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A Szabadság Angyala 1956-os emlékszobor avatásakor.

Mélyen tisztelt Elnök Úr, Dalma Asszony, Három esztendővel ezelőtt szervezetünk, a Kálváriás 3 éven vergődött át. Ha nem Polgármester Úr és Családja, Gabriella és Magyar Studies of America által felállított lettek volna hithű szoborbizottsági Gáspár, Kaposvár népe s vezetősége, ezen 56-os kinti emlékművének avatásakor tagjaink, rokonszenvező barátaink és csodálatos emlékmű alkotója, Gera Katalin művésznő és Családja, tengerentúlról jött lelkes Barátaink, saját családom, Hölgyeim és Uraim!

Mindenekelőtt elmúlhatatlan hálánkat fejezzük ki Dr. Mádl Ferenc Köztársasági Elnök Úrnak, ki elsőnek támogatta ügyünket Magyarországon, s aki megjelenésével történelmi fontosságú bizonyosságot tett; és Szita Károly Polgármester Úrnak, ki jajszavunkat hallva habozás nélkül nyújtott segítő jebbot.

...Kérem, engedtessek meg, hogy egy idegenben lakó tapasztalatával kezdjem a beszédet:

Az elmúlt október 6-ának ezúttal kettőzötten mély gyásznapijén egy magyar asszony könnyektől borított szemekkel rebegette: „1956-ban a kommunizmustól menekültünk, – és 50 év után MIRE jöttünk vissza?!”

...Köszönöm, Julika, feleségem, múlhatatlan honszeretetted, törhetetlen magyar öntudodat!



kevésszámú, de anyagiakban kimagasló támogatónk, úgy ennél a szobornál most nem emlékezhetnénk, nem róhatnánk le hálánkat mindazoknak, kik vérükkel, életükkel adóztak a Haza oltárán.

Három esztendeje készülünk az 50. évfordulóra, valójában azonban fél évszázada ég a túlélőkben a világot megrázó magyar viadal-diadal emlékének olthatatlan lángja. Szétszóródottságunkban is, idegenben is, ahol a szülőöldünkötől, édes magyar Hazánktól való elszakadtság maró fájdalma naponta kínoz... Kedves magyar testvéreim! Könnyeket csal itt a szemekbe nemzeti imánk, a Himnusz hangja, éneklése. Ott kint, a tengerentúlon, március 15-i, október 23-i ünnepéskor és egy-egy templomi szolgálat után is felhangzik a szent zsolozsma. És akkor lelkében, testében zokog a magyar, könnyének csordulását nem rejtheti...

fogamzott meg a gondolat, hogy magyar Hazánkban méltó szobrot emeljünk 1956 hőseinek emlékére, tiszteletére. Miután önkéntességen alapult, magyarságot ápoló intézményünknek anyagi forrásai a legszűkösebbek, a világ magyar emigrációjának pénzügyi segítségét kértük.

Himnuszt énekeltünk 56 októberében. Zenekíséret nélkül. Az évtizedes terror nem ölhetett ki belőlünk Kőlcsey szavait: Isten, áldd meg a magyart, – zengtük felszabadultan, hiszen az ördögi önkény alatt csak a dallamot hallhattuk – szöveg nélkül... Ötven esztendő után a naponta újravillanó emlékezés még fényesebben

hasít elménkbe. Ott vagyunk az egyetemnél, az utcákon, a gyűlölt postarabló/népgyilkos gigászi szobránál, a rádiónál. És az idegen mételey fizikai pusztítóival, a vasszörnyetegekkel szemben. Ma is ökölbe szorul a kezünk, amikor ismételen agyunkba ötlük az úgynevezett „felszabadító” – később „rendcsináló” szovjet belzebubok kéjes vigyora, ahogy a még szétlőtt házak tátongó üres ablakait is szünet nélkül pásztázták golyószóróikkal! ...És emlékezetünkben visszatérünk a közterekre, melyek már sem sétálásra, sem játszásra nem lehettek használhatók többé... Rögtönzött sírhantok erdejévé váltak. Fialatok, öregek, vérüket ontott gyermekek tetemeit takarták a fagyos őszi rögök..

Voltak hibák is azokban a napokban, mint minden más forradalomban. *Korabeliek* tanúk arra azonban, hogy a magyar felkelést bűnös szándék **nem** vezette. A nép a szabadságáért küzdött. És Istenért. Felkelt, hogy ne kelljen többet aggódnia, amikor vallásra akarja taníttatni gyermekét; hogy számos emberöltő után végre szabaduljon az idegen nagyhatalmak szolgaságából. Hogy választhasson a maga elhatározásából.. Hogy írhasa Isten nevét újra nagybetűvel...

Barátainknak, de ellenségeinknek is emlékezniük kell arra, hogy harcainkban **nem** az erőszak akart győzedelmeskedni; az ezeréves nemzet szabad fennmaradásáért küzdött. A történelem igazolta ezt a szent törekvést, hiszen a lator Szovjetunió kivül egyetlen más nemzet sem hagyta jóvá a vérbefojtó beavatkozást!

Hölgyeim és Uraim, drága magyar Testvérek!

Ti, akik itthon éltétek át a megtorlás, bosszú, rabszolgaság és hazugság éveit, akik a nyakatokon élőködők által kikönyörgött irtózatot kölcsönökből

felétek dobott „gulyáskommunizmusnak” is részesei voltatok (s amelynek borzalmas visszafizetési terheit most is nyögitek), Ti, akik minden gátlás nélkül helyet készítettetek e méltó emlékmű számára – **példát mutatva Magyarországnak fővárosának** – Ti felújítottátok 1956-ot. **KÖSZÖNJÜK NEKTEK!** Történelmet írtok. Isten áldjon Benneteket. Isten áldja Elnök Urat, Polgármester Urat, Cs. Gera Katalin művésznőt, Kaposvár vezetőségét, nemzethű polgárait. Isten áldja tengerentúlról idesereglett honfitárs barátainkat... Isten áldjon, ott, a mennyei honban Dakos Rózsa, kinek



köszönetünket majdan átadni csak remélhetjük...

...Petőfi a Nemzeti Dalában az 1848-as Szabadságharc hajnalán írta: „Hol sírjaink domborulnak, unokáink leborulnak, és áldó imádság mellett mondják el szent neveinket”... Amikor a harcok szüneteiben ott bolyongtunk a budapesti terekből átváltozott rögtönzött temetőkből, összetákolt keresztfák erdeiben, pislákoló mécsesek között, – kézzel írkált neveket olvasgattunk könnytől fátyolos szemekkel: *Élt 7 évet... Élt 16 évet... Élt 13 évet...* Ahol azok a sírok domborultak, ott unokák le nem borulhattak. A hantok *unokákat* takartak, kik a föld mélyében már nem álmodhatták, amiért kis életükben harcoltak, a feltámadást... A Haza feltámadását... Legyen örök dicsőség 1956 minden hőségnek, bizonyítsa itt ez az emlékmű irántuk kötelezett kifizethetetlen tartozásunk parányi törlesztését.

HISZEK, HISZÜNK MAGYARORSZÁG TELJES FELTÁMADÁSÁBAN!

...ISTEN, ÁLDD MEG A MAGYART!

(*Magyarázatok.*)

Október 6-i gyásznap kettőssége: 2006. október 6-án a budapesti Parlament bizalmat szavazott(!) Gyurcsánynak. Dakos Rózsa hívta fel Kaposvár polgármesterének figyelmét Budapest hajthatatlan elutasításaira az oda kérelmezett szoborállítási tervekkel kapcsolatban. Kaposvár Vaszary Képtárának dinamikus igazgatónöje 2006. augusztus 15-én tragikus hirtelenséggel elhunyt.)

Speech delivered on October 23, in Kaposvár, Hungary **On the occasion of the** **unveiling of** ***The Angel of Freedom***

in memory of the 1956 Hungarian

Revolution

Dr. Gyula Egervári

Translated by István Scheer

Dear Mr. President, Madame Dalma, Dear Mr. Mayor and family, Gabriella and Gáspár, the people of Kaposvár and members of its administration, Katalin Gera, the creator of this magnificent sculpture, enthusiastic friends who came to join us from overseas, my own family, Ladies and Gentlemen!

First of all, we express our enduring gratitude to Dr. Ferenc Mádl, the President of the Hungarian Republic, who was the first to support our efforts in Hungary and who, with his appearance here today, has been to us a historically significant witness. We also express our gratitude to Mayor Károly Szita, who – having heard our cry for help – gave us patronage without the slightest hesitation.

Please allow me to begin my speech with the experiences of someone who has long lived abroad.

This past October 6, on the occasion of a day of double mourning, a Hungarian woman, with tears in her eyes, whispered: *"In 1956 we were escaping communism – and 50 years later, look to WHAT have we come back!"*

I thank you, Julika, my dear wife, for your enduring love for this land and for your undiminished Hungarian consciousness.

It was three years ago, on the occasion of the placing of a commemorative plaque for '56 in Connecticut, that our organization, the Magyar Studies of America, conceived the idea of erecting a worthy statue in our beloved Hungary in honor of, and with respect for, the heroes of 1956. Since this undertaking was to be based on voluntary participation, and since the financial holdings of our organization were meager, we turned to Hungarians living abroad for their monetary support.

Our Calvary lasted for three agonizing years. If it were not for the faithful members of the Statue Committee, and for all those who shared our determination and who, though few in numbers, gave us substantial monetary support, we would not be standing by this statue today, and we could not express our enduring gratitude for all those who with their blood, with their very lives, sanctified themselves on the altar of our country.

For three years now we have been preparing for the 50th anniversary, but in reality a half a century has kept alive the unquenchable flame in all of us who have lived through that world-shaking Hungarian struggle. Even overseas, where the pain of our separation from our beloved country has been besetting us every day. My dear Hungarian brothers and sister, tears come to my eyes when I reflect on sound of the words of our special prayer, our Hungarian National Anthem. Overseas, on the occasion of March 15 or October 23 or even at the end of religious services, this holy psalm could often be heard. And then in his or her soul, in his or her body, all Hungarians are shaken by sobs, and the flow of

their tears cannot be hidden.

We sang the National Anthem in the October of 1956 as well. A cappella, without instrumental accompaniment. The decade-long terror could not extinguish in us Kőlcsey's words: God bless the Hungarians – we sang with a sense of newfound liberty, as during the satanic tyranny we could only hear the melody, without the lyrics. After 50 years our memories shine ever more brightly. We are at the university again, in the streets, at the gigantic statue of the butcher of millions, at the radio station. Standing up against the corruption imposed on us by an alien force, and all its monstrous weaponry. Our fists still coil when we recall the so-called "liberation" – later the establishment of "law and order" – the ecstatic smirk on the face of the Soviet Beelzebub as he raked the empty store windows with submachine gun fire, the glass of

testify that the Hungarian uprising did not erupt with ignoble intentions. The people fought for freedom. And for God. They rose up because they no longer wanted to worry about giving their children a religious upbringing. Or so that after many generations they could finally be free of the slavery imposed on them by great foreign powers. Or so that they may choose to live according to their own lights. Or so that they may be able to write God's name once more with a capital "G."

Our friends, and even our enemies, must remember that our fight did not aspire to the establishment of a coercive system. Our fight was for the freedom of a thousand-year-old nation. **History** has given favorable testimony to our undertaking, as no other country in the world had supported the bloody intervention of the rogue Soviet forces.



which had already been shattered in the bullet-ridden buildings. And in our memory we return to the public places no longer suitable for either walking or playing in. They turned into the forests of spontaneous graves. Young and old, and children who had shed their blood, were buried there under the frozen sod.

Mistakes were also made in those days, as in all revolutions. But eyewitnesses can

Ladies and Gentlemen, my dear Hungarian brothers and sister!

You have lived through the years of reprisals, of vengeance, of slavery, and of mendacity. You were burdened with the incredible debts leveled at you by the "goulash communism" imposed on you (the repercussions of which you must still endure). Yet you have, without the slightest hesitation, given us the space for this worthy

commemorative statue – **sending a telling message to the capital of Hungary** – you have renewed 1956. WE THANK YOU FOR THIS! You are writing history. God bless you all. God bless you, Mr. President, and you Mr. Mayor, and you Katalin Gera, and all the administrators of Kaposvár, and all its patriotic citizens. God bless all of our fellow countrymen who have come to join us here from overseas. And God bless Rózsa Dakos in her heavenly home now, whom we can only hope to thank personally in the future, in the next life.

Petőfi, at the dawn of the 1848 freedom fight, wrote in his National Song: “And where our graves in verdure rise / Our children’s children’s children to the skies / Shall speak the grateful joy their feel, / And bless our names the while they kneel” (the Loew-Wright translation). When during pauses in the fighting we had roamed about the parks with their spontaneously risen forests of grave sites among all the flickering candles, it was with tears in our eyes that we read the hand-written inscriptions: “Died at the age of 7,” “Died at the age of 13,” “Died at the age of 16.” Where those graves rose, our children’s children may not utter their grateful joy or bless our names. Those graves cover the grandchildren themselves, who in their earthly lives could not even dream of the resurrection for which they fought so valiantly in their short lives. The resurrection of our country. May glory be the reward of all the heroes of 1956, and may this memorial in this worthy place testify to our undying gratitude and to our unrepayable indebtedness to them all.

I BELIEVE – WE BELIEVE IN HUNGARY’S TOTAL RESURRECTION!

. . GOD BLESS

THE HUNGARIANS!

(Notes:

The double mourning on October 6: The Hungarian Parliament endorsed Gyurcsányi’s candidacy.

Rózsa Dakos brought to the attention of the Mayor of Kaposvár the frequent rejections we had to endure from Budapest with respect to the erection of this commemorative statue there. The dynamic President of the Vaszary Gallery of Kaposvár passed away tragically and unexpectedly on August 15, 2006)

Hősköltemény egy pesti srácról

Szentkúti Ferenc

Te napköziben nevelkedett apró kamasz,

Te, akinek élete mindössze vagy tizenöt sívár tavasz.

Te, kibe már az A. B. C.-vel tömték az ideológiát,

A szovjet tankok vad tüzében zengted a szabadság dalát.

A tankok acél záporában sem remegett gyenge kezed.

Bátran markoltad meg a géppisztolyt, és szórtad rájuk a tüzet.

Kicsiny szíved tán összerezgett, de lábad bátran szaladt.

Kezedből nyugodt, biztos ívben repült a benzines palack...

Te pesti srác, te hősök hőse ontottad drága véredet, s a kivívt szent szabadságban megkaptad érte béredet.

Te kicsiny bajtárs, – esküszünk, hogy megvédjük ezt a drága vért, mert nem lehet, hogy kicsiny szíved hiába ontott annyi vért...

Te pesti srác,

Te napköziben nevelkedett apró kamasz!

Te, akinek élete mindössze vagy tizenöt sívár tavasz.

Téged, ki ezt a drága élted hazáért így adtad oda,

amíg magyar él a földön: nem felejtünk el soha!



America’s Name- sake a Thousand Years Old

A thousand years is a long time. A millennium. That is the milestone America’s name giver has reached, a milestone observed this year at Szekesfehervar – birthplace of Szent Imre – and in the dioceses of Veszprem and Kalocsa-Kecskemet. The Hungarian national planning committee also called on parishes and societies named for St. Imre, wherever they may be around the world, to observe this millennial year in tribute to the patron of Hungarian youth.

Szent Imre (St. Emeric in English, Amerigo in Italian), was born in the year 1007, the son of St. Stephen, first king of Hungary. Not much is known of his personal life, beyond his outstanding piety and heroic vow of celibacy.

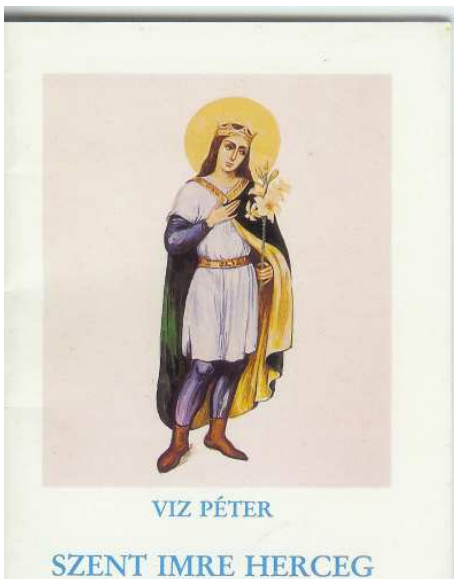
According to the popular preacher, Sandor Sik, a vow of Christian celibacy is “a holy dissatisfaction, aiming at something more, something greater... a creative restlessness ...an inner freedom achieved by the soul’s rule over the body ...it is self-giving and service.” For that

reason, Sik said, it may be considered the highest form of heroism.

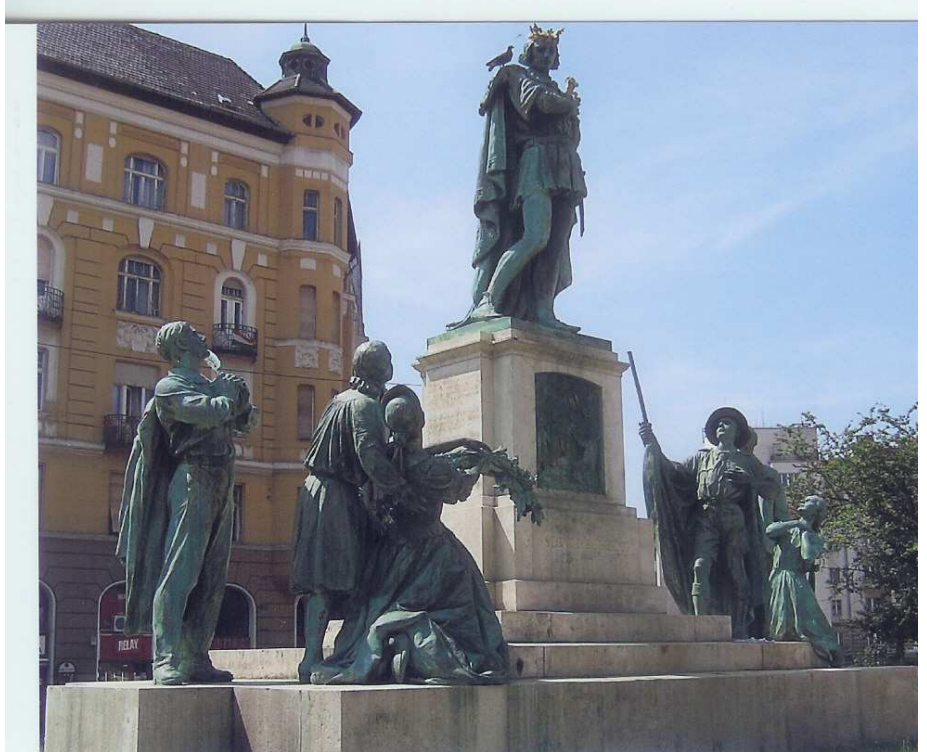
Szent Imre not only practiced this type of heroism, he even convinced his bride to do likewise. (She testified to that effect after his death. He had been attacked and been mortally wounded by a wild boar in 1031.)

How did our Hungarian Szent Imre become the name giver of two continents? In the Middle Ages, Szent Imre's popularity spread across Europe. He was universally regarded as the patron of youth. Churches were named after him. So was the Florentine explorer and cartographer Amerigo Vespucci. A painting in San Martino a Mensola in Settignano, less than two miles outside the walls of medieval Florence, portrays Szent Imre – depicted with moustache, royal robes, and a lily in his hand – and his bride taking a vow of chastity before a crucifix (while St. Stephen looks on through an opening.) The inscription, dated 1391, identifies him as “Sco Amerigo d’Ungheria”, i.e., St. Emeric of Hungary.

Vespucci (1454 – 1512) made



several voyages, trying, like Christopher Columbus, to find a new world. The observance will be held the day before Szent Imre's feast-



St.Imre statue in Budapest, Hungary

passage to the Indies. He explored the northern coast of South America, and on his second voyage there, realized he had reached not India, but a new continent, a new world.

His name was picked up by an amateur geographer, Martin Waldseemüller, who, in 1507, printed a wood block map, with the name “America” indicating the southern continent of the new world. A thousand copies of this map were sold. Later, a similar large continent was found, located to the north, and the name was extended to apply to it as well.

St. Emery Church (or, more correctly, St. Emeric Church) in Fairfield, CT will be the center of the Hungarian observances in the U.S. It will combine the celebration of its patron saint's 1000th birthday with the 75th anniversary celebration of the parish. The par-

day, on November 4th, beginning with Mass at 10 o'clock, to be concelebrated by Bishop William Lori, Father Barnabas Kiss OFM, Delegate of the Hungarian Bishop's Conference, and Father Louis Pintye OFM, Pastor of St. Emeric Church. This will be followed by dinner at Testo's Restaurant in Bridgeport. Tickets will be mailed out in advance.

Bishop Antal Spanyol of the diocese of Szekesfehevar declared: “We wish to remove all ‘baroque accretions’ from Szent Imre's figure, and to show him as he was, every inch a man, who could control himself, who understood his times, who had sacred goals, and who knew how, and dared to, use the tools available to him for the achievement of his aims, a man who wished to inspire his people by his life, who accepted his mission, and could completely identify himself with it.

We see in him not an effeminate young boy with a tilted head, holding a flower in his hand, but a strong-willed, deliberate, real manly man, who clearly saw the goal before him. That is why he can be the example of male youth.”

The diocese has mounted a traveling exhibit entitled “Liliom és Rózsa” – “Lily and Rose” – encompassing every depiction, within the Szekesfehervar diocese, of St. Emeric and St. Elizabeth of Hungary, whose 800th anniversary is also celebrated this year. Some 350 entries – film, photos, drawings and text – were submitted from all of Hungary and outside its present borders to a contest asking “Who is this St. Emeric?”

The diocese of Veszprem, where St. Imre is said to have taken that vow of chastity, organized youth programs, in conjunction with observance of Szent Imre’s mother, Blessed Gizella’s patronage. (Blessed Gizella embroidered the Coronation robe, used at the coronation of Hungarian kings down the centuries. It is probably the oldest piece of European embroidery still in existence, and is currently on exhibit at the National Museum in Budapest.)

The diocese of Kalocsa-

Kecskemet will have its main celebration on August 19th, the day before St. Stephen’s Day, to join remembrance and honor of father and son. Tradition has it that Szent Imre died at Soltszentimre, a ruined fort within the diocese.

When Gerardus Mercator published a map of the world in 1538, he was the first to use the terms “North” and “South America.” And the names stuck.

But how many people know that “America” is derived from a Hungarian saint’s name? Well, now YOU do, and you can tell others about it too, particularly in this millennial year of his birth!

Erika Papp Faber

and headed for the express counter. When I arrived there, a very nice lady, who had spread her dozen or so groceries on the checkout counter, insisted that I go ahead of her, since I had so few items. So I thanked her and moved ahead.

But, there was a holdup at the checkout station. A young lad who was working as the cashier was holding up two strange-looking vegetables, with solid round centers, and spindly leaves growing out of the centers. He was trying to get the attention of other checkout people to identify the vegetables so that he could ring them up. An older woman and her daughter were waiting patiently to finish checking out.

Never one to be shy, I told him that those vegetables were called kohlrabi. Then I added the comment that Hungarians would recognize the vegetable. I don’t know why I said it, but it just sounded like it needed saying at the time. The mother and daughter looked at me with surprised looks on their faces. The daughter asked me, “Are you Hungarian?” I said, “Well, I am of Hungarian descent”. I heard her excitedly tell her mother in Hungarian that I was also Hungarian, and they both smiled broadly.



Bob Kranyik sitting at his office desk where he enjoys writing for Magyar News Online and various other publications.

You Never Know

Robert D. Kranyik

Recently I went to a local supermarket in Fairfield, Connecticut, to buy some cleaning supplies to brighten up our gas grill on the deck. I purchased just two items,

The lady behind me who had offered me her place in line then said, “Well, I’m Hungarian, too. Being a local guy, I asked if she was from Fairfield. She said “No, I am from Sandusky, Ohio. We have lots of Hungarians along the North shore of Ohio” I said, “Yes, I know that, since I have a friend in Lorraine, and I have been to



Hungarian meetings in Cleveland.”

With that, the young lad at the checkout counter said, “Well, I am also Hungarian, at least, I am half Hungarian. I was baptized in Saint Emery’s Church in Fairfield”. I asked him his mother’s name, and he told me. I did not know the family directly, but the name sounded familiar. Here we had five people at a checkout line, dealing with a kohlrabi problem, and all were Hungarians. Now what are the chances of that happening again? You never know.

I was so taken by the experience that I emailed a rendition of it to a number of friends. A day later I got an email back from friends Marie and Zoli Kassay (Zoli and I were classmates in elementary school, and I had written two articles about his family and their experiences growing up during the Great Depression). Well, Zoli and Marie enjoyed the anecdote so much that they shared it at the meeting of the Saint Emery’s Seniors the very next day. The Seniors enjoyed it immensely, and they clapped as Zoli and Marie finished reading. Then a lady stood up and said to Zoli and Marie, “That was my grandson at the supermarket checkout counter! And, she was beaming.

You never know.

A few days later, on a Monday,

I went to Fairfield Woods School to register for Hungarian classes. These classes are sponsored by Magyar Studies

of America, a non-profit organiza-

tion which also sponsors our website, www.magyarnews.org, and all of the staff including teachers are volunteers. Well, as usually happens on registration day, we moved about the room, renewing acquaintances, discussing our summer activities,

and having conversations about such thoughts as whether or not ancient Magyar is related to ancient Sumerian. Finally, I went over to the registration desk and a lovely lady registered me for my class. In the course of our business, she noticed my name, smiled, and said, “My name is Mary Torma Szedlmayer, and it was my grandson whom you helped regarding the kohlrabi at the supermarket. I was at the St. Emery’s Senior Luncheon and heard the Kassay’s read your story.” We then continued our conversation briefly. She mentioned that she was treasurer of Magyar Studies of America, and as the registration line was getting longer, we smiled at each other, and said “Goodbye”.

You never know!

Dr. Robert Kranyik is Dana Professor Emeritus and a former dean



at the University

of Bridgeport, and is a member of the Editorial Board of Magyar News Online.

St. Ladislaus Church and Ödön Lechner

By Paul Soos

Odon Lechner’s Work in Hungary

In the Kőbánya district of Budapest, Saint Ladislaus Church (Szent László-plébániatemplom) stands testimony to the architectural skills of Ödön Lechner. Also known as Edmund Lechner, he came from a wealthy Pest family and studied architecture in Pest, Berlin, and Italy. He maintained an architectural practice from 1869 to 1896 with his partner Gyulá Pártos and together they designed an impressive array of buildings. Their resume includes the Szeged City Hall and Kecskemét City Hall. Lechner also planned such structures as the Budapest Museum of Applied Arts and the Central Post Office Building in Budapest.

Ödön Lechner is called the father of Hungarian Art Nouveau, and is certainly the most important figure in Hungarian Art Nouveau. (Art Nouveau is an international style of architecture and design that is characterised by highly-stylised, flowing, curvilinear designs often incorporating floral and other plant-inspired motifs. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia). Initially inspired by Indian and Syrian architecture and taking into account the eastern origins of Hungarians, many of Lechner’s buildings have an eastern-like appearance. This appearance is evident in the beautiful edifice in Kőbánya, and as the marker on Saint Ladislaus Church shows, it has been designated an historic building by the city council of Budapest. The building was completed in 1906 and most certainly was an inspiration for a large group of Hungarians who traveled to the New World and settled in



Budapest. Hungary



South Norwalk. Connecticut

South Norwalk, Connecticut.

Lechner in America

Attracted by the promise of a better life in America, this group of Hungarians soon grew large enough to establish their own parish and wanted to worship in their own language. Thus, in 1907, began Saint Ladislaus Parish in South Norwalk. This Hungarian community began the fundraising to build their own church and when enough nickels, dimes, and quarters were collected, the very same Ödön Lechner was commissioned to draw up the plans for the building that now stands on 25 Cliff Street. The cornerstone was laid in 1909 and the construction was completed in 1912 for the cost of \$30,000 and is a replica of the one in Budapest. This year, 2007, Saint Ladislaus Church (the cornerstone reads Szt. László) celebrates its 100th anniversary and the year-long celebration will culminate with a dinner on 28 October.

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Memories of the Slavonic Cross

Robert D. Kranyik, Ph.D.

Some three percent of Hungarians are members of the Byzantine Rite Catholic Church, also known as the “Greek Catholic” Church. The ancestors of many of these Hungarians were of Russian origins. They were, in fact, cousins of the Kieven Rus, the founders of Russia, and they lived along the Eastern borders of historic Hungary, on both sides of the Carpathian Mountains, where they engaged in animal husbandry, agriculture, and lumbering. They became known as Rusyns or Ruthenians, and called themselves Rusnaks, and were known by the Hungarians as Magyararosz or Hungarian Russians.

The author Charles Fenyési claims that these people were of Slavic origin who migrated from the steppes east of the Carpathian Mountains more than a thousand years ago, although other sources have suggested that they lived there even longer, perhaps as early as

600 A.D. These Hungarian Russians practiced Byzantine Christianity at a time when the invading Hungarians were still pagans whose shamans sacrificed white horses to their gods, Fenyési has observed. By the 18th century, the Rusyns lived in communities located in the pre-Trianon counties of Bereg, Ung, Zemplén, Sáros, and Máramaros. In addition, groups had settled in such counties as Abaúj, Borsod, Szabolcs and Szatmár, located in present day Hungary.

The Rusyns were members of the Eastern Church until the 1600’s when a movement began which resulted in the union of the Rusyn churches with the Roman Catholic Church. So, the Byzantine Rite Churches became recognized by the Roman Catholic Pope, yet they were permitted to retain their own liturgy and customs, which were Slavonic in language, and close to the Orthodox practices. Priests were permitted to marry, unlike in the Roman Catholic Church, and Communion was administered under two species, bread and wine.

Others who practiced the Greek Catholic faith in Hungary included some peoples of Slovak origin, who inhabited villages in the portion of historic Hungary to the northeast, in the foothills. In addition, some ethnic Magyars, themselves, in those same areas, and in some of the current northeastern counties also practiced the Greek Catholic faith. This was a region of population migrations, and a certain amount of ethnic mixing occurred as different groups settled in various towns and villages. For example, the farming village of Vizslo, located in present day Abaúj-Borsod-Zemplén, north of the city of Miskolc in northeastern present day Hungary, appears to have Greek Catholics of all three ethnic backgrounds, although since the late eighteenth century, the Austro-Hungarian Empire placed a great emphasis on the “Magyarization” of its citizens, and so

in places like Viszlo, the people are culturally and linguistically Magyar, regardless of their ethnic origins.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, large numbers of Hungarian Rusyns, as well as Slovak and Carpatho-Rusyns, emigrated to the United States. Many went to the coal mining regions of Pennsylvania and West Virginia, where they established their churches. Others settled in New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and Connecticut, with a few scattered across other states. According to some sources, the first Ruthenian congregation in Connecticut was in the city of Bridgeport, a major industrial center in Southwestern Connecticut, where factory workers were needed.

A number of years ago I attended a conference in Bridgeport, Connecticut sponsored

by the Carpatho-Rusyns of Connecticut, and held in one of the Eastern Rite churches in Bridgeport. My interest was sparked by dim recollections of discussions with my father about Ruthenians, and far northeastern places like Ungvár and Munkács. There was just a chance that I might learn something about a Rusyn connection.

First, I learned that the birthplace of my maternal grandmother, Viszlo, did, in fact have a significant proportion of Ruthenians, or Carpatho-Rusyns. Then came one of those significant moments in the pursuit of

my ancestry. A very learned young man did a presentation on Rusyns in Connecticut. His first slide showed a church in Bridgeport, Connecticut, which he stated was the very first Rusyn church in the State. I looked



and looked at the slide, not believing my eyes. There was a picture of the Holy Trinity Greek Catholic Church on Bostwick Avenue, in the Hungarian section of Bridgeport. It was the church I attended in my early years, and the one in which I had been baptized. So, the connection had now been made!

This church was organized in 1894, and early meetings and services were held in the home of one of the members of the congregation, since there was no church facility. As the number of Hungarians of the Byzantine Rite grew in Bridgeport, land was purchased on Bostwick Avenue, in the center of the Hungarian settlement known as “Little Hungary”, or by some as “Hunktown”. In 1897, the first church was constructed. One of the founders of that church was John Lukacs, the grandfather of my friend, John Lucas. John Lucas shared with me a photograph showing the dedication of that

church. It is a most interesting photograph. First of all, one notices that there were at that time empty lots in the background. Those were to later fill up cheek-by-jowl with 4 to 6-family houses where Hungarian emigrants lived, and from which they could walk to work at nearby factories. At the top of the steeple is the “Slavonic Cross”, an important symbol of the Byzantine Rite Church. The sign above the door said, in Hungarian, “Magyar Görög Kath. Templom”, or “Hungarian Greek Catholic Church”. The sign may have been lettered in a hurry, since if one looks

closely, it is possible to see that the word “Magyar” is not centered, and the “r” at the end had to be dropped a bit to fit.

Another interesting aspect of the photograph is that the Roman Catholic Hungarian Church, Saint Stephen’s, was not yet in existence. It was later situated to the right of Holy Trinity, facing Spruce Street and the two churches existed next to each other until the late 1950’s when urban redevelopment and the construction of the Connecticut Turnpike devastated the Hungarian community. In 1912, a rectory was constructed in the area to the left of the church. Later photographs of the original church show a basement underneath, so in effect, the church was raised up to provide for a meeting place and utilities.

My father’s family arrived on the scene in 1901 and 1902. His father led the way, arriving in 1901, securing a place to live on Hancock Ave-

nue (probably in a boarding house), and obtaining employment at the Bridgeport Malleable Iron Company, undoubtedly, difficult work. My great-grandfather arrived from Palagy, Hungary (now just over the border in Slovakia) with the rest of the family, and settled in, also finding employment at the Bridgeport Malleable Iron Company. They were all Byzantine Rite Catholics, and my great-grandfather had been, in fact, a seminarian at the great seminary in Ungvár. He had been preparing for the priesthood, but for some reason did not pursue ordination. Instead he became a cantor and school master in the church. There is evidence that he and his wife both hailed from church families, in a society where priests married the daughters of priests.

My grandmother, on the other hand, arrived about 1901 in New Jersey, and then moved to Bridgeport, probably to be near relatives. She and my grandfather were married in the Holy Trinity church in 1903. Grandma Agnes hailed from the village of Viszlo, in Borsodme-gye, now Abaúj-Borsod-Zemplén. Evidence points to the likelihood that at least part of her family were Rusyn settlers, who came down from the foothills of the Carpathians in the 1700's to settle lands which had been devastated by the Turks. It happens that the regional Byzantine Rite church there is located in Viszlo.

My parents were also married at Holy Trinity, although my mother's family was of the Hungarian Reformed faith. So, I grew up attending church under the Slavonic Cross.

Every Sunday we made the trip from Fairfield, just a few miles away, and attended the Byzantine Rite mass, with its Slavonic liturgy, Communion under two species (bread and wine), with the wine providing a slight kick to young people like me. And, of course, there was plenty of incense to tickle the nose. A cousin was the cantor, who led the acapella singing, characteristic of Byzantine

Rite churches.

I remember the "búcsú"s with the paper figures of saints attached to the cakes. There was the annual picnic, usually at St. Stephen's grove in Fairfield, where all manner of Hungarian food and drink were available. There was a dance floor, and all forms of csárdás were performed. My friend, Steve Fekete's father, played the base fiddle in the ensemble which included a cimbalom. There were also pageants held in the church hall, now located on Pine Street, with music and dancing, and always with a Hungarian meal. We were always surrounded by cousins and friends. Annually, there was the Disznótoros Vacsora, a pork supper and dinner dance, the spring Dance, the Grape Festival, a Snow Flake Ball, and a New Year's Eve Party.

On Palm Sunday it was the Greek Catholic tradition to distribute pussy willows rather than palms as customary in the Roman Catholic Church. I can recall going up to the Terebesi property, near my house, with men and boys from the church to pick the pussy willows, which grew there in abundance. They were brought back to the church, and made ready for distribution. There were Hungarian lessons as well, taught by our pastor, and I still meet people from time to time who attended the classes with me.

Our pastor was Father Emil Gulyassy, a native of Hungary, and a

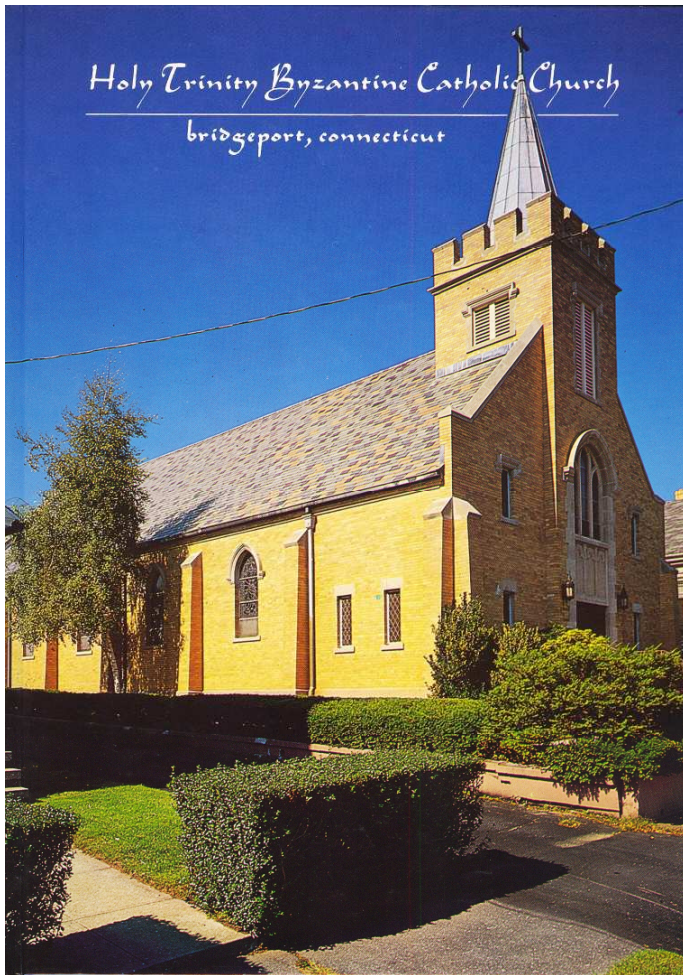


Father Gulyassy

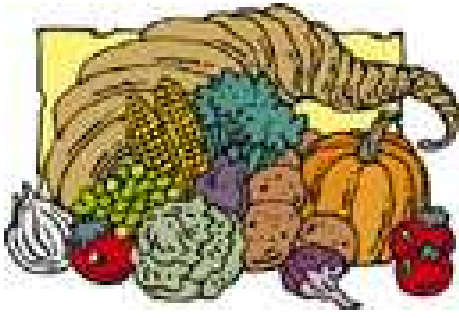
well educated and talented person. He was a talented painter, and his paintings adorned the church and the hall. He was very well respected, and had a fine family. They lived in the rectory next door. Father Gulyassy passed on in 1956, and was succeeded by Father Laszlo Orosz of Trenton, New Jersey. A new church was planned and built in the Black Rock section of

Bridgeport, along with a residence and a social hall, the latter including bowling alleys. Members of the church worked hard to support Holy Trinity, and volunteerism abounded. Father Orosz was, in time, succeeded by Father Marcel Szabo, of Lorain, Ohio I knew both Father Orosz and Father Szabo, as my parents were still active in the Church.

By the 1990's many of the Hungarian-speaking parishioners had passed on. The congregation dwindled as well because of the mobility of the members. Many moved longer distances from the church and attendance at Mass became limited. As with all of the national churches in the area, membership diminished. Hungarians, like others, married outside of their ethnic background. There was no longer the close-knit Hungarian community with its stores, institutions, and traditions. Soon, there was no full time pastor, and Masses were said by a priest from another Greek Catholic Church in Trumbull, Connecticut. He was not Hungarian. In 2006, following a Mass attended by some thirty people, it was announced that Holy Trinity would be immediately closed by order of the Byzantine Rite Bishop. There was great consternation, and a good deal of indignation, but the end had come.. The one hundred year history of Holy Trinity had come to an end. It will only remain in the records retained by St. John's church in Trumbull, Connecticut, and in the hearts and minds of those who remember.



Top left :Confirmation Class ; top right: Cookbook cover—Doldie Terebessy &
Bottom : the New Church outside and inside.



A “MÁG”NETIC AFTER-NOON

Those who attended the concert at the Bessemer Center in Bridgeport on Sunday, September 23rd were treated to a virtuoso performance by the talented and much-decorated Mága Zoltán from Hungary. He was ably supported by his “angels”, two charming violinists in ball gowns.

Taped music replaced the orchestral background, as Mága played his own arrangements of Mozart, Brahms, and Vivaldi, as well as lighter music, including pieces from Kálmán operettas, film music such as the theme from “The Godfather”, the Monti Csárdás, and of course, “Pacsirta”, or “The Nightingale”. Mága has a “magnetic” personality, and he is an expert entertainer who knows how to “play the crowd”. CD’s of his virtuosity were snapped up by the enthusiastic audience.

Besides the Hungarian government’s awards, Mága Zoltán is a Knight of Malta, and has been named Cultural Ambassador.

Like the Viennese New Year’s concerts, Mága also closed his concert with the Radetzky March, for which the audience’s eager clapping pro-



vided the beat.

Mága and his “angels” left Connecticut for performances in several Canadian cities.

The tour was organized by Pongratz Entertainment of Phoenix, AZ.

Erika Papp Faber

that far, being sidetracked by



Did you know ...

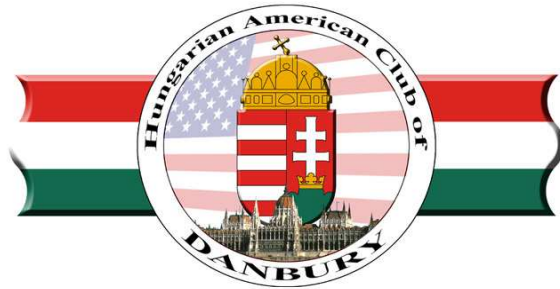
that the only Buddhist shrine in Europe is located in Budapest?

It was erected in honor of Kőrösi Csoma Sándor (1784-1842), who compiled the first Tibetan grammar, and published the first Tibetan-English dictionary.

He had walked from Transylvania to Tibet, with the goal of finding the original home of the Hungarian people. He never did get

the request of the British to study the Tibetan language. He did his research in a lamasery (a monastery for Buddhist monks) in the Himalayan foothills, under extremely austere conditions. He died in Darjeeling, India. The Japanese consider him a *bodhisattva* (a Buddhist holy man).





**Meghívjuk Önt és Családját a
2007 Október 13.-án, Szombaton
délután 5-től éjfélig
tartandó**

SZÜRETI BÁL-ra

ÉLŐ ZENE - TÁNC - TOMBOLA

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VACSORA

6 órai kezdettel.

Helyszín:

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7 East Hayestown Road, Danbury, CT. 06811**

Részvételi Díj: \$35

**A Helyek Korlátozottak
Fizetett Visszaigazolását Kérjük 2007 Október 5.-ig**



Résztevők Neve: _____

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**Hungarian American Club of Danbury, Inc.
56 Pembroke Rd. Danbury, CT. 06811
Lengyel Zsuzsa: 203 746-2162
Fehérné Mónika: 203 300-5541**



*The Hungarian Community Club
Of Wallingford*

Invites You and Your Family to the Annual

HARVEST BALL

Saturday, October 20, 2007

Cocktail Hour Starts at 7:00 pm

A variety of Hungarian Wines will be Available

Hungarian Style Meat Loaf Dinner Served at 8:00 pm

Featuring Music by Laszlo Furnwald

Donations \$50 per couple

Please make your reservations by sending your check payable HCC to:

Hungarian Community Club
P.O. Box 1816
Wallingford, CT 06492

For more information, please contact:

Barbara (203) 269-9768 Lenke (203) 634-0602

The Hungarian Community Club is located at 145 Ward Street in Wallingford, CT

Members: Volunteers needed!! Also, bring items to be raffled for the Scholarship fund!

Please Note: Due to insurance regulations, HCC can not allow alcoholic beverages to be brought in.

