Institute in Iasi and, at the same time, one of the most important Romanian Catholic journalists in the first half of the 20th century (Doboş 2007, 11).

Convinced of the importance of the Christian press in Catholic life, he founded 1913, *Lumina creştinului* magazine (*The Light of the Christian*), and after the first World War, the *Santinela Catolică* (*The Catholic Santinel*) which took the name of *Dacia Creştină* (*Christian Dacia*) in 1933.

On May 17th, 1926, in the courtyard of the Cathedral “Assumption of Our Lady” begins the

construction of the new building, which will become the headquarters of the publishing house and the printing house; the foundation stone is consecrated on June 11, 1926, and on October 31, on the Feast of Christ the King, Bishop Mihai Robu⁸, together with many priests, celebrated a Holy Mass in the cathedral and then “all went to the workshop where the walls and machinery were sanctified” under the patronage of Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus (Cadaru 2013, 11). In 1926, Mons. Anton Gabor founded the “Presa Bună” Institute, placed under the protection of Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus, for which he went from house to house across Catholic villages to ask for financial help (Dumea 2002, 124). A great merit of Mons. Anton Gabor was able to bring together valuable collaborators, “people with great souls, lovers of the church writing”, who all made sacrifices for the progress of the magazine and the “Presa Bună” Institute founded in 1926, as well as for the dissemination of Catholic press and publications among the faithful people. He was able to attract the material support and promotion of the publications of the Institute’s “Presa Bună”. Numerous benefactors whose names were popularized in the pages of publications (Ciobanu-Doboş 2022, 137).

In a letter to Archbishop Alexander Th. Cisar said, “but great is the power of God, and great is the support of St. Theresa for our institute.” (Doboş 2006, 6)

Mons. Anton Gabor, the father of the “Presa Bună” Publishing House, great venerator of Saint Theresa, the beneficiary of the intercession of this Saint, entrusted to Iosif Bălan, for translation, the precious book *Rain of Roses*, printed later with the approval, on March 1st, 1930, of the Bishop of Iaşi, Mihai Robu, at the “Presa Bună” Publishing House.

This was the first edition, *editio princeps*, because in 2016 the second edition was republished, also at the „Presa Bună” Publishing House.

Thus, in 1930 began the dissemination of the book among the Catholics of Moldova, Saint Theresa being thus more and more known and loved. In his address to all the venerators of St. Theresa at the beginning of this book, he stated with the fact that the “Presa Bună” Publishing House wants the development of piety toward this Saint (Despinescu 2016, 2).

Therefore, in bringing a new printing machine, I entrusted this matter to her, promising that the first work to be printed on her would be *Rain of Roses*. Since the machine has arrived safely and is already in working order, that is why we keep the promise made, hoping that even in the future St. Theresa will lead the Presa Bună Institute to an ever greater development (*Ploaia de trandafiri*, 2016, 3).

An Apostle of the good press, as it was Mons. Gabor – it was written in the “Presa Bună” Almanac in 1934, on the occasion of the Jubilee of 25 years of priesthood for Mons. Gabor –, must be valued as a gift of God for the good of the Catholics in Romania and deserves all the support of each one, to continue his work that he conducts with so much zeal and sacrifice and for which the divine providence itself seems to have destined him (Doboş 2007, 11).

In 1927, the little *Flower Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus* is published at the “Presa Bună” Publishing House, with 61 pages, and was republished in 1936 (Dumea 2002, 199).

Mons. Dr. Ioan Coltore (1886-1933)- promoter of the cult of Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus in the Greek Catholic Church in Romania

Fr. Dr. Ioan Coltore was born on September 25th, 1886, in Blaj, having parents of modest condition: his father had been a printer gatherer, and he was the only brother among his three sisters. In Blaj is doing his primary and secondary education. He is one of the most remarkable figures of the Greek Catholic Church, priest, diplomat, and politician. It is the fruit of Blaj schools, due to its intellectual training to the educational institutions in the city at the confluence of Târnaveni.

In 1904 he passed the examination of maturity at the Greco-Catholic Superior Gymnasium in Blaj, and his special inclination toward study and science determined, in the same year, Metropolitan Victor Mihali of Apșa to send him to Rome for the completion of his intellectual training. In the Eternal City, Coltore studied theology and philosophy at the *De propaganda fide* Pontifical Urban College (1904-1910), being one of the most talented students of the Roman University (Bălibanu 1934, 3).

Three years later, on March 31st, 1907, he was made a lecturer, then a subdeacon and deacon, and on March 27th, 1910, by laying on the hands of Blessed Bishop Vasile Hossu was ordained a priest, celebrating his First Holy Mass in the Vatican Basilica, at the tomb of St. Peter, where he would return several times, celebrating on the occasion of the national pilgrimages which he arranged and led in the Jubilee years 1925, 1930, and 1933 (Macaveiu 1934, 3). In 1906 he became a Doctor of Theology.

Young John Coltore chose to follow the priestly vocation, and in 1910, in Rome, he was ordained a priest by the Bishop of Lugoj, Vasile Hossu. Returned to Transylvania in 1910, he works for some time in the offices of the archdiocesan office, then receives the Chaplain mission in Cluj, where he has the opportunity to minister in the land of a large city, with people of all categories, preaching, instructing, caring for the sick, fighting currents and sects contrary to the Greek-Catholic Church (Bălibanu 1934, 3). He has the opportunity to serve as a priest in Orlat, where, for a year, he supplants fr. Ion Agarbiceanu. In Orlat he succeeded in bringing back to the church, through his life and preaching, the faithful who had embraced sectarian doctrines while laying the foundation for an ideal pastoral ministry, the effects of which are still present.

He was later a professor at the Archdiocesan Theological Seminary in Blaj, where he taught moral theology and pastoral theology. In 1918 we find him among the leading fighters for the realization of the national dream of generations. He participated in the Great Union on December 1st, 1918. Mons. I. Coltore was part of Romania's delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and during the period between the two World Wars, his career experienced a fulminant ascent (Bălibanu 1934, 3). "Knowing the European languages, French, English, Italian, he has made a great deal of use to our country and our cause by the connections he has made among the delegates and journalists of other countries, with whom, together, they have investigated the contentious war zones at the borders of different countries" (Bălibanu 1934, 3). He worked in the national Party of Peasant and was a Member of Parliament several times.

He was the first priest of the United Romanian Church to participate in governing the

country, when in the government of Alexandru Vaida Voievod in 1932, he was appointed Minister under Secretary of State at the Department of Health. In 1924 he was named canonical within the Capitulum of the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Blaj. But with all his political concerns, he did not neglect his pastoral activity, participating in numerous spiritual exercises for priests and consecrated persons and popular missions for the faithful of Blaj, Cluj, Lugoj, Beius, and Arad, never ceasing to be the ideal priest, faithful to his vocation. Even as a minister, he celebrated the Divine Liturgy daily. Without making a mistake, we can say that John Coltore was the greatest preacher of the Greek Catholic Church in the interbelic period (Bălibanu 1934, 3).

Ioan Coltore is the personality that spread the cult of Saint Theresa of Lisieux in the Greek-Catholic Church in Romania, reviewing in the characteristic style of a fine theologian, educated in Rome, for the reader audience the event of the canonization of the Blessed woman on May 17th, 1925. In Rome, in the Basilica of "St. Peter", he presents St. Theresa as the one who succeeded in cultivating holiness in the modern world, despite the claims that modern life cannot be reconciled either with the purity of the Gospel or with the superior postulates of faith (Rusal 2020, 141; Coltore 1925, 153).

Today's science overloaded with theories and hypotheses ends the integral understanding of the Christian creed, engaging contradictory theses about religion. Admits that from cinemas and from the daily bustle, dizzying of all the sensations that obsess the brain, from the demanding and newer attractions can only result in the diminution of the religious phenomenon: in the 20th century there are no more miracles or saints; at most a surface Christianity, or Christianity of esthetics, or one of purely artistic or purely philosophical value.

But the Church in the 20th century defies the barren wisdom of all philosophies, and in the ten Commandments, she preaches her most perfect method of soul exaltation, an example of the effectiveness of the Church system being Theresa of Lisieux, among the saints in the age of all the modern lights (Coltore 1925, 153).

Distinguished writer, among his many writings published in Christian Culture, in *Unirea* and other magazines, we emphasize the beautiful work, through which he made known and popular among the Romanian people the little Theresa of the Child Jesus, whose *History of a Soul* and *Rain of Roses* he translates into Romanian. "He was a devoted son of the purest Virgin Maria, whose beauties in such vibrant words he so often proclaimed from the pulpit, of little Theresina (Bălibanu 1934, 3), his prosecutor next to the divine throne", as he liked to call it (Bălibanu 1934, 3).

Fr. dr. Ioan Coltore has printed in Romanian since 1914 *History of a Soul*, the life of Saint Theresa of Lisieux, which appeared in several editions.⁹ In the Greek-Catholic religious environment some books come from the Romanian Roman Catholic environment (Gârleanu 1925), as is the case for those who have fr. Ion Gârleanu OFM. as their author. He will publish the *Abatis of our Holy Mother to the miracle-maker Saint Theresa Lisiosana*, with the high blessing of the Most Holy D. Valeriu Trajan, Bishop of Oradea, 1928. At the Bixad monastery were published

in 1936, with the approval of Dr. Alexandru Rusu, Bishop of Maramureș, brochures that include biographies of the Saint, novenas, and prayers to and in honor of her. On the occasion of the Jubilee of 50 years since the death of Saint Theresa of Lisieux (1947), a group of Franciscan collaborators, led by pr. Iuliu Hirtea, the confessor of the Academy of Theology of Oradea, future bishop, publishes the volume *After fifty years. Patron of missions celebrated on Romanian lands*, Oradea, 1947. The volume contains the circulars of Greek Catholic bishops on the occasion of the Jubilee and Mission Day, the letter of Pope Pius XII to the Bishop of Lisieux, a conference of fr. dr. Iuliu Hirtea about the missions and Saint Theresa, other materials, and a chronicle about the celebration of the Teresian Jubilee in Romania (Rusal 2020, 141-142).

Fr. dr. John Coltore died at the age of 47, but his life, though brief, was "a sermon of faith. Rarely we have seen a man fuller of faith." (Macaveiu 1934, 3)

In one of the speeches given at his funeral, the canonical father, Dr. Victor Macaveiu stressed that, at the time of the holy anointing, he invoked himself, for the health of Mons. John, the help of the Holy Virgin Mary, and prayers were offered to St. Theresa of Lisieux, "whose cult had popularized him in us, so much the sleeping one in the Lord, and whose marble statue adorned his reception room, only a few days ago arriving from Italy, next to the Great Dom of Pisa". In the same panegyric, Father V. Macaveiu pointed out that Mons. I. Coltore has abundantly placed, in the service of culture and the enlightenment of the Community, the agile pen, with which God endowed him: "In tens of thousands of copies, his foliation of the novena and Christian piety, or the biography for everyone's understanding of St. Theresa of Lisieux, which he so adored, have been spread" (Macaveiu 1934, 4).

11 years after his death, Joseph E. Naghiu dedicates an article to him in *Unirea poporului* magazine, where the importance of Mons. Dr. Ioan Coltore in spreading the cult of Saint Theresa is emphasized: "In the history of the church, he has the merit of having worked hard to spread the cult of Saint Theresa of Lisieux. He worked in Romanian the beautiful book *History of a Soul*, a work that we read today with much spiritual benefit" (Naghiu 1945, 5).

In the end, we could also mention other published works, by other authors: *Rain of Roses. Some miracles and interventions of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus*, translated from French by I. B., Presa Bună, Iași, 1930; P. Iosif Tălmăcel OFMConv. *A rose of Saint Theresa, or the life of Teresa Hesselmann* (Craiova, 1911 – Bacau, 1929), Presa Bună, Iași, 1932; *Novena to Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus* followed by several prayers collected and translated by I. B., 1934²; Presa Bună, Iași, 1943³; *Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus*, Presa Bună, Iași, 1936 (Rusal 2020, 142).

Conclusion

This Carmelite and Teresian spirituality developed particularly and with intensity, even from the first years after its canonization. This was favored by the fact that, in all the dioceses of the country, true knowledge of the little Saint of Lisieux took place through the dedication of churches, statues, paintings of icons, but also through the first translations of her writings.

Among the greatest witnesses of Christ of our time is certainly St. Theresa of the Child Jesus. This young Carmelite, unknown to her world, has become famous throughout the world: Its holiness, authenticity, and intuition have remained unique in the history of the Church; her writings, starting from the first page of her manuscript, express an excellent theological synthesis. It's really about a theology of the heart, thanks to which Theresa discovered the presence and action of God in her life: her mission is about the experience of faith, the Gospel translated into everyday language, the wisdom that expresses itself in the prosaic circumstances of life. This mission refers to the universal call to evangelical holiness, a path that opens for everyone.

The special call for her worship lies in its extreme natural simplicity and its obvious pleasant appearance (somewhat compared by some believers to the sweetness of sugar) (Farmer 1999, 476).

In the mostly Catholic countries and regions of Eastern Europe, St. Theresa was known and venerated immediately after her canonization in 1925.

This is also the case in Romania, because the first churches that are dedicated to St. Theresa already appear, as is the case of the stone Church of Beznea-Bratca, belonging to the Greek Catholic Diocese of Oradea, built and consecrated in 1929 by Blessed Valeriu Trajan Frențiu, with the dedication “Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus” (*Șematismul...* 1934, 5).

We can easily see that in most Catholic churches in Romania, we discover representations of St. Theresa that denote an uninterrupted veneration of Romanian Christians for “the greatest Saint of modern times”, as she was called by Pope Pius X.

In both rites, there is almost no Catholic church in which the classic image of Theresa with roses does not appear. People keep as relics the books of the Teresian prayers edited especially by the Franciscan fathers before the establishment of communism. After an absence of 30-40 years, these books are now being reprinted (Jakubinyi 1997, 204).

Endnotes:

1. It was in fact a church and orphanage complex built at the behest of Empress Maria Theresa, who issued an order on September 1st, 1767, ordering the town magistrate to hand over the buildings previously intended for Austrian emigrants to the Jesuit priest Theofil Delphini, for a Catholic orphanage, who arrived in Sibiu following religious persecution and settled in villages around Sibiu, in 1858 the Catholic Bishop of Transylvania raised this institute to the rank of a normal school for teachers, in front of the building is located, since 1909, the bust of Empress Maria Theresa. See <https://www.sibiul.ro/biserici-sibiu/biserica-si-orfelinatul-terezian.html>.
2. Her father, Franz Jelinek, was consul in Sulina at this time. It is not clear how Kalinowski knew them, probably through the Moruzi family.
3. Through Princess Theresa Moruzi (his penitent and later Carmelite tertiary), Fanny Jelinek (daughter of the Austrian consul in Bucharest), Fr Józef Wasilewski SJ (companion in exile) and others. See Gil Czesław, *Ojciec Rafat Kalinowski 1835-1907*, Kraków 1984, 302-306.
4. The Blessed was not satisfied with the erection of Confraternities of the Scapular in various parishes in Romania, but wished to found a convent of sisters there. He obtained the nulla osta of the Archbishop of Bucharest (who promised to obtain the King's placet), joined the Father General of the Order and negotiated with the Barefoot Carmelite community of St. Dié in France (whose superior was Romanian) who could contribute to the new establishment. Even if these projects did

- not materialize, they demonstrate Father Raphael's zeal for the propagation of the Order "which should bring the Eastern schismatics back into the bosom of the Church of Rome", as it appears from his Memoirs. See Szczepan T. Praskiewicz, „Maria sempre e in tutto, Spiritualità Mariana del Beato Raffaele, Kalinowski, O.C.D. (1835-1907)”, in *Teresianum*, 41 (1990/1), 154.
5. <https://www.karmel.pl/ajswietsza-dziewica-maryja/2>.
6. *Ibidem*.
7. One of the few articles written to illustrate his heroic testimony is not published until 1957. See Filip G., *Un principe Apostolo e Martire: Vladimir Ghika*, în «Unitas» (1957), 65-72.
8. Mons. Anton Gabor was colleague in Innsbruck with the first local bishop, Mihai Robu.
9. Richard Söpkéz, *Sora Terezia de Pruncul Isus*, translated and published by dr. Ioan Coltore, Blaj, Tip. Seminarului teologic greco-catolic, 1914; *Fericita Terezia*, trans., Tip. Seminarului, Blaj, 1923²; *Istoria unui suflet. Sfânta Tereza. Ploaia de roze*, trans., Blaj, 1924³; 1928⁴; *Istoria unui suflet. Viața Sfintei Teresa de Lisieux*. Translated after the original version [*La vie d'une âme*], Tip. Seminarului Teologic Gr.-Cat., Blaj, 1929. See Anton Rusal, *Pietate și devotiuni. Istoria vieții spirituale în Biserica Greco-Catolică din România (1918-1948). Vol. 1: Spiritualitatea laicală*, Globe Edit, Beau Bassin, 2020, 141.

References

- Bălibanu, Virgil. “Mons. Dr. Ioan Coltore.” *Curierul Creștin* no. 1 Year XVI (1934): 3-4.
- Cadar, Cornel. “Anul 1926: Institutul Presa Bună [Year 1926: Good Press Institute.]” *Lumina Creștinului* no. 11 (2013): 9.
- Ciobanu, Petru. Doboș, Dănuț. *Figuri ilustre din istoria Diecezei de Chișinău și a Diecezei de Iași [Illustrious Figures in the History of the Diocese of Chisinau and of the Diocese of Iasi.]* Chișinău: Lexon-Prim/Iași: Sapientia, 2022.
- Coltore, Ioan. “O sfântă din zilele noastre. Din prilejul canonizării fericitei Tereza [A Saint from Our Days. On the Occasion of the Canonization of Blessed Therese.]” *Cultura Creștină* no. 5 (1925): 14-15.
- Congregatio De Causis Sanctorum. *Concessionis tituli Ecclesiae Universalis S. Teresiae a Iesu Infante et a Sacro Vultu, Moniali Professae Ardinis Carmelitanum Discalceatorum. Monasterio Lexoviensi.* Roma: Cabellione, 1997.
- Czeslaw, Gil. *Ojciec Rafat Kalinowski 1835-1907 [Father Rafat Kalinowski 1835-1907.]* Kraków, 1984.
- Despinescu, Anton. “O carte dragă, Ploaia de trandafiri [A Beloved Book, Rain of Roses.]” *Calea cea Mică* no. 30 (2016).
- Doboș, Dănuț. *Lumina creștinului* no. 2 (2007).
- Doboș, Dănuț, “Repere culturale. Din istoria institutului „Presa Bună” din Iași [Cultural Landmarks. From the History of the “Good Press” Institute of Iasi.]” *Buletin Istoric* no. 7 (2006). Iași: Presa Bună, 2006.
- Dumea Emil. *Cărți și reviste catolice românești în Moldova [Catholic Romanian Books and Magazines in Moldova.]* Iași: Sapientia, 2002.
- Farmer, David Hugh. *Dicționar al sfinților [Dictionary of Saints.]* Bucharest: Univers Enciclopedic, 1999.
- Filip G. *Un principe Apostolo e Martire: Vladimir Ghika [A Prince, an Apostle and a Martyr: Vladimir Ghika.]* «Unitas» (1957).
- Galofaro, J. *Al Carmelo attraverso la Siberia. P. Raffaele di S. Giuseppe. [To the Carmel through Siberia. Father P. Raffaele of St. Joseph.]* Roma: OCD, 1960: 214-215.

- Gârleanu, Ion OFM. *O sfântă a zilelor noastre, Tereza de Pruncul Isus [A Saint from Our Days, Therese of Child Jesus.]* Hălăucești: 1925.
- Génin, M. A. P. “El era disponibil pentru toți [He was available for everyone.]” *Actualitatea creștină* no. 9. Year XXIV (2013).
- Jakubinyi, György. “Vivre la voie d’enfance en Europe Communiste [Living the Little Way in Communist Europe.]” *Une Sainte pour le troisième millénaire*. Paris: Éditions du Carmel, 1997.
- Macaveiu, V. “Ceasul despărțirii [The Hour of Separation.]” *Unirea* no. 1. Year XLIV (1934).
- Naghiu, Ion. “Canonicul Ioan Coltor. Unirea poporului [The Canonic Ioan Coltor. The Unification of the People.]” no. 1-5. Year XXVII (february 1945).
- Neumann, Piotr Franciszek. *Die unbeschuhnten Karmeliten in Galizien (1880-1911) [Discalced Carmelites in Galitia. 1880-1911.]* Roma, 1988.
- Novac, Ionel. “În prejma lui am găsit de fiecare dată liniștea de care aveam nevoie [Next to Him I Found the Silence I Needed Everytime.]” *Actualitatea creștină* no. 9. Year XXIV (2013).
- Ploaia de trandafiri. Câteva minuni și intervenții ale Sfintei Tereza a Pruncului Isus [Rain of Roses. Some wonder and Interventions of Saint Therese of Child Jesus.]* Translated by Iosif Bălan. Iași: Presa Bună, 2016.
- Praskiewicz, Szczepan T. “Maria sempre e in tutto, Spiritualità Mariana del Beato Raffaele, Kalinowski, O.C.D. (1835-1907) [Maria always and in Everything. The Marian Spirituality of Blessed Raffaele Kalinowski OCD, 1835-1907.]” *Teresianum* no. 41 (1990/1): 154.
- Rusal, Anton. *Pietate și devoțiuni. Istoria vieții spirituale în Biserica Greco-Catolică din România (1918-1948). Vol. 1: Spiritualitatea laicală [Piety and devotions. The History of the Spiritual Life in the Greek-Catholic Church of Romania, 1918-1948. First volume: The spirituality of laymen.]* Beau Bassin: Globe Edit, 2020.
- Sfânta Tereza de Avila [Saint Therese of Avila.]* Snagov: Cartea Vieții. Editura Carmelitană, 2020.
- Sicari, Antonio Maria. *Cartea sfinților Carmelitani [The Book of the Carmelite Saints.]* Snagov: Editura Carmelitană, 2011.
- Sicari, Antonio Maria. *Il novo libro dei ritratti di santi [The New Book of the Portraits of Saints.]* Milano: Jaca Book, 2006.
- Söpkéz, Richard. *Sora Terezia de Pruncul Isus [Sister Therese of Child Jesus.]* Translated and published by dr. Ioan Coltor. Blaj: Tip. Seminarului teologic greco-catolic, 1914; *Fericita Tereza [Blessed Therese.]* Blaj: Tip. Seminarului, 1923²; *Istoria unui suflet. Sfânta Tereza. Ploaia de roze [Story of a Soul. Saint Therese. Rain of Roses.]* Blaj: 1924³; 1928⁴; *Istoria unui suflet. Viața Sfintei Teresa de Lisieux [Story of a Soul. Life of Saint Therese of Lisieux.]* Translated after the original version [*La vie d’une âme*]. Blaj: Tip. Seminarului Teologic Gr.-Cat., 1929.
- Șematismul veneratului cler al Diecezei Române Unite de Orăzii-Mari pe anul 1934 [The Schematism of the Venerated Clergy of the Romanian United Diocese of Orazii-Mari for the Year 1934.]* Oradea: 1934.