

# Athanasios N. Papathanassiou

**Athanasios N. Papathanassiou** was born in Athens in 1959. He has a doctorate in theology and a degree in law. After a period of professional activity in law, he taught theology in secondary schools, primarily at the Zefyriou Lyceum in western Attica. In the years 2000–2008 he taught missiology, theology of the religions, and canon law at times at the Higher School of Theology in Athens and at the Higher Ecclesiastical Academy of Athens. Since the academic year 2008–2009 he has been teaching at the Hellenic Open University. He is chief editor of the prestigious theological review *Synaxis* and is a member of the European Society for Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies and of the editorial committee of the electronic review *International Journal of Orthodox Theology*. He has published studies on the encounter between Christianity and cultures, on the social activity of the Church, and on the dialogue of theology with the various currents of contemporary thought.

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## **“I am the wheat of God” (St Ignatius of Antioch). Eucharistic and Communional Dimensions of Martyrdom**

The Eucharist is an act of the Christian community: a meal at which the members of the community participate and from which are excluded those who do not belong to it. Nevertheless, in St Ignatius of Antioch we find a vision that opens the Eucharist. Martyrdom (an event that takes place in public space) transforms the Christian into Eucharistic bread, which is offered in the course of a “liturgy” celebrated in the open space of society. In addition, one form of martyrdom is also to suffer with history’s victims. Solidarity is founded on Christ’s incarnation and extend the confines of the community, making an ethical criterion (responsibility towards the other) as its basic characteristic.

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