

**Dr. Ágnes Tímár, O.Cist.,**  
the founding abbess of „Gyümölcsoltó Boldogasszony” (Annunciation) abbey of Kismaros,  
in the 93<sup>rd</sup> year of her life, the 68<sup>th</sup> year of her solemn vows  
according to her long desired wish has entered the Heavenly Home of the Father  
on the **31<sup>st</sup> day of August, 2020**

*„If you were to take me already ... that would be great... I would love to join your Mother... I wish to go to Móni (one of the nuns who died in 1963) in the House of the Heavenly Father. You know if you still expect something from me...non recuso laborem, but if possible, may your merciful goodness embrace me... I am tired... I am very tired ... but as you think.” (April 17, 1999)*



*„He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for all;  
how would He not give us everything along with Him?” (Romans, 8:12)*

Through her long life and all the gifts of her personality got unfolded through the light and shadows of Christ’s cross. Her pilgrimage progressed from step to step, moved from cross to cross through which the light of the resurrection was shining toward herself and toward everybody whom she met.

### **The hope of the beginnings and its hard reality**

She was born on January 20, 1928 in Budapest. She was but three years old when her mother left the family. She went to school in Pestújely, in the Állami Elemi Népiszkola (State Elementary School); from 1938 on she continued her studies in the Erzsébet Nőiskola Leánygimnázium (Elizabeth Girl Secondary School).

During World War II, she lost her father and grandmother; she was left completely alone.

After the war she continued her high-school studies in the Angolkisasszonyok Intézet (English Ladies, Congregatio Jesu). In 1945 she participated in the summer-camp at Szakcs in the Katolikus Főiskolai Diákszövetség, where she became familiar with the cultural attaché secretary

of the Actio Catholica, Ödön Lénárd, a religious of the Piarist order. At the end of their conversation from the Father she received this sentence: „*The Good Lord has placed me next to you for life, and I have accepted you for eternity.*”

After graduation, in 1946 she enrolled in the engineering school of the József Nádor Egyetem. Parallel to this she took an active role in the work of the Actio Catholica.

### **The start of religious life – highlights and shadows**

When Father Ödön Lénárd was arrested in 1948, she, along with other young people, moved to the country, close to Zirc, where she received refuge with the Cistercian nuns of Bakonyboldogasszony. She sought a way during these months to find out how she could help „*the poor Hungarian Christianity that was sentenced to death.*” A religious vocation matured in her, and in the fall of 1948 she requested to join the Cistercian nuns’ community of Regina Mundi. Of her vocation she writes thus: „*With the events, the situations that I met and felt I could do nothing if I don’t sleep, don’t eat, only do what I can in order to save, I shall die and did nothing. Then I came to the realization that if I am unable to do anything, then the Good Lord will nonetheless be able to do something. The only thing that one can do is to stand alongside the Good God, and let him do the doing. Thus I became a religious.*”

She made her simple profession on January 9, 1950, before the dispersion of the religious orders, at the monastery of Somogyboldogasszony that was founded by the community of Regina Mundi. When the sisters were forced to leave their monasteries, she served for a while in the parish of Borzavár, then moved to Budapest. She found employment with IPARTERV in 1951. She would have loved to continue her studies, but due to her background as a religious she was not granted the opportunity. In the fall of 1951 she was called by her superiors to Érddiget, where she made her solemn profession on January 9, 1953 for the clandestinely operating Regina Mundi community.

A few months later the contact between Ágnes Timár and the Cistercian nuns was painfully broken. She moved to Budapest and continued her work as a building supervisor of the Diószdi Csapágygyár. Along with the recently freed Ödön Lénárd she embraced those young people who, in spite of the turbulent times, were filled with the yearning to totally dedicate their lives to God, and thus searched for direction from them.

### **The word calling to keep going – commitment without compromise**

A new chapter began in the life of Ágnes Timár on September 8, 1955: along with four young girls, in a sub-let apartment of Budapest, the religious community – which today survives as the Kismaros nuns – was born. „*I lived in Budapest. I was taken in by a friendly family in Semmelweis street, in a tiny rental apartment, where I led the life of the hermit Pambo. A young girl showed up, then another, then soon Móni knocked on the door... From that time on, with a copy of the Rule and a Cistercian diurnale [prayerbook] we began to „live.” After all, those who started in the wilderness of Cîteaux did not have much more of „objective help” than this... We sort of carried our monastery on our backs. We had a common schedule that defined our belonging to one another. We fashioned our life-style very much like early religious communities did at the dawn of Christianity.*”

On February 6, 1961 she was arrested along with three of her companions. The City Court of Budapest judged the common religious life as an act of organized subversion to overthrow the government. After seven months of investigative captivity she was sentenced to four and half years in prison. *„The forces lined up against me, against us, were laughably enormous and out of proportion when they are relating to a dozen of young girls living together a religious life versus presenting the possibility of overthrowing a government. The furious attacks against us served as the awesome testimony as to how efficacious and powerful they judged the force of prayer, the prayer of the Church, and God’s power in the weak.”*

She received news in the second half of 1962, still in prison, that Mónika, the leader of the „community on the outside” had died at the age of 25. *„A heavy blow has hit us... Móni, my Mónika...; one of my life’s most hurtful lack began then, and continues until death.”*

She was released from the prison of Kalocsa through the granting of a general amnesty on March 21, 1963, the earthly birthday of Mónika.

She again was arrested on April 19, 1966. With the charge of conspiracy to overthrow the government, and as a recidive criminal, she was given a three and a half year prison-sentence, adding the time omitted by the amnesty. *„Everything is a bit easier the second time around, and at the same time everything is also much harder. Easier, since much is already known, less frightening. The noises, the voices are easier to decipher, one knows, that the milieu is satanic, and one must rely solely on the merciful love of God... I can affix my eyes only on the Crucified, I can think only about the faithfulness of my own [community].”* She was freed on November 29, 1968, having omitted a few months of grace.

### **Theological studies**

*„After the second prison stint the desire toward studies erupted with elemental force in me. I wish to study the disciplines through which bring the inapproachable world of God into the approachable distance that the human mind and intuition allows one to reach.”*

With the special permission of József Udvardy, the bishop of Szeged-Csanád, she completed the theological studies at Szeged. She handed in her dissertation to the Institut Catholique of Paris to the Department of Patristics, where it was accepted in the early 80s, but for the defense she was allowed to travel to only in 1989.

### **Kismaros – Through God’s graces the ‘impossible’ became possible.”**

At the beginning of the ’70’s the community bought a small property in Kismaros where the „ancient monastery” was built: a wooden-shed. Later a brick building, „the twin-house”. Here, on the top of the hill, „Ági néni” – as she was known by many – along with Father Ödön Lénárd’s wide horizon, crystal clear, dedicated-to-God spirituality permitted them to establish such a spiritual workshop that became a guiding light for the growing number of like-minded sisters and for those who searched for direction and answers to questions of their Christian lives.

Ágnes Tímár was able to connect the community of Kismaros into the spiritual „blood supply” of the universal church through numerous contacts with such theologians as Jacques Maritain, Jacques Lowe, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Henri de Lubac, Paul Beauchamp, friendships and connections with the Benedictine, Cistercian, Trappist communities world-wide. Their numerous foreign language works were assiduously translated and were circulated in the form of samizdat publications.

### **New momentum – the building of a Monastery**

At the time of continued relaxation of the political situation in Hungary, the re-establishment of religious orders finally took place, along with the whole review of regulations regarding their juridical status. On August 14, 1987, the monastery of Kismaros acquired the rank of a „sui iuris” community, incorporated priory of the Cistercian Order, which then was raised to the rank of abbey in 1993. In 1996 it was time to take further ecclesiastical steps, so the abbey of Gyümölcsoltó Boldogasszony joined the larger family of the Cistercian Order as member of the Congregation of Zirc.

After the 1989 political turn-over the community again faced a huge task: *„We were planning the new monastery. And we had to prepare for a relatively large building project whose financial coverage depended solely on God’s providence... Besides the organization of everyday life I was left with the task that without money, without contractor, with only simple work-men I must oversee the erection of a monastery.*

After a ten-year period of bulding, we scheduled the dedication of our church for April 17, 1999. In a short allocution that abbess Ágnes delivered at the feast, she looked back on the road thus far traveled in these words: *„I was the foreman of the project all the way through that was possible only if the whole Community as a single person carried on and in unity shouldered the divided burden.”*

When in January of 2003, having completed her 75<sup>th</sup> year, she resigned her position as abbess. According to her own decision, from May of 2006 she lived in Vác, outside the monastery. As long as her abilites allowed, she busied herself with the historical research of Father Ödön Lénárd’s work, by the support of the „Jelenkori Keresztény Archivum” [Present-day Christian Archives] created by Fr. Lénárd himself. Due to her deteriorating health, diminishing physical and spiritual strength she was moved in April of 2018 to Verőce, into the Migazzi Kristóf Home for the Elderly, where her fervent prayer found a hearing: *„My Good Lord, don’t be angry, but the manifold crosses have tired me out. I am unable to recommend myself.”*

May the Eternal Love of the Risen Christ, along with our deep gratitude, raise her up and glorify her life that was burned with multiple crosses, solitude and suffering!

On the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14, 2020 within the framework of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we shall celebrate her burial rites in the Abbey of Kismaros.

**With sorrowful hearts we inform the faithful that due to the Coronavirus  
the burial will be private,  
thus only members of our community may participate in the ceremony.**

We are and remain in unity with those who knew her, respected her and loved Sister Ágnes, and we thank all those who followed her in faith, hope and love.

*"He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (Romans, 8:32)*

Abbess Olgi and the sisters of Kismaros

The quotes found in the text come from the *Diary of Mónika*, in the book by *Vocation and Mission* written by Ágnes Tímár and the study of Zsuzsanna Bögre, entitled *Hétköznapi ellenállás reziliencia, generativitas, [Weekday Resistance, Resilience, Generativity]*.

The image is from the Cistercian Abbey La Maigrange.

On our web-site one may find a picture essay entitled *Ági néniről*.