

## **Church and Social Integration of Disabled People**

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### ABSTRACT

Social integration of disabled people (D.P.) is gradually becoming an even broader social welfare; its materialization, however, depends on the contribution and cooperation of the entire educational community. In such an effort the role of the Church becomes evident, more so nowadays when the social policy of the State seems to be developing tendencies of self-restraint. The Orthodox Christian Church of Greece (OCCG) has traditionally promoted the overall work of ministration and charity, primarily towards D.P. Nevertheless, self-sufficient action aiming at their social integration cannot be systematically organized. It is evident that their social integration cannot be the concern of the established church only; each one of us should have a share in the concern, to be expressed through our attitude and efforts. Consequently, the role of religious education in this particular orientation, that is, the formation of appropriate attitude and action, constitutes a major factor and, as such, it has become the subject matter of the research program: "Religious education and social integration of D.P." The first phase of the program includes: (i) recording of the degree, range and qualitative type of relevant action which has been developed so far and (ii) the OCCG proposals; the corresponding results have been published (in Greek, in 1997 by the University of Athens) and have been distributed gratis to the Holy Bishops and elsewhere (if needed one may ask for them at the tel. number 01.7277514 or fax 01. 9319598). The present article includes an account of these particular results.

## 1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND AIM OF THE RESEARCH

*1.1. The concept and need for social integration*

Social integration in its established conceptual framework, that of "social insertion," is the outcome of a series of socialization processes; it includes a wide range of activities such as functional rehabilitation, education, vocational guidance, vocational training, which are rounded off with vocational rehabilitation (initial or vocational re-integration). The procedures, the means and the results of socialization, as far as the content, the process and the result of "inclusion-insertion" and "integration" are concerned also include the issue of employment. According to various approaches, concerning the contribution of employment to human and societal survival and integration, employment offers, among others, the following:

- a) Opportunities to cultivate and develop one's abilities, which contribute to the development and formation of one's personality.
- b) Possibilities of developing substantial relations with the other members of the society, which,
- c) entail the existence and functioning of the society and, vice versa, the existence and functioning of the society "enforces" the creation of such relations, which lead to,
- d) man's social integration.'

Despite, however, the need for people's social coexistence, through the possibilities offered by participation in the social setting via work, many people, and more so disabled people (D.P), for a number of reasons (either subjective or objective) are not offered equal opportunities concerning their preparation and "proportionate" participation in it (according to their abilities, skills, interests and the labor market needs). The absence of certain people from the social setting results either in these people's failure to acquire a personal identity (free personality) and in their alienation due to their dependence on their occasional environment (family, institutional, charity, allowances etc.), or their marginalization, their degradation and their cutting off or rejection.

It is evident that the prime prerequisite in every case of social integration is the mutual acceptance and acknowledgement of the equivalence of all the members in a group, or in all sub-groups of a major group, that is, their equation concerning their participation both

in the responsibilities and the rights, which form a common basis for the functioning of a certain environment (family, school, work, social).

Consequently, the education and the educational factors ought to prepare all the members, who compose human society, in such a way that the free and responsible personality of each member can: a) "be cultivated" through the free (both in the family and the society) as well as through the systematic education (within comprehensive and vocational education units); b) be activated through the work-vocational-financial integration, in accordance with both one's interests and the existing subjective, or more so, the objective possibilities;<sup>2</sup> c) resume action in both directions, that is, both towards his/her fellow human beings, in cooperation with D.P. and their representatives<sup>3</sup> and through the mutual acceptance of D.P. and non-D.P, as well as towards one's self. Mutual acceptance also leads to removal of the inhibition of the disabled person by a non-D.P, which is expressed as deprivation of certain rights (such as of the right to education, rehabilitation, integration), as well as to the non-consolidation of allowances or other forms of assistance, which may result in some form of dependence.

Under these terms, the contribution of the Orthodox Christian Church (considered as a factor which contributes in the process of integration of D.P), should, in our view, be manifested through religious education and the practice originating from it, coming from the whole of the faithful and not only from the Church administration. Because integration involves, among other things, the extent and the orientation of social associations,<sup>4</sup> which can be created and developed daily in the context of church life (worship, mystic, in festivities etc.). Fundamental precondition for the achievement of this aim is the acceptance and materialization of integration viewed as promotion of the idea of co-existence and cooperation between D.P. and non D.P, since Church is not simply an ideology; it is mainly and above all life.. .life offered... through charity, recreation, virtual transubstantiation.<sup>5</sup> The concepts of coexistence, cooperation and love, however, do not elevate the obligation and the right to work, according to both the work-related notion of the Christian doctrine,<sup>6</sup> and the demands of the industrial society, in which the profession constitutes the major factor of social recognition as well as the primary means for self-preservation.<sup>7</sup>

### *1.2. The objectives of the research program*

Nowadays, equal participation of D.P. in the social setting, is progressively increasing, a fact which does not necessarily imply an uneventful and unhindered evolution, and, consequently, the "normal" development of the phenomenon is simply a matter of time. There is still a great number of problems to be settled, which are due, as we have already noted (par. 1.1), to subjective (related to the D.P. themselves) or objective (related to the rest of the population) reasons, and their solution constitutes a major prerequisite for the social integration of D.P.

Included among these problems, which are inhibiting or restricting integration, are both the inadequate activity on the part of the whole of the educational factors (Family, School, Church, Society, State), as well as the absence of cooperation or co-ordination of their action of whatever degree.

It is evident that this particular cooperation should manifest itself in two directions: towards the preparation of D.P. for their participation on equal terms, that is, "proportionate", but also self-reliant involvement in the social setting on the one hand, and towards the preparation of the other members of the society on the other, so that there can be progress in the effort to "transform" the societal attitude from negative or neutral to consistently positive and effective action. Consequently, religious education in general, and the Church in particular, can be effective as far as this aim is concerned since its mission is known to be dual: a) it provides spiritual, mental and "material" reinforcement in order to encourage self-reliance on the part of the subject, and b) it takes pains to prepare the social force, whose attitude (positive, negative or neutral) influences "pro-quota" the progress of the effort towards social integration.

These are precisely the aims of our research program "Religious education and social integration of D.P." (RESIDP), *whose first phase* constitutes but a preparatory activity, as part of the whole program and includes: a) acknowledgement and simultaneous critical approach and annotation of the action assumed within the precincts of the Church by the Holy Bishops (H.B.) in the Greek State concerning these people's social integration; b) recording of the relevant proposals that have been put forward, with this aim in mind, by those

involved, in various sectors or levels, in the Christian doctrine and practice; and c) annotation of their own action and proposals along with certain personal suggestions.

These aims are approached by the following partial activities: a) detection of the changes, already apparent in the broader Christian precincts, starting off from the "microclimate" in each of the Holy Bishoprics, which may not be broadly known, given that the Orthodox Church neither advertises, nor boasts of its work; b) identification of the intentions and mode of materialization, so that new or complementary action can be assumed, as well as appropriate preparation of the people who are dealing or are going to deal with D.P; c) location of new employment sectors for D.P. (These activities constitute fundamental preconditions, since the final recommendations concerning the form and the mode of contribution of religious education [second phase], should consider not only the present conditions, but also the outlining perspectives related to the development of relevant action); and d) identification and critical description of the action by the Patriarchates as well as by the rest of the Orthodox Churches.

The *second phase* includes a) detection of the broader experience related to the Christian initiatives in the European Union; b) content analysis of the school books for the subject of Religion; and c) proposals concerning the adjustment of their content, so that, even through this school-subject, the issue of attitude formation on the part of "non disabled people," concerning the self reliance and social integration of D.P, can be approached according to the current views.

It should also be noted that, the general aim of the research program, that is, the social integration of D.P, is in line with the current increasing demand not only for the systematic contribution, but also for the cooperation of all of the factors and educational means (Family, School, Church, Society, State, Habituation, Model and Teaching respectively) in dealing with the complex issue of social integration of D.P.

## 2. RESEARCH SCOPE AND APPROACH

For the materialization of the aim of *the first* research phase data were collected: a) mainly from the Holy Bishoprics (H.B.) within the Greek State, since these represent the official domain of the Church (approximately 30% of the H.B. completed the relevant question-

naire, which constitutes a cross-section sample: see Table 1; b) secondarily, from youth organization-unions (Y.O.) (14% responded out of those who have been asked); and c) also from 41% of those present at the first meeting of the program (May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1994: Church and D.P.<sup>8</sup>). Among them were clergymen, university professors, teachers in special schools and in other educational units, university students, schools advisers etc. (see Table 2).

For the collection of the research data the following means were employed: a questionnaire, which was sent (in June 1995), along with

**Table 1**  
**Number of H.B. and Y.O. questioned and**  
**corresponding number of responses.**

<b>People questioned and respondents</b>	<b>H.B.</b>		<b>Y.U.</b>	
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Were questioned</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100,00</b>
<b>Returned questionnaires:</b>				
• <b>as unclaimed</b>	—	—	3	9,70
• <b>due to abolition</b>	1	1,07	—	—
<b>Were questioned (finally)</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100,00</b>
<b>Responded</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29,35</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14,28</b>
<b>From the respondents:</b>				
• <b>completed the questionnaire</b>	23	85,19	4	100,00
• <b>responded without completing the questionnaire</b>	4	14,81	—	—
<b>Responses used in 98 and 28 cases respectively</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>25,00</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14,28</b>

a registered informative letter, a delivery note and a reply-paid envelope, to the H.B. and Y.O. After a certain period of time, a reminder letter was sent, in the cases of delayed response, or even a new copy of the initial letter and questionnaire, in cases of acknowledgement of non-receipt, whereas telephone contacts or reminders followed. Also used was a special form which was filled in by the participants in the above mentioned meeting.

The data, which have finally been collected, do not offer a quantitative representation of the main or of the secondary sources of

**Table 2.**  
**Distribution according to the capacity of the participants in the**  
**May 9<sup>th</sup> 1994 meeting and corresponding numbers of those who**  
**completed the distributed special form.**

Item no	Capacity	Participated in the meeting		Completed the form	
		No.	%	No.	%
1.	Clergymen (metropolitans, archimandrites, priests)	6	4,6	2	3,8
2.	University professors (Faculty members)	21	16,1	5	9,4
3.	Teachers	33	25,5	11	20,7
4.	Teachers in special schools or other educational units	9	6,9	4	7,5
5.	University students	19	14,6	11	20,7
6.	School advisers	2	1,5	1	1,9
7.	Social workers	6	4,6	3	5,7
8.	Civil servants	6	4,6	2	3,7
9.	Civil servants in services for Disabled People	4	3,1	3	5,7
10.	Free professionals	2	1,5	—	—
11.	Pensioners	4	3,1	3	5,7
12.	Housekeeping	5	3,9	—	—
13.	Disabled People	3	2,3	1	1,9
14.	Parents of D.P.	3	2,3	3	5,7
15.	Representatives of D.P.	5	3,9	3	5,7
16.	Did not declare any capacity	2	1,5	1	1,9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>

information, and as such they cannot claim expression of the view of

dimension of the research data, however, does not raise a question of reliability, as far as the conclusions are concerned, since: (i) we are seeking strong and reliable proposals from those who have dealt in practice, too, with any theoretical conception concerning the social integration of D.P. and (ii) the general work of "spiritual and charitable ministry" offered by the Church is presented, in its entirety, in the "Church of Greece Diptychs." (see Tables 3 & 4)

It should be noted that from the data presented below, those concerning special action assumed by the H.B. for the D.P, refer only to the 23 Bishopricks, which have completed the questionnaire, rather than to the whole of the H.B. at the time of the research.

### 3. RESEARCH RESULTS: PREVALENT CONDITIONS AND PROPOSALS

#### 3.1 *Developed action for D.P.*

It is evident from the facts mentioned in the "Church of Greece Diptychs," that "ministry," that is, the services offered on the part of the Church to the people in general, is particularly developed and centers around two axes:

a) the axis of "Spiritual Ministry," which includes solidarity services, schools, summer camp sites, spiritual centers, etc. (see Table 3) and

b) the axis of "Charitable Ministry," which is manifested through extended action by the H.B. and refers mainly to the activities of the funds for the relief of the poor or the centers of parochial action. This particular action is manifested, mainly, in the frame of broader services offered to the whole of the population (accommodation, nursing, rehabilitation etc.), but, also, in the form of integral services (see Table 4).



**Table 3**  
**Kinds of rendered "Spiritual Ministry"**  
**(educational and social applications)**

Item no	Units or kinds of "Spiritual Ministry"
1.	Support, rehabilitation, prisoner /discharged /drug-addict/ alcoholic re-integration services (personal or/and extended to include their families)
2.	Services for those about to be married
3.	Parent Schools, Family support centers ( families having many children or special social e.t.c. problems)
4.	Religious Services or pastoral care services or solidarity services intended for working people, repatriating people, prisoners, discharged, drafted, hospitalized, patients, older people, holiday-makers, tourists e.t.c.
5.	Second Mass or other holy service for young people and other categories of people.
6.	Consultative stations for the solution of young people's problems.
7.	Speeches, sermon, lectures, congresses and other relevant demonstrations.
8.	Missionary action
9.	Schools and workshops for music (byzantine, mainly), hagiography, traditional dances, computer science, cutting-sewing, knitting-weaving, popular art, icon-code-work-of-art restoration, handicraft, pottery, carpet-making, house-keeping, agricultural works
10.	Schools for ecclesiastic work executives
11.	Tutorial classes for poor pupils

(To be continued in the next page)

(Table continued from the previous page)

Item no	Units or kinds of "Spiritual Ministry"
12.	Pupil and university student attendance services
13.	Lending libraries
14.	Spiritual-cultural-educational-display centers, haunts
15.	Stage organization and functioning
16.	Employment agencies
17.	Summer-time camping sites
18.	Day nurseries (infantile, baby)
19.	Information in printed or electronic form; production and free or charged disposal of goods
20.	Special educational units, special education, protection, rehabilitation centers-unions for special categories of D.P. (e.g. mentally handicapped, deaf-mute people)

Specialized action aiming at the social integration or re-integration of D.P. has not yet reached a satisfactory level of development. There has not been much progress concerning activities aiming at independent living through one's independent moving inside and outside one's home as well as through one's financial independence, which is, mainly, achieved through vocational rehabilitation. As a consequence, the action of whatever degree or range of development that has been assumed by the H.B. aiming at the social integration of D.P. is mainly realized within the framework of broader social action.

According to the data which have been collected through the responses of the H.B. to the questionnaire, the already developed special action for the D.P. includes, mainly, Medicare (65%), financial relief (61%) and psychological support (48%), home nursing (13%) and institutional care (4%). Activities related to employment are limited (17% of the H.B.), whereas activities related to educational support are worth mentioning (48% of the H.B.). These activities, however,

**Table 4**  
**Kinds of offered "Charity ministry"**

<b>Item no</b>	<b>Units or kinds of " Charity ministry "</b>
1.	Orphanages
2.	Old people's homes, guest-houses, shelters for the elderly
3.	Institutions, homes, youth shelters, boarding houses (for orphans, poor university students e.t.c.)
4.	Houses for the destituted
5.	Associations, charity and benefaction institutions
6.	Charity meals-messes
7.	Units offering accommodation to children from other orthodox countries
8.	Scholarships or financial relief offered to poor pupils, university students, families having many children
9.	Rehabilitation institutions- dowry provision to poor or orphan girls
10.	Homes for unmarried mothers
11.	Clinics for chronic diseases
12.	Homes for incurables
13.	Hospitals, clinics in medical attendance units, surgeries, health centres, first-aid stations, medicare services, sanitariums, psychiatric units, psychical hygiene centers, blood donation centers, organ donation centers, home nursing.
Notes: See notes at the end of table 3.	

Source: *"Diptyha lis Ekklesias tis Ellados"* [in Greek] [*Church of Greece Diptychs*], (1997). Apostoliki Diakonia tis Ekklesias tis Ellados, sel. 301-912.

cannot be considered adequate since, in any case, they constitute basic prerequisites for the social integration of all people in general and not additional activities designed for the D.P. in particular. It is noted that in the context of the broader work of the Church for the D.P., there are special units (institutions, boarding houses, centers etc.) operating in the H.B., through which various services (Medicare, accommodation, rehabilitation, reintegration, training, support, solidarity) are provided for these people.

*3.2 D.P. Categories covered by the action of the H.B.: Criteria for the support offered and number of people covered by the special action developed for the D.P.*

It is evident from the data at our disposal that "old age" is supported by the majority of the H.B. (74%), people with motor impairments and mental retardation are covered by the same, per category, percentage (48%) and people with sensory impairments (visual, acoustic) by a much lower percentage per category (9%). Finally, various other categories of special groups (Greeks from N. Epirus and the former USSR) are covered by a 30% of the H.B., whereas drug-addicts are supported by a very small percentage of the H.B. (4%). When evaluating the quality of the intervention, we notice an escalation in the interest of the Church, concerning the development of action; it starts off from those who are unable to lead an entirely independent life (elderly people, mentally retardate, people with motor impairments) and extends gradually, to cover the rest of the categories which face, comparatively, fewer problems, as far as autonomy is concerned.

Determinant criteria for the support provided are primarily the financial status of the disabled person or his/her family (57%), as well as the type of the disability (39%), whereas, in many cases (48%), there is a co-evaluation of both factors; various other criteria such as desertion on the part of the family, descent-origin (people of Greek descent, foreigners), exit from the institution as well as the possibility of training (people able to receive training) are also reported. In our view, the criterion for the distribution of support to poor and suffering people is formed on the basis of the parameters which determine the degree of autonomy and self-reliance of the person to whom the activity is addressed. That is, the basic criterion -which, in

our view, is the degree of the person's autonomy- has indicated that "old age" constitutes top priority; a considerable part of it is gradually incorporated into the category of D.P. So, priority is given to three groups, which have a typical problem in common, that is, inability for self-reliance of any kind (movement, meditation, decision-making, etc.) or degree.

Concerning the number of people covered by the action developed for them, in 43% of the H.B., it does not exceed 100 people per H.B., whereas in 9% of the H.B., this number rises to 100-150 people. As for the rest of the H.B., 26% of them cover 150-250 people per H.B. and just 4% covers 400 people. In our view, the existence of special activities for, approximately, an average of 100 people per each one of the 23 H.B. is not an indication of adequate development of related action. Therefore, it is evident that what is needed is "to become aware" of the already existing initiatives and proposals, which could function as a source of inspiration or motivation which could broaden the circle of people who are to receive the already developed or proposed new form of action.

### *3.3. Sources of financial, educational and psychological-spiritual support provided, as well as motives of action for the D.P.*

The major source of the financial support provided, is the Fund for the Relief of the Poor (approximately 80%). As far as the people receiving the support are concerned, in more than half of the cases (52%) they are D.P, whereas in 30% of the cases support is offered not only to the D.P. themselves, but to their family as well; in much fewer cases support concerns only the families of the D.P. (13%). This means that in the majority of the cases it covers, in the first place, the person that is deprived of financial autonomy (82%) and, in the second place, that person's family (43%). In our view, this priority contributes to the social integration of the disabled person, provided that it does not ignore the perspective of gradual financial independence.

As for the educational support, which is provided by 87% of the H.B., it is primarily offered in institutions (88%), associations (50%) and spiritual centers (31%), that is, in organizations "related" to the Church and secondarily, through activities of our own initiative in units with purely educational (comprehensive education or vocational

training) or more specific aims, such as de-institutionalization. The fact that this task is accomplished by non-specialist organizations does not constitute a "particularity" which is exclusively typical of the Church; it is, though, an indication of the policy which is in effect outside the domain of the Church, where institutions, associations and unions<sup>10</sup> are responsible for the vocational education and training of the D.P.

It is generally accepted that the disabled person needs psychological and spiritual support in the effort to overcome all kinds of obstacles, which hinder his/her evolutionary process or attempt at socialization. For this reason, the Church has developed cooperation with specialized persons and organizations (specialists, institutions of medical attendance and advisory centers). The cooperating persons and organizations are: i) clergymen, laity, specialists (22%), ii) the previously mentioned people and institutions of medical attendance (17%), iii) clergymen and laity (13%) and iv) clergymen, laity and medical attendance institutions (9%).

In all but two cases, cooperation between clergymen and laity, and even, very often, between special scientists and medical attendance institutions or other units, is evidence of acknowledgement or acceptance of the need for contribution and cooperation from all sides. Equally significant is the fact that clergymen participate in almost all schemes; this is evidence that the Church has not "handed over" this particular task to others, but accomplishes it itself, in cooperation with ordinary laity or specialists and organizations.

Finally, it is worth noting that the prevalent form of spiritual and psychological support provided is a combination of voluntary and paid work (43%).

In any case, the value of voluntary giving" is evident nowadays so that the policy of the state is considered "less social"<sup>12</sup> and there is a variety of social needs, provided that this particular offer is not an expression of mere compassion, formality, display, etc., but of sympathy<sup>13</sup> and sincere love.<sup>14</sup> In fact, it is clear from the answers of the H.B. -as it was expected- that the main motives of action for the D.P. in the evangelical context are love for fellow human beings (70%), and charity (52%). These are followed by man's duty to fellow man (35%), sympathy (17%), personal need (13%) and, eventually, the demands of the D.P., which are posed by their organizations (9%).

*3.4. Activities aiming at the vocational rehabilitation of the D.P.*

According to the data of our research study, certain H.B. have developed action for the D.P. through such activities as vocational preparation and rehabilitation, which include: placement in work-posts within or outside the competence of the Church (26%), school-and-vocational-guidance counseling (17%), tuition-fees payment (9%), pre-vocational education or vocational training (9%), search for a job, or moral support for the search for a job (9%), sheltered employment (4%) and housing in the form of accommodation in institutions (4%).

It is thus evident that more than half of the H.B. -which have developed general action for the D.P- offer a network of vocational preparation and rehabilitation activities. Consequently, systematization and expansion of this particular activity, in a period when unemployment rates, concerning the general population of the E.U. countries, appear particularly high (during the research, the relative rates ranged from 3,3 % to 22,3%, with an average rate, on a E.U. level, approximately 11 % of the work- force),<sup>15</sup> will definitely have a positive impact on the hard-hit special groups, since poverty and disability have always been closely connected,<sup>16</sup> thus forming various types of dependencies.<sup>17</sup>

As far as the employment and the vocational specialties (labor posts) within the domain of action of the Church are concerned, it is gathered that the D.P. are employed by a 30% of those H.B. which have responded to the questionnaire, as follows: sacristans (22%), gardeners (22%), hagiographers (13%), cantors (4%), Sunday-school teachers (4%) and assistant-cooks in institutions (4%). In domains outside the competence of the Church, people appointed to work-posts by the agency of the Church work as: office clerks (13%), civil servants and private clerks (9%), manual workers (13%) and assistant-cooks in institutions (4%).

This concise picture of the work-posts occupied by the D.P, within or outside the domain of the Church, offers evidence of a satisfactory dispersion in almost all sectors of employment, always, though, in the form of dependent work. What seems to be totally missing -even in general- is the form of support for self-employment. It is worth noting that subsidy programs concerning employment offered by the Organization for the Employment of Work-force (OEFF), have made

-among others- provision for self-employment. There are also favorable provisions concerning compulsory employment of the D.P. in work-posts up to a certain quota of posts, which are offered each time.

### *3.5. Recreation of the D.P.*

Some of the most important factors which help to secure the possibility of recreation for every single person, are: free time, personal views and demands related to recreation, as well as the capabilities for the organization and good use of free-time, one's cultural standard, and, finally, the objective possibilities or the prevailing general conditions.

Recreation constitutes an indispensable need, especially for young D.P. since music, role-playing and "dramatization in Education," in general, plastic arts, trips, athletic games, etc. serve therapeutic purposes as well.<sup>18</sup> In the domain of the Church, in particular, additional opportunities are offered for the development of such activities, through Byzantine music<sup>19</sup> and other relevant activities.

Recreation, thus, appears to be a group activity with various manifestations in 65% of the H.B. The dominant form is that of trips (61%), mainly of pilgrimage type, and then summer camps and cultural activities (30%), as well as watching or organizing theatrical performances (26%), celebrations or festivities (9%) common or occasional recreation outside religious areas (9%), whereas, athletics constitutes a recent form of recreation in this particular area. There are, also, lectures offered for foreigners; as for older people, recreation includes visits by children attending Sunday schools to institutions, which accommodate these people.

In conclusion, we could say that there is a considerable variety of recreation forms; however, this does not mean that similar activities should not be looked into and that the already existing ones should not receive adequate publicity. We hold that participation in summer camps greatly contributes to the efforts towards mutual acceptance and co-existence.

### *3.6. Proposals for new forms of action*

As it has already been mentioned (par. 1.2.), the primary aim of this research phase is the search for proposals and views among all



those who speak for the Church nowadays or are inspired and work in the Christian climate. Easily discernible in the proposals put forward by the Church is a "modernization tendency," when dealing with current needs and demands. Table 5 shows that almost every single H.B. has put forward a proposal concerning new forms of activities aiming at the social integration of D.P. Even nowadays, all these proposals, though familiar in the context of social welfare and private initiative, constitute, at least some of them, innovative activities in the context of the Christian Orthodox Church.

The proposals put forward by two of the Youth Organizations (Y.O.) are related to two basic prerequisites for the social integration, that is, to vocational and spiritual support, on the one hand, and on the other, to the functioning of the *agapetic* community of the faithful, of the community of God, which is effected through the sensitization and activation on the part of the Church staff.

Finally, the proposals on the part of those who participated in the meeting of May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1994 (see Table 2) can form two distinct categories: a) activities included in the ones which have been put forward by the other sources of information or are already in practice (information-sensitization demonstrations, modern technology exploitation, cooperation with foreign countries, functioning of special schools-support centers, provision for orphans, parent-counseling, census of D.P); b) activities constituting new or original propositions: special synodal committee formation, in-service teacher-training aiming at preparing special executives, projection of talents among the disabled people, enactment of valid legislation, introduction of a relevant subject at the Faculty of Theology.

The key to effective activation of the Church towards the social integration of D.P, is considered to be the search for suitable people and their consequent appropriate specialization. People fit for the task under consideration are to be searched -according to the proposition of the H.B.- among university graduates (in general or of certain relevant specialties), nurse-men/women, special professionals, women and people with such qualities as: morals, faith, love, volunteerism, as well as a capacity for co-operation with the Church. Also recommended is the training of all those already working in the domain of the Church. Those who participated in the 9<sup>th</sup> May 1994 one-day meeting: a) maintain that the executives should be both distinguished for their knowledge concerning the Christian doctrine and voice the

**Table 5.**  
**Propositions by the H.B. concerning new forms of action to be assumed by the Church for the social integration of D.P.**

Item no	New forms of action	H.B. (N = 23)	
		No	%
1.	Special clergymen and specially trained people committee-formation	1	4,34
2.	General activation	1	4,34
3.	Information	1	4,34
4.	Special institutions-schools or educational support centres (D.P. normally staying in the family environment)	3	13,04
5.	Modern services-provision organization	1	4,34
6.	The Church is the regulator-coordinator of all social integration activities	1	4,34
7.	Implementation of "open medical attendance" forms	1	4,34
8.	De-institutionalization initiatives	1	4,34
9.	Sensitization of the Church crew	1	4,34
10.	Organization of a european specifications centre	1	4,34
11.	Creation of an organization for the employment in the private and public sector	2	8,7
12.	Coordination with state and social organizations	2	8,7
13.	No answer	10	43,47

Christian spirit; b) hold that the Holy Monasteries themselves can resume such a role (for the social integration of D.P.); c) suggest that the education should extend to include the parents of the D.P. as well; and d) insist that the education is achieved through direct contact with the D.P and dealing with their problems.

The H.B. point out that the main sectors of action to be assumed by the executives concerning the social integration of D.P. are: a)

mental support -moral, psychological and religious- (40%); b) education and vocational training (22%); c) medical and "therapeutic" intervention (13%); d) financial and social support (9%); and e) recreation (4%).

The basic proposal on the part of the Y.O. focuses, mainly, on psychological support and moral solidarity as well as on counseling and school and vocational guidance, that is, the main emphasis is on the psycho-mental sector.

### *3.8. Technical Equipment*

The existence of facilities is considered an indispensable prerequisite for the implementation of any form of support for the D.P. It is self-evident that the types of technical facilities should vary according to the nature of the support (educational, vocational, financial etc.) as well as the type of the special need. The basic needs as far as facilities are concerned, as they are defined through the answers of the H.B., are mainly: a) special building constructions (35%) and professional/technical workshops (9%) and b) the existence of appropriate equipment (26%). According to the proposals of the Y.O., apart from the need for the creation of suitable premises, individualized support should be facilitated, within a confined region, as the additional (special) support cannot be possibly provided in places shared by all people (D.P. or non D.P). In this way, however, there is great risk of isolation and non-promotion of mutual acceptance. For this particular reason, we favor the notion of dealing with the issue as the occasion arises each time. That means that, whenever the additional-"proportionate" intervention (see note 8) requires group-work, the group dynamics will be employed. In the same way, individualized intervention will be practiced whenever this approach is required, and whenever the group-dynamics function in the frame of the broader pursued aim, to include all different cases, then the process to be implemented should be the one that is employed for the general population.<sup>20</sup>

### *3.9. Religious needs, religious education of the D.P.*

The issue of objective obstacles, hindering religious needs satisfaction, and their removal has been approached separately for each one of the three major categories of D.P. (sensory, motor disabilities

and mental retardation). This particular issue is brought into notice since certain arrangements aiming at facilitating satisfaction of religious needs have been made in order to include the whole of the faithful. As an example, we mention the two successive Liturgies on Sunday. Within this framework, it is self-evident that the issue related with the general facilitation of the D.P. in order to be able to exercise their religious duties, is a major one, and has been repeatedly raised publicly by various sides.<sup>21</sup>

Concerning the facilitation of people with motor and mental disabilities, the following means are proposed: construction of ramps (48%), special seats, lifts, handrails, provision for wheelchairs and home-visits (same rate in all cases 4%).

As for people with sensory disabilities, additional activities are proposed during the Divine Liturgy, such as "simultaneous translation" (for deaf people), special Liturgy programs, use of companions or special instructors as well as use of audiovisual means, whereas for people with mental disorders, introduction of innovative elements where involvement of other people or "means" (of technology) is recommended.

With regard to the mentally retarded in particular, three different trends can be detected: the first one focuses on the need for a preparatory stage, as is the case in other sectors, outside religious life (e.g. the area of vocational training). The second one aims at two directions and includes both the contribution of specialized clergymen and executives, as well as special celebrations of worship. The third trend focuses on the idea of dealing with the problem on an individual basis, even with the aid of companions. It is evident, however, that the whole issue cannot be attended through the use of generally applied practices; for this particular reason, its further investigation by specialists has been recommended. Undoubtedly, there is a major difficulty in dealing with this special issue in the case of the D.P; for this reason, prayers, a suggested solution, indicate the extent of difficulty in dealing with general issues related to mentally retarded people. There is even the view (4%) that no facilitation, whatsoever, is needed, since communication with God is effected on a spiritual basis.

There are certain considerations to be made as far as the introduction of innovative elements is concerned, particularly in the case of people with sensory disabilities; they are related to their application and effects. People with auditory disabilities are incapable of attend-

ing, acoustically, the Divine Liturgy or the rest of the services. There is, however, the possibility of making up for this, up to a certain degree, by using the holy books, provided, of course, that they are capable of reading whatever they attend at any given moment. Consequently, the problem is acute in the case of people with acoustic disorders, who are incapable of reading. Nevertheless, the problem still exists, even for those who are capable of reading: it is a matter of synchronization of those portions recited or chanted with their corresponding written form. This is particularly difficult, if not impossible, for the majority of the congregation, even those with no acoustic problem.

It is exactly these two shortcomings, reading and synchronization, that, in our view, could be overcome through the introduction of technology. A possible solution could be the installation of large or small screens at various points which in the church and other places (e.g. the place used for the delivery of the sermon), where the written form of whatever the faithful listen to is projected. This could be achieved, in the first place, by the intervention of a person through the central electronic unit. It is evident that the Orthodox Church, by adopting such an innovative approach, does not distort the mentality, the character, the structure or the tradition of worship. The Orthodox Church could even pioneer by taking up a research project, to be followed by a study and practical implementation of a model of automatic translation, through which the oral form of speech would be converted into a written form or into pictures similar to those used in sign language, whenever such a practice is advisable. It is worth noting that such a model could be automatically transferred to the domains of education, mass media, recreation and demonstrations of any kind.

As far as the issue of any relative facilitation is concerned, due to the spiritual character of the communication with the divine, we argue that it does not distract the spiritual character of the communication, since sensory perception, either as a symbol or as an image or even as any other inferential element, constitutes, for the whole of the faithful, a "medium" of transition from the visible to the invisible, from the material to the immaterial, from the earthly to the spiritual sphere. So, deprivation of the sensory perception of those taking place in the context of religious life would be considered as a negative distinction, even though they are approached through the use of "substitute" visual signs. Furthermore, the effort to communi-

cate with the divine should be assumed through the occasional "shared consciousness,"<sup>22</sup> of whatever degree, of this union, always looking forward to God's grace.<sup>23</sup>

In the proposals of the Y.O. we notice coincidence of views, which, in the case of people with motor disorders, focuses on facilitation of transport only, and not on that of access or approach to the places of worship. As for people with mental retardation, the Y.O. argue in favor of the introduction of any possible innovation. In all cases, the continuous personal contribution of the clergymen is considered essential.

Based on all that has been mentioned before, concerning all categories of D.P., a general speculation may help related to the possibility of conscious participation of all Christians in worship. Should we choose to ignore the fact that the understanding of all that is heard during the Divine Liturgy, is a general problem<sup>24</sup> not related with the mentally retarded only?

Besides, we consider that any personal option on the part of the disabled person, as far as the type of conscious participation in religious life is concerned, depends, on three major factors: a) previous related education; b) subsequent formation of personal notions; and c) the training of "people without disabilities" which will serve to increase their awareness and sensitization with regard to their attitude and disposition towards the issue of facilitation of the D.P. as far as the performance of their religious duties is concerned.

In conclusion, it can be claimed that all proposals but one, concur with the notion of providing facilitation to all D.P.; they even go as far as proposing the introduction of innovative elements in case the means already in use are not considered efficient for such activities.

### *3.10. The contribution of religious education to the change in the social attitude towards the problems of the D.P.*

Nowadays, religious education is provided in the following two ways: a) in the frame of the school subject "Religion," through the corresponding textbook; and b) through the religious training from the pulpit or "as occasion arises." It follows from related views on the part of both the H.B. and the Y.O. that neither the content of the textbook (see table 6) nor that of the holy sermon (see table 7), in any form or with any objective whatsoever, seem to be providing effi-

cient indications as to the way a change in social attitude and action can be effected in order to help in overcoming the present problems of the D.P., consistent with modern theories as far as their social integration is concerned.

In particular, with regard to differences traced among related rates, referring both to the textbook for the subject of Religion and the holy sermon, we notice that: in the case of the holy sermon, the difference between negative (35%) and positive responses (22%), which is here 13 percentage units, rises to 19, if expressed as the difference of the 16 actual responses (50% negative and 31% positive). These differences however remain lower when compared to the ones, which correspond to the textbook, and they reach 30 percentage units (39% negative responses minus 9% positive) and 50 (64% negative minus 14% positive) respectively. This correlation is represented in Table 8. The negative response is prevailing in this case, too, thus leading to the conclusion that our initial research hypothesis needs further investigation.

From the corresponding answers of the Y.O., it becomes evident that none of the two (textbook and holy sermon) can, in their present form, meet the modern demands concerning the mode of dealing with the problems of D.P. Typical are such answers as: 'slightly,' 'very little,' 'not much,' 'no.' Consequently, this fact confirms the need to look for new answers to the pressing questions posed to the religious education factors (Church, school, religious unions), concerning the approach to be employed for the accomplishment of all those included in the term social integration.

### *3.11. Information*

Given the fact that efficient and broad information concerning the specialized services provision by the Church, for the people with disabilities constitutes a fundamental factor for their development, we insist that it should be granted not only on an individualized basis, but also at various places or spaces as need arises.

It follows from the corresponding answers, that relatively few H.B. have issued a special list of their institutions, a fact which is mainly due to lack of adequate financial resources (43%). The main means employed in the service of information are: information leaflets issued by each one of the institutions and, in certain cases, radio stations,

**Table 6**

**Adequacy of the content of the schoolbook for the subject of Religion in relation with the present attitude towards the problems of the D.P.**

Item No	Adequacy of school-books	H.B.			
		Which completed the questionnaire (N = 23)		Which responded to this particular question (N = 14)	
		No	%	No.	%
1.	YES	2	8,70	2	14,29
2.	NO	9	39,13	9	64,28
3.	No definite answer (depending on the case)	1	4,35	1	7,14
4.	Don't Know	2	8,70	2	14,29
5.	No answer	9	39,13	-	—
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 7**

**Adequacy of religious education from the pulpit or "as occasion arises", in relation with the present problems of D.P.**

Item no	Adequacy of religious education from the pulpit or "as occasion arises"	H.B.			
		Which completed the questionnaire (N = 23)		Which responded to this particular question (N = 16)	
		No.	%	No.	%
1.	YES	5	21,74	5	31,25
2.	NO	8	34,78	8	50,00
3.	No definite answer (depending on the case)	2	8,70	2	12,50
4.	Don't know	1	4,35	1	6,25
5.	No answer	7	30,44	-	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100,00</b>



**Table 8**  
**Comparison of the numerical disparities between positive and negative answers with regard to the extent that the content of the school-book and the holy sermon deal with the present problems of D.P.**

Answers	Concerning the schoolbook		Concerning the holy sermon	
	No.	%	No.	%
From those who completed the questionnaire	23	100	23	100
Expressed a negative view	9	39	<b>8</b>	35
Expressed a positive view	2	9	5	22
<b>Difference</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>
From those who answered the question	14	100	16	100
Expressed a negative view	9	64	<b>8</b>	50
Expressed a positive view	2	14	5	31
<b>Difference</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>19</b>

various religious services in hospitals etc. We consider the expansion of relevant action possible, always taking into consideration the fact that any increase or expansion of information presupposes the capability to meet the requirements in the case of increased "demand" (on the spot).

*3.12. General comments and remarks*

General comments and remarks were gathered through a final question. Relevant H.B. and Y.O. views focus, mainly, on the following axes: a) the need for an inter-disciplinary approach and Church-State co-operation in dealing with the multi-factor problem of social integration of D.P. as far as both prevention and rehabilitation are

concerned; b) the need for specialization on the part of those already involved or about to be involved in this particular issue; c) the theological oration, with the sermon for love, which should mark any action in favor of any person, always standing out; d) the need for financial support towards the D.P.; and e) the fact that there is definitely no problem as far as liturgical attendance is concerned, as the "experience intake" is a matter of the "heart."

#### 4. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Having completed this present phase of our research as well as the description and annotation of the research data, which can be considered adequate as they come from the H.B. with relevant developed action (of whatever form or extent) and consequent experience, we hold that: the next step should be the acknowledgement, on the part of the Church and its staff, of the need to move from the stage of multi-faceted support to that of contribution to the effort of the disabled people to achieve self-reliant development in the social setting, always in line with individual abilities and skills, provided that there are no obstacles hindering their effort at carrying out their expectations. Apart from the material and spiritual support, disabled people should be given adequate chances to practice putting theoretical knowledge into practical implementation, as is the case with the rest of the members of society, since cognitive development includes empirical intellectual development, that is, man's ability to manipulate his knowledge and skills.<sup>25</sup>

Taking into account the expressed views and propositions, we regard that the following constitute feasible forms of action to be undertaken by the Church: (i) educational support (by volunteer university students, teachers, etc., either in the form of reinforcing tutorial teaching or as pre-vocational or even vocational training in Church-related sectors and vocations); (ii) counseling and vocational guidance and job placement; (iii) psycho-spiritual support and encouragement; (iv) recreation; (v) facilitation of participation in religious life; (vi) all activities aiming at limiting the rate of the dependent living conditions for the D.R., which require the existence of certain prerequisites, such as:

a) Expansion of the action developed by the Church, as far as activities of "spiritual" and "charitable" ministry are concerned, as

well as activities aiming at facilitating school or vocational integration for D.P. Furthermore, such activities should also provide for both an increase in the number of people covered and an extension of the criteria which are related to the type of support, always considering the interests and abilities of the D.P. The most significant aim is the perspective of individual self-reliance.

b) Cooperation between clergy and laity as well as creation of inter-disciplinary groups, which will look for solutions to various types of problems related to the D.P. They will function combining voluntary and paid work, always based on religious faith and love.

c) Preparation of the required manpower, suitable places and use of technical equipment.

d) Search for new sources or modes of raising the required funds either through the E.U. organs and programs, or through radio-television programs and publications on the part of the Church-related Mass Media.

e) Search for work-posts within the domain of the Church, such as office-work or professions related to ecclesiastic kinds of production (candles, holy and other utensils and holy vestments).

f) Appropriate preparation not only of the D.P. themselves, but of the broader society through religious education. [Note: At the present phase, religious education is related only to the unhindered practice of their religious duties.] It should be noted that efforts aiming at either individualized or group facilitation -through the use of innovative means-, do not refute the spiritual union with the divine through "the Descent of the Holy Spirit."

g) Finally, there were a great variety of question-like propositions that were posed in an unequivocal manner during the meeting of May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1994, the most typical being the following:

- Will religious education, regarded as an aid, which helps the disabled person live in the context of the Church, assist his integration?

- What is the role of the Church in supporting the family surroundings of the D.P.?

- Is not the formation of an organization-service urgent, which will offer full support for the attempts of the D.P. at social integration?

- Is employment provision feasible via the Church?

- Why doesn't the Church organize special Sunday Schools, or even creative occupation groups for these people?

- On what conditions can social integration, lacking in substructure, be effected at an early age?

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See the Council Resolution of 20<sup>th</sup> December 1996 concerning the equality of opportunities for people with disabilities, O. J. C 12/13.1.1997: Guidelines, paragraph 3b, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> See Dellassoudas, L. *Idike epangelmatike katartise* [=Special vocational training], *Parousia*, Athens 1992, pp. 30-31.

<sup>3</sup> See Dellassoudas, L. *Koinotike koindnikopolitike kai idike epangelmatike katartise* [=Community social policy and special vocational training], *Ekdosis Panepistimiou Athenon: Bibliothiki Saripoulou*, Athens 1991, sel. 137-138.

<sup>4</sup> See Dobbins, ?. & De la Mare, T.J. "The assessment of academic progress of students with special needs who attend regular education: a challenging problem," in Tafa E., *Synekpedeuse paidion me kai horis problemata matheses kai symperiphoras*, [=Co-education of children with and without learning and behavioral disabilities], *Editions Ellenika Grammata*, Athens 1997, pp. 168-169.

<sup>5</sup> See Roussos, P. "Psychokoinonika problemata kai sychrone neoi: E ekklesiastike empeiria," [=Psycho-social problems and youth: The ecclesiastic experience], in *Praktika tou 2ou Panelleniou Synedriou tes Etaireias Pedagogikon Epistemon Komotines: "Psycho-koinonika Problemata "* [Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Panhellenic Conference of the Association of Professional Pedagogues of Komotine: "Psycho-social Problems"], *Grafistas, Komotini* 1997, pp. 38-39 & 41.

<sup>6</sup> See a) "...if any would not work, neither should he eat," 2 Thes. 3. 10, "...and to work with your own hands as we commanded you. That ye may walk honestly towards them that are without and that ye may have lack of nothing." 1 Thes. 4. 11-12;b) Bratsiotis, P. *Christianismos kai ergasia* [=Christianity and work], reprint from *Ekklesia*: Athens, 1959; and c) Savramis, D. *Eperi ergasias didaskalia tou Apostolou Paulou* [=St. Paul's doctrine concerning work], Athens, 1962.

<sup>7</sup> See Sinopoulos, P. *Ergasia me scheseis allelengyes oikogeneiakou tyπου. E oikogeneia 6s monada ergasias tou laou tes Palaias Diathekes* [=Work with family-type relations. Family as a labor unit of the Old Testament people], *National Center of Social Researches*, Athens 1997, pp. 72 & 76.

<sup>8</sup> The minutes of the one-day meeting have been issued under the title *Ekklesia kai atoma me idikes ananges* [=Church and disabled people], *Apostolike Diakonia tes Ekklesias tes Ellados*, Athens, 1999.

*Diptyha tes Ekklesias tes Ellados* [=Diptychs of the Church of Greece], *Apostolike Diakonia tes Ekklesias tes Ellados*, 1997.

<sup>10</sup> See: a) L Dellassoudas, *Idike epangelmatike katartise* [=Special vocational training], pp. 31-32, 56-60, 150-152. b) Especially, in whatever relates to the role of the Church, see Spetsiotis G., "E symvole tes Ekklesias sten antimetopise tou problematos tes epangelmatikes katartises kai tes koinonikes ensomatosis ton atomon me idikes ananges" [= "The contribution of the Church in dealing with the issue of vocational training and social inclusion of people with special needs"], *Gregorios Palamas*, 76:747 (1993), pp. 184, 190 & 194.

<sup>11</sup> The extent of the voluntary work of the Christian Church is broadly known. Nevertheless, there is always need for systematic preparation, not only on the part of the volunteers, but also on the part of any other person ready to offer service to other fellow human beings and particularly to the D.P. On social work with religious motives also see: F. Furger, "Le monde des valeurs- Les sens de Taction -Les fondements religieux," in M. Fehlmann et al: *Manuel de faction sociale en Suisse*. Lausanne 1989: Realites sociales, pp. 44-45.

<sup>12</sup> "The functioning of the statal social policy is indisputably related, to a great extent, with developments in the structure of complementary social protection techniques... It is argued that such an expansion is considered necessary, since there seems to be a shrinkage as far as the social protection provided by the statal social policy systems is concerned, which may result in a shift of responsibilities on to these traditional techniques" (family, charity, property, private insurance, money-saving, civic liability, mutual help). See Amitsis, G. "To thesmiko plaisio tes koinonikes politikēs se shese me ligotero eunoemenes omades- E kalypse ton elikiomenon kai ton atomon me idikes ananges," [= "The institutional context of social policy in relation to less favored groups - Cover for the elderly and disabled people"], in Chtouris, S. (Ed.), *Thesmoi kai rythmises tes koinonikes politikēs. Anergoi-Elikidmenoi-Atoma me idikes ananges. Astike megethynse kai kratos Pronoias* [=Social policy institutions and regulations. Unemployed - Elderly - People with special needs. Civil magnification and Welfare state]. Editions "Praxis," Athens 1993, pp. 148-149. Provision is made in: a) Council resolution 93/136/7EC, 25<sup>th</sup> February 1993 concerning the enactment of the third community program of action for the people with special needs (HELIOS II 1993-96), O.J. L. 56/30/9.3.93, article 3 case (c), article 4 case (a), 2<sup>o</sup> section, appendix 1.1.

<sup>13</sup> Sympathy with the meaning of the Greek word "sympathia," that is, to share with someone who is suffering, to understand and participate in somebody's psychological suffering.

<sup>14</sup> "a new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another" (St. John ch. 13. 34). "...And the second [commandment] is like unto it, Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matth. 22. 39-40).

<sup>15</sup> See related Eurostat data concerning the end of 1996. Greece is just below the average of the E.U. (11 %), since it reaches 10% (ephemerida "TO BEMA," 16 Martiou 1997, p. 243).

<sup>16</sup> See: a) *Gnome tes Oikonomikes kai Koinonikes Epitropes ton E.K. Problemata ton anaperon* [=View of the Economic and Social Committee of the E.C. "Problems of the handicapped], Brussels, September 198; b) Kogidou, D., Pantazis P., "Mia bibliographike prosengise tes ftoheias ton atomon me idikes ananges" [=A biographical approach of disabled people's poverty]. Kaila et. Al. (Eds.), *People with special needs*, torn. II, Editions *Ellenika Grammata*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Athens 1995, pp. 883-890.

<sup>17</sup> See Sussman, M. "Anaperoi kai aporoi se katastase eksarteses: ennoiologikes omoiotetes kai ananges gia ereuna" [=Handicapped and poor in a state of dependency: conceptual similarities and need for research], *Ekloge*, 54 (1981), 6-13,[translated and ed. by Zarnari, O].

<sup>18</sup> See: a) The Resolution of the Council of 25<sup>th</sup> February 1993 concerning the enactment of the third community program of action for people with disabilities (HELIOS 11,1993-96), where it is noted, with regard to athletic and cultural activities and recreation,

that relevant action should aim at; i) sensitization concerning the alternatives and free choice for participation in sports, recreational and cultural activities; ii) abolition of barriers on the architectural level, concerning sports centers, recreational and cultural activities; iii) promotion, to the greatest possible extent, of integration of the D.P. in local or regional sports as well as in recreational and cultural activities.

Also, in the "European Guide of Good Practice" which was issued in the framework of the activities included in the aforementioned program, it is noted that, according to the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, that "The states take measures which will provide equal opportunities in recreation and sports for people with disabilities," *op. cit.*, p.132. In more analytical terms, for the United Nations Standard Rules, see *Regies pour l'egalisation des chances des handicapes*, regulation 11, UN Information Dept., New York, DPI/1424- May 1994-5M, p.p.30-31. b) Erickson, E. *Epaidike elikia kai e koindnia* [=Childhood and society], translated by Koutroumbaki ?, Editions *Kastaniotes* Athens, pp. 233 and 243.

c) Ferriere, H. *Syntomos eisage eis ten nean agogen* [=Brief Introduction to new education], translation by Kostadema G, Editions *Christianikes Endsis Ekpaideutikn Leitourgon*, Athens 1958, pp. 25-30 & 69.

d) Herbert, M. *Psychologika prohlema paidikes elikias* [=Psychological problems in childhood], torn. II, Greek editor Paraskeuopoulos J., Editions *Ellenika Grammata*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, Athens 1995, pp. 226-8.

e) G. Orff, *The Orff music therapy*, translated into English by M. Murray, Schott & Co. Ltd., London 1980.

f) Shuman, R. B. *"Dramatopoiese ste Didaskalia"* [=Dramatization in teaching], in *Paidagogike kai Psychologike Enkyklopediko-Lexiko*, Editions *Ellinika Grammata*, Athens 1989, pp. 1558-1560.

g) Stahel, N. *To shedio ds ekphrasepsychikon traumaton j=Design as an expression of psychal traumas*, translated by Lambraki-Paganou, ?, Editions *Epikairoteta*, Athens 1987.

<sup>19</sup> See: Bourles, A. *"E iera psalmodia ds meson agoges atomon me idikes ananges"* [=Holy psalmody as an educational means for people with special needs], in *Praktika emeridas: "Ekklesia kai atoma me idikes ananges*, Editions *Apostolikes Diakonias tes Ekklesias tes Ellados*, Athens 1999, pp. 99-119.

<sup>20</sup> See: J.L Lambert (1986): *Enseignement special et handicap mental*, (12th edition.) Liege-Bruxelles: P. Mardaga, pp. 172-179.

<sup>21</sup> See also: a) relevant recommendations by the representatives of the trade unions of D.P. at the 9<sup>th</sup> May 1994 meeting: *Ekklesia kai atoma me idikes ananges* [=Church and people with special needs], *op. cit.*, pp. 28-30, 137-141; b) UN Standard Rules concerning equality of opportunities for disabled people: in rule 12 (concerning religion) it is mentioned that the states promote measures in favor of equal participation of D.P. in the religious life of their community: *Regies pour V egalisation des chances des handicapes*, *op. cit.*, pp. 31 -32. A synopsis of this particular rule, along with the rest 21, has been included in HELIOS II, European Guide of good practice, *op.cit.*, p.p. 131-133.

<sup>22</sup> By the term *"shared consciousness"* we mean the sense of the same thing, which is equally or simultaneously shared among the faithful.

<sup>23</sup> See related: a) "...they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand ... But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear."

(Matth. 13:13-16; b) "... But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised, hath God chosen..." (I Cor. Ch.1. 27-28).

<sup>24</sup> See related: Bambiniotes, G.: "Ti na allaksei ste Theia Leitourgia" [=What should change in the Divine Liturgy], article in the Greek newspaper "TO BEMA," Sunday 7.9.1997, p. 39. In this article Mr. Bambiniotes, Professor in Linguistics at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Athens, asks "the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece to deal with the crucial issue of Liturgy attendance. If she does not wish to ignore the fact, reason, or even excuse, that many do not attend Sunday Liturgy ... because they do not feel really involved in the Liturgy... and because they have great difficulty in grasping the meaning of the words of the priest... etc." It may be appropriate, he argues, to follow the "sincere, well-tried effective measures" taken by other non Orthodox Churches, namely: a) to have manuals of the Divine Liturgy readily available to the congregation at the entrance of each church, which would include translation and clarification of the text; b) to have all prayers delivered by the priest pronounced slowly, clearly and loudly; c) to have the scripture passages read and not chanted so as to make them clear and meaningful; and d) to have the part that is chanted delivered in a way that does not hinder comprehension. The aforementioned measures are, to a great extent, valid for the D.P. as well.

<sup>25</sup> See Gena, A. "Vasikes arhes gia to xekinema tes synekpaideusis sten Ellada" [=Basic principles for the onset of inclusive schooling in Greece], in *Children is inclusive schooling*, Editions Ellenika Grammata, Athens 1997, pp. 237-238 and 243.

