

# The Increasing Social Relevance of the Catholic Liturgical and Theological Reform Regarding Judaism (Nostra aetate 4): an Orthodox Point of View\*

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*One of the smallest and most influential documents of Vatican II is the Nostra aetate ( declaration. The dynamic of the discussions as it was formulated and the subsequent arduous process of and reception application on local church level proved that the reconsideration of the attitude of the Roman-Catholic Church towards Judaism was concealing unforeseen consequences at the moment of the promulgation. Not only that Nostra aetate has been a turning point for the relationships between Catholicism and Judaism, but it has opened and encouraged – of course, along other documents of the council – a whole new perception of one another and of the ecumenical dialogue. The Jewish response to the 50 years Jubilee of Vatican II confirms the ultimately social relevance of the possible collaboration between Christians and Jews in ethical issues. This paper puts at the fore the Nostra aetate as example for the Orthodox Church as well, and draws attention to the many benefits that may follow such responses.*

**Keywords:** *liturgical renewal; Nostra aetate; Orthodox liturgy; anti-Judaism; ecumenism; social theology*

## **Introduction: « Je ne veux pas être un souvenir, je serai pour vous un appel »<sup>1</sup>**

In March 2016, a street in Paris was given a new name and this was a name that surprised many people. It was the name of Saint Maria Skobtsova (1891-1945), already canonized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 2004. The street was officially opened in the presence of several representatives of the Orthodox Churches in Paris, of local political public figures, but also

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\* Research Project financed through a Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu research grant LBUS-IRG-2016-02.

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<sup>1</sup> “I don’t want to be a memory, I will be a call for you,” among the last words of nun Maria Skobtsova quoted by Catherine Vieu-Charier in her inaugural discourse of the street in Paris. Source: <http://orthodoxie.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/DISOURS-CATHERINE-VIEU-CHARIER-Inauguration-rue-M%C3%A8re-Marie-Skobtsov-31-03-2016.pdf>, viewed 23. 01. 2017.