THE BOOK OF NEEDS OF THE ORTHODOX HEALTHCARE CHAPLAINS

PUBLISHED WITH THE BLESSING
OF HIS BEATITUDE

DANIEL

PATRIARCH OF THE
ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

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2

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EDITORIAL NOTE

„ Is anyone among you suffering?
Let him pray.
Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.
Is anyone among you sick?
Let him call for the elders of the church,
and let them pray over him,
anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord"
(James 5: 14).

The Book of Needs
of the **Orthodox Healthcare Chaplains** –
a source of faith, hope, and love for those in suffering

According to Holy Scripture, when someone is sick, we are urged to call upon the priests of the Church: "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." (*James* 5: 14) The pastoral work of the Orthodox Healthcare Chaplain involves, first and foremost, a prayerful presence beside the one who is suffering, and, secondly, in order to carry out his sanctifying ministry, the priest uses rites and prayers to bring comfort, hope, and strengthening of faith to those who are undergoing various forms of suffering.

The healing ministry of our Savior Jesus Christ during His earthly life is full of examples of how we should behave

toward those who are suffering. From the Parable of the Good Samaritan, we see that caring for the sick involves a loving presence toward one's neighbour and the use of material means as an intermediary in the act of healing: "And he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own donkey, brought him to an inn, and took care of him." (*Luke* 10: 34).

From the words of the Holy Apostle Paul addressed to the Galatians: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (*Galatians* 6: 2), we understand that sharing in the suffering of those around us is a duty of every Christian.

The Book of Needs of the Orthodox Healthcare Chaplains – A Practical Necessity in the Contemporary Socio-Medical Context

The Book of Needs of the Orthodox Healthcare Chaplains is a liturgical book intended initially for Orthodox Healthcare Chaplain of the Romanian Patriarchate, but it can be used by all priests who minister to those in suffering.

Out of this practical need arose the idea of putting together a *Book of Needs of the Orthodox Healthcare Chaplains Chaplains*, designed to support the work of priests in hospitals and care centres.

Recently, there has been a dynamic shift in the development of patient care systems within public health

institutions, and in this new socio-medical context, the Church is called upon to respond to these demands, including in terms of the religious assistance it provides in both public and private health institutions.

Medicine has evolved both in terms of innovative treatments and in the way patient care is organized. This development has created new realities in the realm of patient care. In this regard, the Church has updated liturgical texts for rites and prayers to assist priests in their pastoral ministry.

This edition of *The Book of Needs of the Orthodox Healthcare Chaplains* is intended for clergy in healthcare institutions, offering them, in an accessible and well-organized manner, the liturgical text used in the specific pastoral care of the Healthcare Chaplain. Therefore, through this work, we have set out, on the one hand, to enrich the content with rites and prayers that can be recited on various occasions encountered in the pastoral care of the sick, and, on the other hand, to provide a liturgical book that is easy to use at the sickbed and, at the same time, to present it in a format that upholds the solemnity of the sanctifying ministry.

The novelty of this edition of *The Book of Needs of the Orthodox Healthcare Chaplains* lies in the fact that, for the first time, rites and prayers have been published that are found in the worship of other sister Orthodox Churches: Prayers for the blessing of a Cardiology ward, Paediatrics, Neurology, Psychiatry, Ophthalmology, Dentistry, ENT, and so on, as well as rites that the hospital chaplain

may officiate outside the chapel, for example: *The Rite of Prayer for the Sick* and *The Rite for the Consecration of a Commemorative Plaque*.

Therefore, we hope that this first edition of *The Book of Needs of the Orthodox Healthcare Chaplains* will be of assistance to ministers in hospitals and care centres in their liturgical and pastoral work, for the alleviation of suffering and for the salvation of the faithful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial note 5

Rites Related to the Birth of a Child

Prayer for a husband and wife who wish to have children 9
Prayer for the pregnant woman 11
The ritual on the first day after the birth of a child 12
The blessing of the water 12
The prayer for the blessing of water 14
Prayers on the first day 15
The order of services on the eighth day at the naming of the infant, when the name is given 19
Prayer when a woman has a miscarriage 22

The Order of Holy Baptism

The order of holy baptism in short 23

Confession of Sins or the Sacrament of Repentance

Confession of sins or the sacrament of repentance 25
Prayers for forgiveness 25
Guide to confession 28

Communion for the Sick

The order for the urgent distribution of Holy Communion to the sick 33

The Holy Oil (Annointing)

The office of holy oil 37
The prayer of the oil 50
A supplicatory canon (molieben) for the sick 83

Prayers for the Difficult Departure of the Soul

Prayers for one who is struggling with death 93

Absolutions

The prayer read by the bishop or the spiritual father, for the forgiveness of all sins, both voluntary and involuntary, and for every oath and curse 98
A prayer for those who are under a curse or have bound themselves by an oath 99
Prayer for the removal of a curse 100

Prayers for Reconciliation

Prayer for the increase of peace and love for one another 100
Prayer for the reconciliation of those in conflict with one another 101

Prayers for the Sick

A prayer for every kind of sickness 102
Prayer for headaches (evil eye) 103
Prayer for those suffering from inflammation (neuralgia, toothaches, ear infections, and others) 105
The prayer for one who is ill and cannot sleep 105
A prayer for every kind of illness 107
Prayer for a sick person confined to bed 108
Prayer for a sick child 108
Prayer for the sick before operations 109
Prayer for someone injured in an accident 110
Prayer for those troubled in spirit and for the mentally ill 111
Prayer for the blessing of the elderly 112

Prayers in Times of Public Danger

Prayer for invoking God's mercy in all times of public danger and plague 114
Prayer in times of contagious diseases 117

Prayers for Those Struggling with Passions

Prayers for those enslaved by passions (drunkenness, smoking, drugs, etc.) ... 118
Prayer for the one enslaved by the passion of fornication ... 119
Prayer for those overcome by despair (depression) ... 120

Exorcism Prayers

From the prayers of Saint Basil the Great ... 121
From the exorcism prayers of Saint John Chrysostom ... 125
Other prayers for driving out evil spirits ... 127
The prayer of the Holy Hieromartyr Cyprian ... 127
Prayer for those tormented by demons ... 128
Prayer for the one troubled by evil spirits ... 129

The Order of the Lesser Sanctification of Waters for the Inauguration of a Medical or Social-philanthropic Facility

The order of the lesser sanctification of waters for the inauguration of a medical or social-philanthropic facility ... 131

Other Prayers

Prayer for the blessing of an ambulance ... 138
Prayer for the fulfillment of our useful requests ... 138
Prayer of thanksgiving for the blessings received from God ... 139
Prayer for the blessing of a blood donation centre ... 140
Prayer for the blessing of a palliative care centre (for the terminally ill) ... 141
Prayer for the blessing of a pharmacy ... 142
Prayer for the blessing of a maternity ward ... 143
Prayer for the blessing of a centre for the deaf or with hearing-impairments ... 144
Prayer for the blessing of a centre for the blind ... 145
Prayer for the blessing of an ear, nose, and throat (ENT) clinic ... 146
Prayer for the blessing of a dentist practice ... 147

Prayer for the blessing of an ophthalmology clinic 148
Prayer for the blessing of a care home (for the elderly) 149
Prayer for the blessing of an emergency room (A&E department) 150
Prayer for the blessing of the neurology and psychiatry clinic (ward) 151
Prayer for the blessing of a paediatric clinic (ward)..... 152
Prayer for the blessing of a radiology department..... 153
Prayer for the blessing of a microbiology laboratory 154
Prayer for the blessing of a cardiology department (ward) 155

The Order of the Blessing of a Monument

The order of the blessing of a monument or a memorial plaque..... 156

Commemoration of the Departed

The small lytia or the trisagion prayers of mercy for the departed 160