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The Pastoral History Study of the Transylvanian Folk Missions of the 20th Century, with Special
Reference to the Pastoral Practice of the Franciscans

TEZĂ DE DOCTORAT

- Rezumatul în limba engleză -

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The journey is very meaningful and rich, not only in results, but also in experiences. In the first part, we described the current mission concept of the church and looked for clues to the definition of the mission concept. We had references for this from the documents of the 2nd Vatican Council. Although the synod documents named *Gaudium et Spes*, *Ad Gentes* and *Apostolicam Actuositatem* discuss the mission of the Church from different perspectives, it will be clear that this mission is not an end in itself, and the mission is not the sole responsibility of a governing organization, but the common task of believers, who got mission in baptism. Related to this, we also presented the statements of Pope Francis, who updates the 2000-year Christian teaching for his 21st century man and emphasizes that „every baptized person is a mission (...) We are all on a mission in the world because all people are the fruit of God’s love.”¹ The spirituality of Pope Francis represents a church image that is also open to joy and problem-solving, while his words and gestures encourage us to be the co-workers of our small and world church with our communities, to pursue peace and dialogue creatively and in solidarity. This kind of mission can only be accomplished if there are open hearts and ears in the world, sensitive to physical, mental life situations, and various problems. In this missionary conception, the same Christian principles continue to apply as in the former 20th century Transylvanian folk missions. Spiritual renewal, healing, life organization, change - these are all basic motives that not only characterize today's mission concept, but have been closely linked to the concept of missionary already in the 20th century.

¹ Pope Francis’s message for World Mission Day 2019, In: <https://www.magyarKurir.hu/hirek/ferenc-papa-uzenete-2019-evi-misszios-vilagnapra-100782>. Date of download: April 4 2021.

The second chapter of the first part of our dissertation explores and examines the history of the Transylvanian people's mission in detail, bearing in mind the relevant manifestations of 20th century bishops. Starting with the period of bishop Mailáth Gusztáv, elected in 1897, the diocese is given a new impetus because the bishop orders a number of effective measures aimed at spiritual life - more about this can be read in the body text - among which we also find folk missions. At the beginning of the research, we did not yet know how much source and material stock can be expected, so they were arranged afterwards, as a result of which the period of the Transylvanian people's missions was divided into three periods.

The years between 1897-1918 includes a period characterized by the description of the people's mission as a pastoral tool and its spread. The circulars and exhortations of the chief pastor, the founding of the Priestly Missionary Association, its operation and thus the integration of popular missions into the public consciousness took several years and required a very patient and calm planning. It is a fact that the Franciscan people's mission cannot be separated from the operation of the Priestly Missionary Association, since the Association had to be a member of all parishioners and monks who served as people's missionaries, but we only covered Franciscan folk missions in the second part of our dissertation. In the first part, we had the presentation of the development and growth of the Transylvanian folk mission practice in a general sense. It is important to emphasize that we did not have any resources left from the first stage of the people's missions that would clearly and consistently include the structure of the people's mission days. At this early stage, these can only be deduced in a mosaic-like way from a report or other description. First, in 1931, a comprehensive printed guide to holding mission days was published. We can clearly conclude from the sources, that in the initial time there were few requests for folk missions and the interest only increased over time. This is indicated by the surviving mission reports. A slow but growing missionary work has begun, but the outbreak of World War I is blocking it. A total of 115 sources from this period were identified, including superiors' statements, statements, and popular mission requests and accounts.

The second period of the Transylvanian people's missions can be traced back to the years between the two world wars, which we defined in the dissertation as the “flower age”. From this time, we have a rich source of material and, accordingly, our information is more accurate about the people's missions held. Compared to the 18-20 years of the first period, in these years - between 1919 and 1937, we can observe a very strong, so called, explosive popular mission demand and their retention. Of course, several factors contribute to this. The most significant factor that favored the boom in popular missions was simply the spread of missionaryism in the public consciousness. Furthermore, the increase in the number and popularity of priests who undertook popular missions, but even more so of monks, played an important role in this process. In addition, the positive experience of believers and parishioners on mission occasions also stimulated interest in missions, but the desire for post-World War I pain, political delusions and a “cure” for political decisions all contributed to the transition between the two world wars in Transylvania note the heyday of popular mission.

After the entry into force of the Treaty of Trianon, all state and ecclesiastical institutions, including the fate of families and individuals, had to face many challenges in Transylvania. Sources show that the diocesan leadership has tried to adapt to the laws of the new country, especially in the fight to keep church schools and buildings, often in a windmill battle. In the period of the years 1920-1925, it is clear that everyone was busy reorganizing and from that time we did not even identify an episcopal declaration regarding popular missions. Of course, this does not mean that there were no mission days, as twenty sources have been identified for these five years, including details of the prevention of the people's mission days in 1922 by the state. A episcopal circular issued in 1927 discusses that „experience has shown that the people's mission occupies one of the first places among the extraordinary means of pastoralism, promising the strengthening of our believers in God's holy grace and renewal in a faithful, Catholic way of life.”² In this conviction, the chief pastor urges as many parishes as possible to claim the days of popular mission, also called soul-saving mission days. Here we note a sad but already real social problem, the problem of

² GyÉL: 4080/1927.

the spread of alcoholism. The bishop specifically urges the people's missionaries to pay attention to the fact that during the missions in Szeklerland „the idea of anti-alcoholism should not be missed, but communicated in a poignant way, because drinking alcohol is one of the greatest crimes and destruction of our poor people.”³

Meanwhile, the Priestly Missionary Association, which has been operating since 1901, has increasingly sought to hold regular meetings, even annually, with the aim of reviewing the “work” done, considering it, and planning for the future. However, new members were also recruited, especially among the diocesan clergy, as they were few in number in the association. Founded in 1929, Unio Cleri pro Missionibus was intended to serve as a mission-facilitating society, which means to spread missions and promote them among believers and the clergy, often linked to fundraising for the benefit of the Priestly Missionary Association. An important event from this period is the annual general meeting held in Miercurea Ciuc on July 11 1930, which reports that OFM monk P. Lukács Mansvét was present, among others, and shared his experience with the "colleagues" of the people's mission who were there. According to the clerk, what was said was of such value that an initiative was taken to publish what was said by P. Mansvét, which was also supported by the bishop present and presiding at the meeting. From this initiative, a small booklet was compiled and published in 1931 at the St. Bonaventura Printing House in Cluj-Napoca, entitled: „People's Mission. A guide for the Reverend Priesthood organizing the people's mission.” Although it should be mentioned later in chronological order, but closely related to the subject, we already note that the folk mission guidelines printed in 1931 are followed by another in 1935, namely two volumes written and published by Balázs Lajos and Sándor Gálffy, pastors of Oradea: Mission Book: 1. Handbook and rituals, 2. Sketches and material. Oradea, 1935. It was also made for mission leaders.

The second half of the 1930s and the period after the outbreak of World War II until 1945 it was discussed together, as the third and final period of popular mission begins thereafter. According to the reports, the situation in Transylvania around the second great world burning was not easy: the new war period, the impoverishment of the hinterland, and

³ GyÉL: 494/1929, 2nd circular.

the calling of men to the war did not favor the mission. There was less and less demand for the people's mission, because the conditions were not conducive to the classic holding of missions. A letter from this period survives, which is annexed to the report on the operation of the Unio Cleri pro Missionibus, in which the author notes that „the great world burning is hitting the mission areas”⁴, but he also adds his pertinent suggestion that ”we must prepare now for more intensive missionary work after the war.”⁵ From the part of Franciscans we get some hope, that in 1939 and 1940 three volumes of P. Lukács Mansvét mission's manuscript were published, entitled: „Follow Me - Folk Missionary Speeches”, also from the work of the Cluj-Napoca Printing Press. Here we note as an interesting fact that the progress of the age and development can also be perceived in the fact that more posters, advertisements, flyers, mission memorials have survived from this period than from the previous ones. Its size, shape, pattern and content are very varied, it can be said that each one is unique in design and construction. However, one point is common to all: neither is missing the „Mission!” Or the „Save Your Soul!” subtitle.

Closely and inevitably, the resources of the period between the two World Wars include the large number of mission requests and reports that form the basis of this chapter. Of course, we were not able to display all the sources in the dissertation, but their identification helped to quantify the soul-saving days of this era. Between 1919 and 1937, more exactly in the second phase of the Transylvanian people's mission, sources were identified for nearly 700 people's missions, and for the years 1938-1944, there were identified 310 sources. Although the numbers may seem very „talkative”, in addition to the content of the quality reports, it can be said that this period is indeed a „flower age” in the history of the Transylvanian people's mission, when the concept of saving souls was given a literal interpretation in view of the horrors of wars. The large number of audiences, the number of confessions, the holy communions, the number of marriages, the founding of religious associations, the joining of these, attending more frequent Masses at all, and

⁴ GyÉL: Sz.n/1942.

⁵ Uo.

accepting of the sacraments could have had a positive effect on the life of the individual and the community.

The third and last historical period of the Transylvanian people's mission is the period from 1945 to 1947. In his circular published on January 1, 1945, with blessed memory Bishop Márton Áron, writes in his circular about the consequences of the shocking years of World War II, which affected all segments of society. He notes that „unfortunately we have painfully many opportunities, and perhaps there will be more if we do not practice the virtue of love. War breaks life and destroys it like a storm, a flood, a fire, or an earthquake. There is a lot of pain, suffering and misery.”⁶ The meeting convened by the bishop on September 29, 1945, concludes that a diocesan public mission program should be announced.⁷ Following the meeting, the bishop expresses in a circular his wish that, through popular missions, believers may, if possible, remind their past, put their spiritual lives in order, be reconciled to God, and begin a new life both individually and communally.⁸ The diocesan folk mission plan is for a year and a half, according to which all communities in the diocese were to benefit from the soul-saving days. The bishop indicates that he expects „a separate report from the parishioners and pastors as well as the missionaries on the people’s missions in our parishes”, as he records and processes these reports.⁹

In these years, nearly 80 and a further 14 sources of public mission from 1948-1950 were identified, despite the fact that, according to the episcopal report, „there were a total of 316 missions in the diocesan parishes in less than a year and a half (...). First there are soul-saving days in the Catholic regions living in one block, then in the mixed places and finally in the scattered areas. Totally 27 Franciscans, 6 Lazarists, 3 Minorites, 3 Jesuits, 1 Piarist, 1 foreign diocese and 74 diocesan priests took part in the work: a total of 115.”¹⁰ As a summary, the chief pastor puts it this way: „the mission plan was set in a caring manner and

⁶ GyÉL: 1st circular/1945

⁷ GyÉL: Sz.n/1945.

⁸ GyÉL: 8th circular/1945.

⁹ GyÉL: 15/1946.

¹⁰ GyÉL: Sz.n/1947.

the implementation took place on time, it could never have come at a better time.”¹¹ This is confirmed by reports that missions in turn report a positive impact, despite the post-war drought, poverty, the associated clothing, and even the growing prevalence of communist ideas. The churches were crowded and even „the big fish came”, as we can read from the account of the parish priest of Csíkmadaras.¹² In many churches in Transylvania or in its forecourt, or even in its garden, folk mission crosses and their „talkative” years can be observed, especially the two World Wars and for the period after World War II.

After the review of the source history, in the first part of the dissertation we dealt with the concrete presentation of folk missions. The number of folk mission publications included six forms, representing four volumes and two booklets.

When dealing with the concept of the people's mission and their content, it is important to explain its principles and goals, so that in addition to the organizational techniques, we can also encounter content specifics. The principle is that the mission is the spiritual exercise of the masses, which is always and everywhere needed, its success also depends on the local parish priest and the active operation of some church organization who work together to maintain mission enthusiasm in the faithful. The basic goal of the people's mission is repentance, the frequency of attending to the sacraments, and from these it follows in turn to live everyday life as Christian as possible. These helping „crutches” are the recitation of prayer, sacraments and glosses and the application of their spirit in everyday life. Experienced people in missions have made a distinction between people’s missions in the city, village or scattered countryside, as they argue that each life situation requires a different missionary attitude, speech plan and content.

In the chapter entitled The Architecture of People's Missions, we described the structure and organization of the soul-saving days and their course, with special regard to the available secondary resources. The preparation, which required thorough logistics, was illustrated according to the instructions issued by P. Lukács Mansvét in 1931. Based on the

¹¹ Uo.

¹² GyÉL: Sz.n/1948.

Franciscan missionary insights, one had to pay attention to the weather in addition to the well-chosen time, but also to the beginning and last day of the mission, as every detail had consequences in both positive and negative directions. The extent to which the parish priest requesting the mission knew his community and the relationship between the community and the parish priest also had a significant impact. The Priestly Missionary Association compiled a 17-item questionnaire, in response to which the parish priest provided a general overview of those preparing to hold a people's mission, sort of helping him prepare, but especially in terms of speech topics. The information suggested to the faithful is summarized in only 7 points, including encouragements such as attending masses, attending speeches as faithfully as possible, a thorough examination of conscience, but also the reverence of Virgin Mary and the exercise of moderation. The particular interest in that publication is the section in section 8 which discusses the missionary's duties, spirit, conduct, and health, with useful advice. While at one point we can read about how useful „travel companions” to put in your package, at the other point your focus and scientific knowledge is already in the spotlight. Advice on his behavior includes dealing with the other missionary, but also his presence in the pulpit, in the parish and among the faithful people. In connection with his health, his voice, confession time, teeth, eating and heating, bathing and sleeping were extremely important, as these aspects and senses were the basic „working tools” of a practicing public mission.

Mission plans and speeches carried a number of essential accessories (announcements, glosses, prayers, and so on), however, the management of speech plans is essentially what mattered in order to achieve the most effective results possible. A distinction was made between instructive, moving, conversion-promoting, and reinforcing speeches, which were usually given in the morning and evening. Speeches on conversion required special attention here, as the importance of confession and holy communion often depended on the contribution of believers to sacraments both during and after the people's mission. In addition, the topics of eternal truths, commandments, prayer life, Virgin Mary, and the sacraments were considered important speech plans.

The purpose of presenting the mission agenda was to help us imagine the schedule of a soul-saving day, its planned and schedule. The environmental conditions - village, city, diaspora, practicing population dependent on political ideologies and so on - had to be kept in mind when preparing to keep the people's mission, and with these in mind, you could plan, even at what time in the morning, the program would begin. It was recommended to give an explanation of the mass, but offering the intentions and describing them increased the interest and participation of the faithful. The devotion of the cross, the praying of the rosary, the application of the bell of penance were all such small details that they could have strongly contributed to the outcome of an effective or even opposite public mission. Evening devotions and various celebrations – processions, worship, litany, etc. – also played a significant role, but also to cultivate the faithful to silence, to listen, especially on the occasion of leaving the temple. The constant encouragement to fast – even giving up alcohol on Wednesday and Friday – is not only in the direction of the faithful, but also to the people's mission and the parish priest who receives it, as they set an example before the faithful people.

Since the confession is an essential point of the agenda and of the people's mission in general, it is essential that the missionary adopt not only a good speaker, but also a patient, gentle and kind behavior, so as not to close his mouths and souls, but to open them more and more for purification. Organizing or reorganizing religious associations and expanding them with members was also one of the items on the agenda of the people's mission days.

One, if not the most significant „strategic” method of popular mission was group education; to give to all ages, members of the community in any life situation and leave something valuable and lasting after the days of soul-saving. To do this, it was necessary to group the members of the community in a targeted way, so that the stakeholders could feel that they were individually important members of the parish, of the church itself. In fact, the problem of the older generation is not the same as that of a young family and then we didn't even talk about children, maybe separately about men, women, girls, boys. It was possible to participate in these events, group trainings, according to gender and age, as the mission was purposefully prepared for the existing life situations. The structure of the child's mission has

been expanded, as experience has shown that the beliefs acquired in childhood form the basis of a practicing adult Christian.

Each popular mission had to have a separate speech plan for alcohol, abstinence, and swearing. According to the parishioners, these are the „miseries” that were the everyday „visitors” of the society of Transylvania, and even more so of Szeklerland.

In this dissertation, we can also read in this section about the organization of one of the cornerstones of popular missions, its content, namely the scattered missions. The livelihood, that is the „bread problem”, forced many families into a Protestant environment, where there was a great chance not only to enter into mixed marriages but also to neglect spiritual life and move away from the church. The fact that there was no local Catholic priest played a significant role in all this, perhaps it was only possible to attend Mass every month or on major holidays, but the lack of a Catholic school, religious class, ministerial occasion did not favor the situation either. Experience has shown that the „most effective tool” for maintaining and strengthening Catholic self-awareness and faith was the practice of popular mission. Important topics of conversation were Sunday consecration, Catholic marriage and charity.

Folk mission celebrations were of great importance as they were among the essential accessories of the daily program. Each day had a separate „celebration” that was thematically related to the traditions of folk religiosity. We know a total of 10 mission ceremonies. In chronological order, the opening ceremony was the first in practice, which according to experience, if it resulted in a full house, could have been a half-success of the mission days. There were several scenarios for the organization of the opening, in which they had in common to receive them with the procession of the people's mission, to accompany them to the church and then to their accommodation.

The celebration of the end of the people's mission was the assertion of the mission cross. It was recommended to make it from specific tree types to remind members of the community for a long time of the effects of soul-saving days. It was necessary to write the year of the mission (but even the exact date of the day) and the words „Mission!” or the

„Save Your Soul!” It is customary on the anniversary of the mission – but even weekly, on Sundays – for fresh flowers to adorn the base of the cross.

We also find more ideas on what celebrations can still be held during people’s missions and what theme can be wrapped around them. Vows against harmful passions, offerings to families and youth are important, but even the Heart of Jesus and respect for St. Joseph are among the ideas.

As a memorial, during the soul-saving days, if possible, a holy image, a memorial card could be made and distributed, with the date of the mission on it and short prayer texts. It was the responsibility of the faithful and parishioners to see how consistently they lived all the good they had promised and received during these days.

Parish feedback has been present since the beginning of the study period, in smaller or even larger numbers. The report to the bishop usually included the exact date of the people's mission, the name of the mission, the number of believers attending, and information about contributions to the sacraments.

Last but not least, we discussed in the architecture of popular missions, the practice of renovation, that is, missionary innovation. It was recommended that the renovation be organized in the first year after the mission, and that it be repeated thereafter every 2-3 years.

In the first part, we described the most significant additions of the 20th century Transylvanian people's mission, ranging from the manifestations of ecclesiastical leaders to the spread of missions to the structural and content structure of missions. Obviously, it is not the task of a summary to write in detail about the details, as this is what the body text is for, but it should provide a comprehensive, descriptive picture. We have called the introductory parts of the people's missions the backbone of the dissertation, as there are many important threads that are important in connection with the missions: principles, goals, preparations, missionary, believer and parish conduct and their agenda during the mission. We also discussed here the accessories for missionary speeches, the well-thought-out and structured schedule of the missionary agenda, the use of group teaching, but also the sporadic missions, the ceremonies that raised and diversified the daily program items. We also demonstrated the

important role of concluding parish feedback and mission renewal. These are all aspects of successful and still memorable soul-saving days that are worthy to know more or less about it.

The second part of the dissertation explored the practice of the Franciscan people's mission in Transylvania in the 20th century and processed and used all available sources. Similar to the epoch of the people's mission in the first part, in this case as well, we can discuss the soul-saving days performed by the Franciscans in parallel with this epoch.

We started the second part with the history of the Franciscan order, the founding of the order, the history of the Custodian of the Holy Land, and the parts concerning St. Francis and his spirituality. Francis and his companions, along with the wandering preachers, preached the importance of calling for repentance, even taking martyrdom. The penitent of Assisi, as he himself called himself and his followers, voiced throughout, and even left in his legacy, that one of the hallmarks of all his followers was his obedient and faithful devotion to the Pope of all times and to the Catholic Church itself. This kind of continuity can also be traced in the sermons of Franciscan folk missions in Transylvania in the 20th century, as the encouragement of faithful commitment to God, the Church, the nation, and the school was a fundamental topic of conversation during Franciscan missions. After describing a short history of the Franciscan order in Transylvania, we used the indispensable virtues of the Franciscan folk mission using the sources of the Order Gazette – the Transylvanian Franciscan Way – the Official Gazette of the Order Province. Humility, self-denial, and love were considered missionary „weapons” and it was emphasized that the preacher was the messenger and personifier of Christ, and therefore had to become the bearer of the characteristics of Christ.

The structural and content structure of the Franciscan sermon is summarized in 6 points. We presented the aspects that distinguished the Franciscan sermon from any other sermon. The use of religious, positive, simple, and intelligible words, as well as the illustration of what is being said, is a Franciscan feature of sermons, as is the spirituality that is included, which is the bearer of repentance, faith, unity, and association life.

The first phase of the era of the Franciscan people's mission in Transylvania was made from the time of joining the Priest's Missionary Association, from April 25, 1901 until the end of World War I. During this period – similarly to popular missions by dioceses or other monks – the number of soul-saving days undertaken and performed by the Franciscans was relatively small. The basic explanation for this is that the Order has devoted its existing resources to the schools it maintains and invested its energies there. Another explanation may be that since there are still few parishes requesting a mission at the Transylvanian level, they were able to be fulfilled without any interruption by the diocesan priests who were designated for this purpose. Of course, there are sources from almost every year that testify to the Franciscan people's mission, except for the period 1914-1922.

The period of intensive Franciscan folk mission can be traced back to 1922, until the outbreak of World War II, the period of popular mission between the two World Wars, can also be called the „flower age”. During this period, a number of new names appeared in Franciscan folk mission sources, who, thanks to their young age, were full of momentum and good work ethic, even going weekly on weekly missions. We note that the first occasion of the state-banned public missions identified so far can also be linked to a Franciscan mission, namely in the Jil Valley in the autumn of 1922.

Significantly fewer Franciscan sources can be identified in the episcopal documents, not within the ranks of the Order, where the monthly newspaper – Catholic World – and the Order Gazette – Transylvanian Franciscan Way – Official Gazette of the Order - are in the legacies of manuscripts preserve their memory.

The folk mission accounts that have survived from this period have a very rich content both about the social situation of the given parish as well as about the Franciscan person and charism of the mission days. In the meantime, we must not forget the Trianon border change and its many individual, family, community and national consequences, especially with regard to the structure of the new state. The maintenance of Hungarian-language and even ecclesiastical schools, the move from here and beyond on the border due to unemployment, the spread of ideologies of the germinating Communist Party are all causal

connections that led the leadership of the order to be present to adapt to environmental influences, be present among people and share the joy, but also in their tears. In the mentioned years, such unforgettable names are added to the *Historia Domus* of many parishes in Transylvania, but also to the history of parishes living in the territory of the former Yugoslav Kingdom, such as P. Lukács Mansvét, P. Weldin Konstantin, P. Máthé Benvenut, P. Takács Gábor, P. Réthy Apollinár, P. Vitéz Berárd, P. Kassay Kelemen, P. Trefán Timotheus, P. Albert Kasszián, P. Kristó Xavér, P. Kristó Modeszt, P. Imets Károly, P. Fodor Pelbárt, P. Szabó Dömjén, P. Szolán Seres, P. Bojáky Zsigmond, P. Ambrus Kapisztrán, P. Ráduly Kolozs, P. Szócs Dénes, P. Vargha Iréneusz, P. Gábor Anasztáz, etc.

The outbreak of World War II and the border change following the Vienna decision once again slows down the possibility of holding people's missions, as the militarization, the gradual impoverishment, and the front lines around the settlements do not favor the conditions for holding soul-saving days.

Franciscan members also join the diocesan-level people's mission plan announced by Bishop Márton in the fall of 1945, adding new members to the Franciscan mission. From this period, a number of beginning with „I happily announce you” public mission reports were identified, in which parishioners reported with satisfaction the results of the soul-saving days held by the Franciscan people’s mission. Here we draw special attention to the fact that during these years and decades the missionaries gained such notoriety that on several occasions the parishioners asked them for a mission not only by naming a Franciscan monk, but by naming a specific person. We also included a short excursion in this chapter, as the period of public mission announced by the diocesan leadership lasted from the autumn of 1945 to the spring of 1947, but in other way, Franciscan sources identified folk mission requests and accounts between 1948 and 1950, along with several triduums and parish reliefs.

It is a separate source value and it is therefore important to highlight that in 1931 as well as in 1939 and 1940, the world economic crisis and during the World War II and the Vienna decision, Father P. Lukács Mansvét, a public mission, published a small booklet and

three volumes in the Cluj-Napoca printing press. These publications were an excellent guide to the popular missions of the time, and for us in describing certain topics, our only document of source value.

We also described the location of the sources in the second part of the dissertation. We presented the Archbishop's Archives of Alba Iulia and the Franciscan Archives of Transylvania. In the Archbishop's Institution, within the Episcopal Documents, the group number 23 contains the records of the monks in each year. Within this, we also found a number of sources for people's missions. The newly formed Franciscan Archives, although its list of funds has not yet been officially published, preserves resources for popular missions within the Legacy of the Provincial Governors and the Legacy of the Order. The identification of nearly 1.300 archival sources was a serious support, as in the absence of publications, no other source material was available for Franciscan folk missions.

In addition to primary sources, although in negligible numbers, there are also some secondary sources. Of these, they are considered basic folk mission literature - if you may call it that.

We deal in a separate chapter with the biographies of the well-known Franciscan folk missions. In addition to describing the biographical additions, our goal was to bring the legendary folk missions closer. The best-known people's mission in Transylvania – P. Lukács Mansvét – died in 1958 at a relatively young age, in an incurable disease, but an also highly sought-after and popular mission – P. Réthy Apollinár – died in 1987, when he was old and retired.

Of course, due to the length of the dissertation, we could not undertake to describe their lives to all Franciscan folk missions of the 20th century, even for a few lines, but let's describe his life, but with the help of a creative categorization, we grouped them along characteristic traits and tried to classify everyone based on their characteristic trait. This completed a Franciscan mission portrait hall.

Finally, the last chapter of the second part presents specific agendas and topics of conversation, as our aim was to show what it is like to apply folk mission guidelines in a

village, town or scattered and along which a program of folk mission occasions is created. In this part of the dissertation, we used the method of complete source transcription, thus giving an introduction to the originality of folk mission programs.

In the third and final part of the dissertation, we wanted to answer to what might be the relevance of Franciscan (people) mission in the 21st century. Along two questions, we asked five Transylvanian Franciscans of different ages and assigned tasks. The legacy of St. Francis and the ancestors of the folk mission can still be seen in action on the basis of what has been said: to be present, to listen, to approach meekly, to heal, to lead as many souls as possible through the sacraments on the path to eternal life.

Pope Francis said of the Franciscan spiritual heritage: „an invaluable wealth rooted in gospel life, brotherhood, poverty, lesser brotherhood, and migration.”¹³ He added, and was about to ask that the members of the order, like St. Francis, embrace „the victims of the modern world and those excluded from the world. The opportunity for renewal is closeness to and support for the poor, paving the way for a God-appointed future.”¹⁴

This line is also represented by the new Franciscan Minister, Massimo Fusarelli OFM, elected on 13 July 2021, who said: „The church can be close to those in need not only as an abstract institution, but through people living the gospel. So the church is not a distant reality that appears at certain moments and places, but a nearby, supportive institution.”¹⁵

The leader added that God's presence and faith are one of the realities that touch man's life, that are present in him, in which one can believe and trust. It is worth starting the practice of this today in our individual and community life, so that we are not only official Christians belonging to an institution, but also those who feel the characteristics of the

¹³ Pope Francis's message to the participants of the Franciscan Grand Chapter, In: <https://www.vaticannews.va/hu/papa/news/2021-07/ferenc-papa-uzenete-a-ferences-nagykaptalan-resztevevoinek.html>, date of download: July 20 2021.

¹⁴ Uo.

¹⁵ Conversation with Fra Fusarelli, the new leader of the Franciscans, In: <https://www.vaticannews.va/hu/egyhazi/news/2021-07/beszeltetes-fra-fusarellivel-a-ferencesek-uj-eloljarojaval.html>. date of download: July 20 2021.

Christian discipleship, the behavior of its representatives. We have great examples ahead of us who have helped those entrusted with this even in the most difficult circumstances of the 20th century.

We borrow our closing thought from a folk missionary speech by P. Lukács Mansvét, who said in his concluding speech after a soul-saving week:

„I have completed my mission. However, the mission was not over. It begins today in its reality, because then it must create its fruits in souls, hearts, families, the whole community of faith. Please be steadfast in the good! (...) My brethren, love God! (...) Your Catholic religion! (...) Your best mothers are the Catholic Church! (...) Love the church. (...) Love your priests. (...) Love your children. (...) Love your schools! (...) Love each other!”¹⁶

¹⁶ Mansvét Lukács: Follow me II, 303-307.