

# Father Redbeard jailed for crucifixion of a nun



Coroceanu: Excommunicated

A PRIEST who killed a young nun by leaving her strapped to a cross for five days to 'rid her of demons' has been jailed for 15 years.

Sister Irina Cornici, 23, fell unconscious after her crucifixion, during which she was left with no water or food and a towel stuck in her mouth.

Romanian Orthodox monk Father Petru Coroceanu insisted that the ritual was commonplace in 90 per cent of the country's monasteries.

But the red-bearded fanatic was excommunicated from the Church and yesterday he was found guilty of causing Sister Irina's death.

Another nun who assisted him was jailed for eight years and three more for five years each. They were also ordered to pay £1,700 compensation to their victim's parents.

Sister Irina died in June 2005 at the Holy Trinity convent in the north-eastern village of Tanacu.

The priest and nuns said at the time that she had been possessed by Satan and that they had been compelled to carry out an exorcism.

It emerged after her death that Sister Irina had been diagnosed with psychiatric problems and her 'possession' was unlikely to be more

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than a series of schizophrenic episodes.

But 29-year-old Father Coroceanu told a court that the exorcism ritual was 'quite normal' and blamed doctors who attended to Irina for her death.

'I consider myself not guilty because Irina's death was not down to the fact that we kept her locked up.

'We tied her up because she kept hitting and harming herself and we would have found her dead in her room eventually. I

admit I tied her up and stuck a towel in her mouth and kept her like this for five days. I admit that I used to cover her mouth with tape while she took part in daily Mass, but only because I did not want her to disturb the service.

It was the four nuns who helped me tie her up and who guarded Irina for days. They tried to give her food and water but she refused. All she accepted was Holy Water. This was the best solution for her because she had to recover from her constant agitation.

'I never thought for a second that she had a medical problem. I

realised from her very first seizure that she had a spiritual problem. She was acting as if she had supernatural powers and I realised she was possessed by a demon. Everybody in the monastery believed the same thing.'

He added: 'My biggest mistake was that I called an ambulance when I saw she was not moving. I think she died because the medics who came with the ambulance tried to resuscitate her by giving her too much adrenaline.'

'Had I not called the ambulance, she would have been well now.'