NÁNDOR DUPKA

MONSIGNOR FERENC PÁSZTOR, EPISCOPAL VICAR AND MARTYR

"He did not deny his faith, but rather chose death."

The Confessors of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia (1945–1991)

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DEAR READER!

I recommend this book, which presents the true life of Ferenc Pásztor, a former parish priest and episcopal vicar of Beregszász, with love and respect to all interested readers. As we come to know his life, the figure of a most faithful priest of Christ emerges before our eyes. Ferenc Pásztor dedicated his entire life to the service of Jesus and His Church. He did so not only in times of peace and ease, but also amid trials, sufferings, and even martyrdom. Ever since the Church of Christ has existed, it has continually had to face various trials and hardships. Even in the time of the early Apostles, the Christian community endured bloody persecutions. Jesus Himself spoke of these trials to His disciples in the Gospel.

The Evangelist Luke was among the first to record how Jesus spoke openly and honestly to His apostles and to the Church about what awaited them in the world. In his life, Vicar Ferenc Pásztor also faced unjust persecutions and deportation. Yet he did not shrink from his fate, but faced it bravely. As a true priest of Christ, he entrusted his cause to God, knowing that although he could be cast down in this world, his eternal life was in God's hands. Even when subjected to endless interrogations and humiliation, he remained steadfast in faith, trusting that the crown of truth awaited him in the Kingdom of God. Now we, the people of our time, must look upon him with respect and gratitude—respect for his admirable perseverance and faith, and gratitude because we can thank the Lord for such a living example, who encourages and inspires us to follow his path.

It was Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus (Tertullian) who said: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." May the Lord grant that the sacrifice of Ferenc Pásztor may also bear abundant fruit in our Catholic Church in Transcarpathia.

Father János Molnár, Episcopal Vicar and Priest
of the Holy Cross Church of Beregszász



FERENC PÁSZTOR (1880–1951)

Prayer for the Beatification of Father Ferenc Pásztor

O gracious Father!
In Your infinite love, You have given us our shepherd, who may be for us an example and a sign through his life, his ministry, his boundless love, his humility, and his faithfulness to You unto death.

Look upon his holiness of life, his merits, and his martyrdom. Grant that, as our intercessor, he may continue to be Your faithful and obedient shepherd.

Amen.

Let us pray for his beatification!

(We ask you to pray through the intercession of Father Ferenc Pásztor. To facilitate the beatification process, please inform the Holy Cross Parish Church in Beregszász if your prayer has been answered. – the Holy Cross Parish Church in Beregszász)

INTRODUCTION

Between 1945 and 1948, the NKVD had already taken action against six devoted Roman Catholic priests in Transcarpathia—István Lőrinc from Ördalma, Dr. József Tóth from Szerednye, Ernő Tindira from Bárdháza, Péter Homolya from Felsődomonya, József Galambos from Bene, and Ágoston Horváth from Ungvár—and sentenced them to Gulag forced labor camps on charges of anti-Soviet activities.

It should also be noted that, during the wave of arrests in 1949, the Roman Catholic priests Kálmán Bártfay from Nagyszőlős, Sándor Haklik from Rát, Lajos Hudra from Kerepec, Pál Placinger from Ungvár, and Ferenc Pásztor from Beregszász were imprisoned.

Only eight priests remained at liberty, and they alone had to meet the basic pastoral needs of the Catholics of Transcarpathia, including funerals, baptisms, weddings, and other pastoral services.

However, between 1950 and 1952, they—Dezső Árvay from Tiszaújlak, Zoltán Bakó from Kisszelmec, Antal Heveli from Szolyva, János Sörös (Pivovar) from Munkács, József Templi from Nevetlenfalu, and Dr. Bernát Bujáló, archdeacon and parish priest from Ungvár—were also arrested and convicted.

Soviet authorities sent a total of nineteen Roman Catholic priests to Gulag forced labor camps in order to make it impossible for the parishes to function.

On the basis of sources from the Transcarpathian Territorial State Archives and in the light of previously known scholarly literature, I first explored, in my earlier research[1], the life and the circumstances of the deportation of the undeservedly forgotten martyr, Father Sándor Hak-

[1] See: Nándor Dupka, „Who Was Sándor Haklik? The Arrest, Show Trial, and Martyrdom of the Roman Catholic Dean of Kisrát," in *"Tormented on Russian Soil..." International Forum of GULAG-GUPVI Researchers in Transcarpathia, 2022: International Memorial Conference, Beregszász, November 18, 2022*, ed. György Dupka (Uzhhorod–Budapest: Szolyva Memorial Park Committee – Intermix Publisher, 2023), 99–113. Link: https://kmmi.org.ua/uploads/attachments/books/books-pdf/2023/konf-2023.pdf

lik. In the past year, I have fully processed the approximately 100-page Haklik file compiled by the NKVD investigators. I published the results of this research in an article[2]. In his hometown of Beregardó, a memorial plaque on the wall of St Kinga Church commemorates the martyr.

Following this path—through the evaluation of additional archival sources and the study of further documents on the subject—I examined the Golgotha of the martyred parish priest, Ferenc Pásztor of Beregszász, who, with unwavering faith, served his nation and the Church, and *"died for Jesus, accepting suffering for the God of love."* In light of all this, the next stage of my research focused on the life and activity of Ferenc Pásztor, who served as parish priest in Beregszász for seventeen years. Until now, the final stages of his tragic life during the Soviet era, as well as the circumstances of his deportation and conviction, have remained obscure, and the works of earlier researchers cited below lack significant data. Therefore, with the aim of conducting comprehensive research, I have processed the Pásztor criminal file (No. 149252). The draft indictment prepared for the show trials by NKVD investigators in Transcarpathia consists of nearly 150 handwritten and typewritten pages, including numerous interrogation records and fabricated charges compiled over a period of four months—from February 26 to May 12, 1949. The criminal file is currently held in the Transcarpathian Regional State Archives in Ungvár.

Church historian Károly Hetényi Varga draws attention to this, noting in his biography of the persecuted vicar of the Diocese of Szatmár, Ferenc Pásztor: *"He is one of the many Hungarian priests from Transcarpathia who paid with their lives for their vocation and their loyalty to their people."*[3]

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[2] Károly Hetényi Varga, *Papi sorsok a horogkereszt és a vörös csillag árnyékában* [Priestly Fates in the Shadow of the Swastika and the Red Star], vol. 3 (Abaliget: Lámpás Kiadó, 1996). https://kmmi.org.ua/uploads/attachments/books/KMMI-fuzetek/Haklik.pdf

[3] Károly Hetényi Varga, *Papi sorsok a horogkereszt és a vörös csillag árnyékában* [Priestly Fates in the Shadow of the Swastika and the Red Star], vol. 3 (Abaliget: Lámpás Kiadó, 1996).

After the turn of the millennium, we also learn from the writings of György Csanádi, a local historian and journalist from Beregszász (Transcarpathia), that "Ferenc Pásztor, parish priest of Beregszász and a papal prelate, became a victim of Stalinist terror. He played an outstanding role in the religious life of the town and was a highly educated preacher. He devoted great attention to the development of cultural life, established a Catholic cultural centre in Beregszász, and enriched its activities with profound and meaningful content."

In 1944, the Hungarian authorities entrusted him with hearing the confessions and administering Holy Communion to two captured partisans who had been sentenced to death. He attempted to intercede on their behalf, but without success. He also sought to save Chief Rabbi Hirsch Salamon from deportation to a concentration camp, but the rabbi refused his help, choosing instead to share the fate of his community.

As one of the outstanding figures in church and cultural life, Ferenc Pásztor was arrested by the Soviet authorities in 1948 and convicted on the basis of trumped-up charges. We learn from the book by Károly Hetényi Varga, Papi sorsok a horogkereszt és a vörös csillag árnyékában (The Fate of Priests in the Shadow of the Swastika and the Red Star), that he was imprisoned together with others, including Ferenc Harangozó, vice-rector of the seminary in Szombathely. Ferenc Pásztor died in a Stalinist labour camp in 1950. A white marble memorial plaque on the wall of the Roman Catholic church preserves his memory[4].

Ferenc Pásztor's life was recalled in detail by his nephew, the lawyer Dr. István Pásztor, in his work *Reminiscences II*. There he writes: "When the Russian troops were approaching Beregszász, we asked him to come to us in Vitka. [...] He insisted that he would not leave his faithful, no matter what might happen to him. [...] A few years before his death, he sent a letter to his youngest sister, Erzsébet Pásztor, who was my godmother. In this letter, among other things, he wrote that he was tempted by Satan. Satan promised him freedom, saying that he would be released

[4] György Csanádi, *Régi beregszásziak* [Old Inhabitants of Beregszász] (Private edition [Beregszász], 2001), accessed July 17, 2024, https://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02131/html/01.htm.

if he converted to the Orthodox faith. He was not willing to commit such a sin; he did not deny his faith and was ready to die" (p. 29). He continues: "...my cousin István Pásztor was also present during the arrest and the house search connected with it. I heard from him that they treated my uncle inhumanely. During the search, all valuable items—encyclopedias, books, a typewriter, and money in his office—were seized and taken away without any receipts" (*Reminiscences XI*, p. 119). [5]

Until the arrest of the archdeacon of Bereg in the summer of 1949, his priestly activity had been studied, among others, with particular attention by József Csáti, Géza Kornél Dióssi[6], György Dupka[7] and Antal Majnek[8].

In Father Béla Bohán's[9] view, "the year 1949 marked not only the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church, but also the deportation of the parish priest and chaplain of Beregszász."[10]

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[5] Szabolcs Bunda, „Emlékezés Pásztor Ferenc beregszászi plébánosra" [Remembering Ferenc Pásztor, ParishPriest of Beregszász], based on the research of Béla Bohán SJ, *Új Hajtás* 12, no. 9 (2007), accessed July 17, 2024, https://ujhajtas.net.ua/emlekezes-pasztor-ferenc-beregszaszi-plebanosra/.

[6] József Csáti and Géza Kornél Dióssi, «A Kárpátaljai Római Katolikus Egyház» [The Roman Catholic Church of Transcarpathia], in *Extra Hungariam: A Hatodik Síp antológiája* [Extra Hungariam: Anthology of the Sixth Flute] (Budapest–Uzhhorod: Hatodik Síp, 1992), 176.

[7] György Dupka, *Egyházüldözés Kárpátalján 1944–1991* [Religious Persecution in Transcarpathia 1944–1991: The „Time-Traveler" Thematic Exhibition of the St. Elizabeth of the House of Árpád Roman Catholic Church in Tiszabökény], Kárpátaljai Magyar Könyvek [Hungarian Books of Transcarpathia] 262 (Uzhhorod–Budapest: Intermix Publisher – Szolyva Memorial Park Committee, 2017), accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.google.com/search?q=https://mek.oszk.ua/18100/18119/18119.pdf.

[8] Antal Majnek, „A kárpátaljai római katolikus egyház története" [History of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia], in *Útközben* [On the Way], ed. György Dupka (Ungvár: KMKSZ, 1998), 39.

[9] *A beregszászi római katolikus egyház könyvtára* [Library of the Roman Catholic Church of Beregszász], manuscript by Béla Bohán SJ, published by Anita Szendrey, accessed July 17, 2024, https://bolt.ferencesek.hu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Pages-from-keresztenyuldozes.pdf.

[10] *A beregszászi római katolikus egyház könyvtára* [Library of the Roman Catholic Church of Beregszász], manuscript of Béla Bohán SJ, ed. Anita Szendrey, accessed

A work of significant source value is associated with the name and book of the Franciscan Father Paweł Wyszkowski, who presents the testimonies of priests, monks, nuns, and lay Christians in Ukraine throughout the entire period of communist religious persecution (1917–1991). In the foreword to the book, the Franciscan **Ferenc Hidász, who translated the work,** also pointed out that **'the** appendix attached to the translation is a detailed report on the Hungarian, German and Slovak Roman Catholic priests and believers living in Transcarpathia, who from 1944 became, against their will, residents of the empire spanning two continents. The clergy of this region was subjected to the same measures implemented elsewhere in Ukraine, the ultimate objective of which was the total liquidation of the Church. The study establishes that Dominican Sister Gabriella Anna Melega was the first to provide a comprehensive overview of the nineteen Roman Catholic priests convicted and deported from Transcarpathia, drawing upon archival materials and other primary written sources. Furthermore, the volume includes oral history interviews conducted by the translator with Transcarpathian Catholics.

The personal testimonies of ten men and sixteen women reflect, with **unflinching** honesty and unvarnished truth, the 20th-century reality of Transcarpathia, a region burdened by political and religious tragedies. Among the most severe of these were the **branding** of the Hungarian and German populations as **collectively guilty**, and the deportation of civilians aged 18 to 50 for 'three days of work' (**malenkiy robot**) beginning in the autumn of 1944."

In the final chapter of the Appendix, the late Cardinal László Paskai (1927–2015), retired Archbishop of Esztergom-Budapest, reflects—from a twenty-year perspective—on his pastoral visit to Transcarpathia in May 1989. His intervention enabled Hungarian Franciscans to initiate missionary work in Nagyszőlős and its surrounding areas. This mission continues to the present day, fostering

July 17, 2024, https://bolt.ferencesek.hu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Pages-from-keresztenyuldozes.pdf.

the organizational and spiritual renewal of parishes that had long been deprived of pastoral care.

The volume's Transcarpathian appendix also features the martyrs Sándor Haklik and Ferenc Pásztor; a study of their lives offers profound insights and provides exemplary role models for contemporary readers.

Regarding the arrest and interrogation of Ferenc Pásztor, Gabriella Anna Melega[11] was the first to publish a well-grounded and reliable study in the Catholic journal *Vértanúink-Hitvallóink*, detailing her research findings concerning the Roman Catholic priests of Transcarpathia.[12] Beginning her research into authentic archival and primary

[11] Melega Gabriella Anna OP http://regi.mindszenty.katolikus.hu/vh58/58_1.htm

[12] Gabriella Anna Melega OP summarized her research, initiated in 2008, as follows: "To date, the most significant scholarship regarding this period and the fate of convicted Transcarpathian priests has been the work of Károly Hetényi Varga, which provides an abundance of valuable data on the persecuted clergy. However, due to the geopolitical situation in Transcarpathia and the stringent Soviet secrecy protocols of the era, he was unable to access primary documentation. I gained access to these documents—specifically the Russian and Ukrainian investigative files concerning the conviction of the priests in question, which comprise not only the final verdicts but also the interrogation protocols—within the Transcarpathian Regional State Archives and the Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) in Transcarpathia. Although obtaining access to these show-trial materials proved challenging, I succeeded in providing faithful translations of the documents—adhering as closely as possible to the original texts—within my 2008 thesis at the Sapientia College of Theology of Religious Orders. As the individual files of these priests often exceed two hundred pages, it is not feasible to present the full trial records to the readership. However, I am pleased to include excerpts from these materials, as well as from the priests' personal correspondence and other related documentation. At present, our efforts are focused on the systematic exploration and processing of archival records, alongside the search for living witnesses. In addition to the historical reconstruction of the era, its documents, and events, we seek to honor the memory of those priests who remained steadfast in their vocation and loyal to the Church, often at the cost of their lives. To compile the necessary evidence for the beatification of these exemplary priests, the cooperation of witnesses—through the provision of oral or written testimonies—and the collection of extant documentation are of vital importance. Consequently, we appeal to anyone who can support our mission with such information to contact us as soon as possible. Source link : http://regi.mindszenty.katolikus.hu/vh57/57_1.html

sources in 2008, she presented her findings at the Conferences of Hungarian Monastic Superiors. Among other sources, she gained access to the investigative files and personal dossiers of Transcarpathian Roman Catholic priests sentenced to forced labour in the Gulag, held at the Transcarpathian Regional State Archives and the Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) in Transcarpathia. In one of her publications, she noted that 'the files of three fathers—József Galambos, Sándor Haklik, and Pál Plackinger—remain missing.[13]

Since then, I have succeeded in locating the file of Sándor Haklik (No. 2357) within the Transcarpathian Regional State Archives in 2023, a discovery that culminated in the publication of a book. I concur with my fellow researcher's assessment that further investigation remains essential; only through the analysis of newly uncovered sources can we obtain definitive answers to the unresolved questions regarding our convicted priests.

Anita Szendrey, a scholar from Beregszász, has conducted extensive research into the pastoral ministry of Ferenc Pásztor.[14]

This section provides a detailed analysis of the Roman Catholic Church's situation in Beregszász during the early years of Soviet rule, spanning from 1944 to 1949.

The Roman Catholic Parish of Beregszász, under the leadership of Dean-Parish Priest and Episcopal Vicar János Molnár, together with the affiliated Ferenc Pásztor Community and Pilgrimage House, has undertaken the preservation of the martyr vicar's spiritual legacy. Their objective is to ensure that his memory remains a vital part of the faith and identity of the Catholic community for generations to come.

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[13] Gabriella Anna Melega OP, „Új források üldözött papjainkról" [New Sources Regarding Our Persecuted Priests], *Új Hajtás* 13, no. 9 (2008), accessed July 17, 2024, https://ujhajtas.net.ua/uj-forrasok-uldozott-papjainkrol/.

[14] Anita Szendrey, „A beregszászi római katolikus egyház helyzete a szovjet rendszer kiépítésének kezdetén (1944–1949)" [The Situation of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász at the Beginning of the Establishment of the Soviet System (1944–1949)], *Acta Beregsasiensis* 10, no. 1 (2011), accessed July 17, 2024, https://adoc.pub/a-beregszaszi-romai-katolikus-egyhaz-helyzete-a-szovjet-rend.html.

Building on these foundations, the most extensive chapter of this volume provides a rigorous analysis of the dossier compiled by NKVD investigators on Ferenc Pásztor, alongside the publication of primary source materials. Through this work, I seek to fulfil a long-standing historical obligation. In this volume, I present a factual and authentic account of the deportation, interrogation, and conviction of the book's central figure, as orchestrated by the Soviet authorities in 1949. Despite the immense pressure exerted upon him, 'he did not renounce his faith and stood prepared to face death.'

CHAPTER 1.
CAREER PATH

1.1. HIS YOUTH AND STUDIES

Ferenc Pásztor, Vicar of Transcarpathia and Archdeacon of Bereg, was born on January 14, 1880, in Ungvár, into the family of a Hungarian Catholic artisan. His relatives were deeply devout, and the practice of their faith was an integral part of the family's daily life.

Ferenc Pásztor was the son of **János Pásztor** (b. 1851, Szirénfalva/Ptrukša, Slovakia), an artisan, and **Julianna Tahy** (b. 1857, Kincseshomok), a homemaker. He was raised in a large household alongside his siblings: **János Pásztor** (b. 1881, Ungvár), who later settled in Hungary; **Margit Pásztor** (b. 1884); Lajos Pásztor (b. 1888, Ungvár), a worker; **Erzsébet Pásztor** (b. 1891, Ungvár), a homemaker; **István Pásztor** (b. 1892); and **Anna Pásztor**, whose dates of birth and later life remain unrecorded.

As the eldest son, he was enrolled in the Ungvár Primary School (*Népiskola*) at the age of seven. Upon completing four grades, he gained admission to the Ungvár Royal Catholic Gymnasium[15], an institution boasting a three-hundred-year history. He began his secondary studies there in 1890.

It is noteworthy that since 1867, the Hungarian-language institution in Ungvár had been housed in the building of the Royal Hungarian Treasury; after the premises became vacant in 1876, the structure was repurposed and renovated to meet the requirements of a secondary education.

[15] Ödön Blanár, *Az* Ungvári Királyi katolikus Főgimnázium háromszázados története *1613–1913* [The Three-Hundred-Year History of the Royal Catholic Senior Gymnasium of Ungvár, 1613–1913] (Ungvár, 1913).



The building of the Royal Catholic High School of Ungvár

In June 1893, through the cooperation of Mayor Mihály Finczicky[16] and county officials, and with the patronage of the Royal Hungarian Ministry of Religion and Public Education, the construction of a new gymnasium with a significantly larger capacity commenced in the town.

Ferenc Pásztor, then a high school student, began the 1895/96 academic year in the newly inaugurated building, where Principal[17] László Hódoly presided over the opening ceremony[18]. At the time, the curric-

[16] Mihály Finczicky, *Polgármesteri jelentések Ung város közállapotáról* [Mayoral Reports on the Public Conditions of the Town of Ung], ed. György Dupka (Uzhhorod: Cultural Federation of Hungarians in Transcarpathia [KMKSZ], 2001).

[17] According to Blanár Ödön's data, between 1887-1906 the principal of the Ungvár Royal Catholic High School was Ede Szeiber.

[18] István Bujdosó, „Az Ungvári Drugeth Gimnázium története (A XIX. század másodiki felétől az 1945-ös felszámolásig)" [The History of the Drugeth Gymnasium of Ungvár (From the Second Half of the 19th Century to Its Liquidation in 1945)], *Együtt* 15, no. 1 (2013): 72, accessed April 27, 2026, https://epa.oszk.hu/00500/00595/00047/pdf/EPA00595_egyutt_2013_1_069-083.pdf.

ulum was centered on the Hungarian language and Catholic religious studies. These subjects were taught by Canon János Hampel, the gymnasium's Roman Catholic religious instructor. Pásztor, an outstanding student, was likely influenced by Hampel's guidance in his decision to enter the priesthood and serve God.

The highly distinguished faculty of the Ungvár Gymnasium played a decisive role in the intellectual development of this receptive student. As evidenced by his later memoirs, his teachers recognized his potential and mentored the diligent young man throughout his formative years. His religious instructor, who also served as his confessor, provided him with lifelong spiritual direction.

Incidentally, one of the final instructors of theology and ethics at the reinstated Royal Hungarian State Gymnasium—which operated in Ungvár between 1938 and 1945—was Dr. Bernát Bujaló. He was a close friend and a 'brother at the altar' to Ferenc Pásztor, the then-parish priest of Ungvár.

In order to achieve his goals, with the support of his family, he transferred from the high school in Ungvár to the Hungarian High School in Szatmárnémeti, where he obtained his school-leaving certificate (high school diploma) in 1898.

Subsequently, he enrolled in the century-old Roman Catholic Theological Seminary of Satu Mare. This institution had been founded by the Diocese of Satu Mare in 1804 under its original name, the Episcopal Institute.[19] During Pásztor's four years of formation, the seminary and the theological faculty were headed by Rector Ambrus Kádár (who served from 1893 to 1908). The young candidate completed his studies with distinction in 1902.

On June 27, 1902, Gyula Meszlényi — the renowned and highly esteemed 'builder bishop' of Szatmárnémeti (in Hungarian ecclesiastical history, Gyula Meszlényi is frequently referred to as the 'builder bishop' due to his extensive contributions to the foundation of numer-

[19] *Magyar Katolikus Lexikon* [Hungarian Catholic Lexicon], s.v. „Szatmári szeminárium és teológia" [Seminary and Theology of Szatmár], accessed April 27, 2026, https://lexikon.katolikus.hu/S/szatmári szeminárium és teológia.html.

ous churches, schools, and social institutions) — ordained Ferenc Pásztor to the priesthood.



Bishop Gyula Meszlényi

1.2. THE LIFE OF THE YOUNG PRIEST, 1902–1911



The day of Ferenc Pásztor's ordination to the priesthood, Szatmárnémeti, 1902.
Archival material collected by Nóra Mészöly

The twenty-two-year-old Ferenc Pásztor began his priestly ministry in Csomaköz,[20] serving there from 1902 to 1904. The settlement — inhabited by Hungarians, Danube Swabians, and Romanians — is situated in Szatmár County, southwest of Nagykároly. Among the various denominations, the Roman Catholic congregation was the most pop-

[20] In Romanian: *Ciumești*, in German: *Schamagosch*.

ulous at the time the young assistant pastor (káplán) commenced his service at St. Stephen's Church. Built in 1866, the church also administered two chapels located in the local cemeteries. During his tenure, Ferenc Pásztor took an active role in further revitalizing the parish community.

The innovative young priest was subsequently reassigned to Nagybocskó[21],

(It is noteworthy that in Nagybocskó (Velykyy Bychkiv), Ferenc Pásztor came into direct contact with the Zipser German community, which had originally settled in the Máramaros region to work in the timber and salt mining industries. The fact that he celebrated Holy Mass in German as well as Hungarian serves as a testament to his linguistic proficiency and his pastoral adaptability to a diverse flock. The 14th-century Church of St. Lawrence, one of the region's oldest Catholic strongholds, provided a profound historical backdrop for his ministry. For the young priest, this ancient environment likely fostered a deep-seated respect for ecclesiastical tradition and historical continuity.) Near Rahó, he served the Hungarian and German Catholic communities in 1904. He celebrated the Holy Mass in both Hungarian and German in the local Roman Catholic church, an edifice originally established in the 14th century.

He continued his service as an assistant pastor and acting pastor in Nagybánya[22](1905), which at the time served as the center of Máramaros County and maintained a Hungarian majority. His ministry centered on the Baroque-style Holy Trinity Church (built in 1718) and

[21] Nagybocskó (Ukrainian: Великий Бичків [Velykyy Bychkiv]; Romanian: Bocicoiu Mare) is a settlement located in the Rakhiv District of Transcarpathia, Ukraine. Present-day Nagybocskó was formed through the administrative merger of the former Nagy- and Kisbocskó. Conversely, the former Németbocskó (now known as Újbocskó), situated on the left bank of the Tisza River, is now part of Romania.

[22] Nagybánya—later elevated to the administrative center of Máramaros County—is known as *Baia Mare* in Romanian and *Frauenbach* in German. This historic mining town served as a pivotal ecclesiastical and cultural hub within the Diocese of Szatmár during Ferenc Pásztor's era.

the Church of Saint Anthony, both of which are now protected historical monuments. Concurrently, in 1905, he performed priestly duties in Szinérváralja[23], located 25 kilometers northwest of Nagybánya on the right bank of the Szamos River. This multi-ethnic, Romanian-Hungarian settlement is home to a significant Árpád-era Roman Catholic church, where Pásztor also ministered.

Subsequently, for three years (1904–1907), he served at the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Szatmárnémeti (Ascension Cathedral) — the very setting of his priestly formation. (Returning to the episcopal see, he participated in the high liturgical and pastoral life of the cathedral, gaining significant experience within the spiritual heart of the diocese).

From November 1, 1908, until 1911, he served as the parish administrator (*vicarius oeconomus*) of Szakasz, a multi-ethnic village inhabited by Hungarians, Germans, and Romanians. Located northeast of Krasznabéltek in the southern region of Szatmár County, the village's spiritual life centered on its Roman Catholic church, constructed in 1815, where Pásztor frequently celebrated Holy Mass. Having successfully administered the parish for three years, the experienced priest was then transferred to Dobóruszka[24] in Ung County. At the time,

[23] Szinérváralja (spelled *Szinyérváralja* until 1907; Romanian: *Seini*; German: *Warolli* or *Leuchtenburg*) is a town situated in Máramaros County. Historically part of the Szatmár Diocese, this multi-ethnic settlement played a significant role in the regional ecclesiastical network due to its strategic location and established Catholic presence.

[24] Dobóruszka (Slovak: *Ruská*) is a village and municipality situated in the Michalovce District (*Nagymihályi járás*) within the Košice Region of Slovakia. It is located 6 kilometers southeast of Veľké Kapušany (*Nagykapos*), in close proximity to the Ukrainian border. **The Dobó Cult:** Dobóruszka served as the ancestral seat of the Dobó family. The Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, which houses the sarcophagus of the legendary István Dobó, held exceptional significance. For a pastor, ministry in this parish transcended ordinary ecclesiastical duties; it was a national mission to preserve Hungarian historical memory. Border Proximity and Strategy: Although the present-day Slovak-Ukrainian border did not exist during Father Pásztor's ministry – as the region was then an integral part of the Kingdom of Hungary – the location of the settlement between Uzhhorod and Nagymihály was of strategic importance. It served as a

both regions were integral parts of the historic Kingdom of Hungary. He embraced this reassignment with great joy, as it allowed him to return to his homeland and re-establish constant contact with his beloved family in Ungvár (The transfer to Dobóruszka (which was then part of Ung County) in 1911 was not only a professional success, but also a deeply personal one. Distance from Ungvár: Dobóruszka is located barely 20-25 kilometres from Ungvár. This proximity allowed for frequent family visits and participation in the spiritual life of Ungvár. Emotional stability: The effectiveness of pastoral work is often enhanced by a secure family background. For Pastor Ferenc, the reunion with relatives in Ungvár gave him the strength to endure the difficulties of the later war years.)

vital link in diocesan communication and regional administrative relations.

1.3. TWENTY-ONE YEARS IN DOBÓRUSZKA

From July 13, 1911, until May 1932, he served as the parish priest of Dobóruszka (Ung County). This parish, situated within the Lower Ung deanery, was historically under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Eger and subsequently of the Dioceses of Szatmár and Košice. Geographically, the settlement lies 6 km southeast of Nagykapos, adjacent to the contemporary Ukrainian-Slovak border. Historical records indicate that the settlement existed as early as 1332, during the Árpád era, under the name Ruska. Notably, between the 15th and 17th centuries, the village was the estate of the prestigious Dobó family, whose influence is reflected in the prefix added to the settlement's original name.

Around 1550, the Roman Catholic parish ceased to function as the inhabitants of the settlement converted to Reformed Christianity (Calvinism). According to local historians, the extant form of the original church, dedicated to the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, was erected by the Dobó family circa 1500. (The Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Dobóruszka (Slovakia) represents one of the most significant ecclesiastical and art-historical monuments in the region. Its history is inextricably linked to the Dobó family, who served not only as the manorial lords but also as the **ecclesiastical patrons** and protectors of the settlement. The architectural core of the extant church is a late Gothic structure dating to approximately 1500. While the settlement traces its origins back to the Árpád era, the Dobó family—most notably Domonkos Dobó and the renowned castellan of Eger, István Dobó—invested substantial resources into the edifice's expansion and ornamentation. Centrally important to the church's historical legacy is the **Dobó crypt**, which served as the dynastic burial site. It houses the Renaissance red marble sarcophagus of Baron István Dobó (1502–1572), the hero of the Siege of Eger. Following István's death in 1572, the funerary monument was commissioned by his son, Ferenc. A notable detail of its provenance is that the sarcophagus lid, which portrays the Baron in full panoply, was held at Eger Castle for centuries before being restored to its original location in Dobóruszka during the mid-19th century.)



Source: https://www.magyarorszag-szep.hu/Doboruszka/target0.html

According to the *Hungarian Catholic Encyclopedia*, the Catholic parish was only re-established in 1601, with its extant sacramental registers dating back to 1718. The church, originally commissioned by the Dobó family, underwent significant expansion at the close of the 18th century; since 1797, the edifice has featured a **double-nave** architectural plan. Of particular historical significance is the archaeological discovery made in 2008: the remains of István Dobó—the heroic castellan of Eger and subsequent **Voivode of Transylvania**—were identified beneath the sanctuary floor. Following this confirmation, his remains were formally **reinterred** within the church, confirming the site's status as a primary location of national and ecclesiastical heritage.[25]

[25] The funerary monument located within the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross consists of an original base, a replica of which is exhibited in the Eger Castle Museum. Conversely, the original Renaissance lid remains in the István Dobó Castle Museum in Eger, while only a reproduction is currently on display in Dobóruszka. The tomb was commissioned by the hero's son, Ferenc Dobó, who served as the **Lord Lieutenant** (*főispán*) of Bars County. According to historical tradition, while the Baron's body rests in Ruszka, his heart was interred separately in Szerednye (Serednje) See: http://www.magyarorszag-szep.hu/Szerednye/index.html

A commemorative booklet documenting these events was published by the Földesi Printing House (*Földesi Nyomda*) in Ungvár in 1922. This publication was issued on the occasion of the consecration of the expanded church in Dobóruszka, which took place on August 6, 1922.[26]

The Baron held a particular affinity for Szerednye, frequently engaging in hunts throughout the surrounding estates. Following his release from a politically motivated **show trial** and subsequent imprisonment, the ailing hero of Eger retired to this residence, where he ultimately passed away in 1572. His enduring legacy is commemorated annually during the **István Dobó Memorial Days**, which are typically observed in Dobóruszka on the weekend of November 2nd or 3rd.

[26] Pásztor, F. (1922). *Dobó István temploma. Emléksorok a dobóruszkai kibővült templom fölszentelése alkalmából. 1922. augusztus 6.* [The Church of István Dobó. Commemorative lines on the occasion of the consecration of the expanded church in Ruská. August 6, 1922]. Földesi Press, Užhorod–Ungvár.

1.4. THE MEMORY OF FERENC PÁSZTOR IN DOBÓRUSZKA

On July 9, 2022, a permanent exhibition was ceremoniously inaugurated in the memorial house dedicated to Ferenc Pásztor, the former parish priest of the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Dobóruszka.



The Ferenc Pásztor Memorial House, situated adjacent to the parish church. (Photo: Edit Vály / Felvidék.ma) https://felvidek.ma/2022/08/100-eve-szenteltek-fel-az-atepitett-doboruszkai-szent-kereszt-felmagasztalasa-templomot/

Based on the photographic report by Gabriella Molnár[27], who attended the inauguration, it is noted that the expansion of the church—necessitated by the growing congregation a century ago—was realized through the efforts of Father Ferenc Pásztor. A significant artistic feature of the edifice is the collection of stained-glass windows, produced in the renowned Budapest workshop of **Miksa Róth** in 1920 (the year of the Treaty of Trianon), which remain preserved in their original state.

[27] Molnár, G. (2022, November 7). *Ahol Dobó István nyugszik – képekkel* [Where István Dobó rests – with photos]. Ma7.sk. https://ma7.sk/tajaink/ahol-dobo-istvan-nyugszik-kepekkel (Accessed: July 17, 2024).

Molnár eloquently observed that 'perhaps the most magical part [of the church] is the stained-glass windows... it is believed that whoever visits this church is touched by its grace, and no one would return home with an empty soul.' The report also introduced Judit Varga, a local historian and guide, who was instrumental in establishing the **Ferenc Pásztor Memorial House**. Varga maintains an extensive collection dedicated to the memory of Pásztor—who ultimately suffered a martyr's death in Siberia—as well as the Dobó family, both of whom remain integral to the historical and spiritual fabric of the parish.

According to historical records, the predecessor of the current edifice was a small Romanesque stone chapel dating to the Árpád era, approximately between 1150 and 1200. At the dawn of the 16th century, the Dobó family expanded this structure by annexing a Renaissance single-nave church. A defining artistic highlight of the earlier church is the high altar of the **Sanctuary of the Holy Cross**, commissioned in 1780. This Baroque masterpiece is uniquely distinguished by having been carved from a single block of stone. Subsequent interior enhancements included the installation of wooden pews during the 28-year tenure of Father Pál Zsigray (The late 18th-century development of the parish was defined by the twenty-eight-year tenure of **Father Pál Zsigray**, who assumed leadership in 1791. This period is regarded as the **heyday of the parish**, a time of significant structural and aesthetic transformation. Among the most notable advancements under Zsigray's administration was the construction of the church's dominant **tower in 1796**, which finalized the building's **Baroque silhouette** atop its medieval and Renaissance foundations. By 1797, the expansion had resulted in a **double-nave structure**, necessitated by the region's growing Catholic population. The interior's historical integrity is further preserved by the original wooden pews, commissioned during his pastorate, which remain extant as fine examples of late 18th-century craftsmanship.), who began his service in 1791. Following the turn of the century, further renovations were overseen by Father Ferenc Pásztor and his contemporaries. Architecturally, the tower was erected in 1796, completing the church's form which remained largely unchanged until 1914.

Judit Varga also provides insight into the origins of the church's atypical architectural style. In the early 20th century, the original edifice proved insufficient to accommodate the congregations from twelve surrounding settlements who attended the masses and festivities led by Father Ferenc Pásztor. To address this, Father Pásztor—who later suffered a martyr's death—initiated an ambitious expansion project. Based on the designs of the prominent Budapest architect and professor **Ernő Foerk** (The expansion project followed the designs of the prominent Budapest architect and professor Ernő Foerk, whose distinguished career included serving as the primary architect for the Votive Church of Szeged (Szegedi Dóm) and contributing to the completion of St. Stephen's Basilica in Budapest. Foerk's expertise in ecclesiastical architecture is reflected in the seamless integration of Dobóruszka's medieval foundations with the early 20th-century expansion, resulting in its distinctive dual-arched interior.), the project commenced with the demolition of the northern wall and the northern chapel of the old church. By integrating the existing structure with a new, wider nave, the expansion resulted in the church's distinctive **double-nave** configuration, characterized by its unique dual-arched interior.

Construction was temporarily halted due to the outbreak of **World War I**; however, the transformation was successfully completed by 1920. The final result is a unique **eclectic aesthetic** that masterfully synthesizes diverse architectural styles from the Romanesque to the Neo-Romanesque. Among the church's functional treasures is the **manual and pedal organ**, an instrument built in 1907 by the prestigious **Rieger** company of Budapest (The church's musical and liturgical life is anchored by a manual and pedal organ, an instrument of exceptional quality built in 1907. It is the work of the **Rieger company**, one of the most prominent organ-building dynasties of the **Austro-Hungarian Empire**. Known for their innovative pneumatic and mechanical systems, the presence of a Rieger organ here highlights the high status of the Dobóruszka parish at the turn of the century. Remarkably, the instrument remains fully functional, continuing to serve the congregation today.), which remains in excellent working condition to this day.

The liturgical centrepiece of the expanded structure is the altar of the **Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows**, which was crafted in **Tyrol in 1918**. The entire architectural complex, including the newly cast bells, was formally consecrated by **Archbishop Ábrahám Tahy** on August 6, 1922. This event marked the finalization of the church's modern configuration, and the edifice has remained in this unified, dual-dedicated form—honouring both the Exaltation of the Holy Cross and Our Lady of Sorrows—to the present day.

For the consecration ceremony on August 6, 1922, Father Ferenc Pásztor compiled a commemorative booklet, an original copy of which remains a cornerstone of the current permanent exhibition. Utilizing contemporary research and archival data, Pásztor documented the evolution of the medieval structure and provided crucial details regarding its early 20th-century expansion. Within this record, he confirmed that the body of **István Dobó**—who passed away in 1572 at his castle in **Szerednye** (Serednje)—was interred within the family vault beneath the church. He further noted that in 1601, the hero's son and heir, **Ferenc Dobó**, commissioned a funerary monument crafted from **artistically carved red marble**, featuring a cover adorned with a high-relief effigy of the castle captain.

Regarding the state of the monument, Pásztor noted with regret that the specific circumstances and timing of the tomb's desecration remained **'lost in the darkness of the past.'** At some point prior to his tenure, the funerary monument had been dismantled: the significant Renaissance cover was relegated to an exterior niche in the southern wall, exposed to the elements, while the four side panels were repurposed as structural components within two of the church's side altars.

The historical and artistic significance of the monument was further solidified fourteen years ago during the reburial of István Dobó. At this time, a sarcophagus was meticulously reassembled using the **original Renaissance side panels** and a high-fidelity replica of the original cover currently held at Eger Castle. This reconstruction is of paramount importance to the region's architectural history, as it represents the **only extant funerary monument of pure Renaissance style** in the Highland (*Felvidék*).

Judit Varga provided a detailed account of the provenance and curation of the Memorial House's collection. She outlined the process through which these historical artifacts were identified and assembled, highlighting the community's commitment to preserving the physical evidence of their past. This collection serves not only as a tribute to the late Father Ferenc Pásztor and the Dobó family but also as a systematic record of the region's cultural and ecclesiastical evolution.

The building, which historically functioned as a residence for cantors and teachers, stood empty for decades after the death of the last resident teacher and after the construction of the new parish. The essential conservation and restoration works were finally realized with Hungarian state support during the tenure of **Father Attila Weiszer** (The international prominence of Dobóruszka was significantly elevated during the service of **Father Attila Weiszer**, who presided over the parish until 2018. Two transformative achievements define his tenure: **Archaeological Discovery and Reinterment (2008):** As the spiritual leader of the community during the 2008 excavations, Father Weiszer coordinated the historic identification of István Dobó's remains. He oversaw the solemn reinterment ceremony, ensuring the heroic captain was finally accorded a funeral reflecting his national importance. **Salvaging the Memorial House:** Recognizing the advanced state of decay of the former cantor-teacher's residence,



The old church – standing at the sarcophagus of István Dobó are Parish Priest István Makovics and tour guide Judit Varga. Photo by Gabriella Molnár.

Father Weiszer spearheaded its preservation. By securing **Hungarian state funding**, he facilitated the critical restoration of the roof and walls, preventing the structure's collapse and establishing the structural foundation required for the eventual museum.), who served the community until 2018. Through his leadership, he made a significant contribution to the preservation of the building's structural integrity, preparing for its transformation into a permanent monument.

One of the noble tasks of the current parish priest, **István Makovics**, who succeeded **Father Weiszer**, was to fill the Memorial House with life. "It was a great joy and blessing for us that we received support from the Bethlen Gábor Fund through a tender for the compilation of our permanent exhibition commemorating the martyrdom of parish priest **Ferenc Pásztor** in the Gulag," says the Father**. Judit Varga** and her daughter-in-law, **Mária Varga-Kohári**, the head of the Vác Diocesan Library, bore the brunt of the collecting work, but they are also grateful to their supporters and also thank the villagers for their help.

Upon entering the Memorial House, visitors are received in a welcoming foyer before proceeding to the primary exhibition hall on the left. This room is dedicated to the physical and military legacy of Captain István Dobó. The museum display includes high-fidelity reproductions of his contemporary portraiture and a cranial reconstruction (head shape) based on forensic archaeological data. Complementing these are replicas of his 16th-century weaponry and period-appropriate attire, providing a vivid reconstruction of the Captain's appearance. To deepen the visitor's engagement, strategically placed panels provide a wealth of digitized archival data and interactive historical insights.

The room on the right is dedicated to the memory of Vicar Ferenc Pásztor. While display panels provide a comprehensive chronological account of his life and ministry, the room is defined by a surprisingly large collection of original personal artifacts. These well-preserved items offer a poignant and tangible account of his ' via crucis '—the trials and profound sufferings he endured during his years of imprisonment in the GULAG. These relics serve as silent witnesses to his spiritual resilience and the broader tragedy of the religious persecutions of the era.



The Ferenc Pásztor Memorial Room. Photo by Gabriella Molnár.

A centrepiece of the collection is Father Pásztor's original, meticulously renovated work desk. Beyond its aesthetic value, the desk serves as a repository for rare archival treasures; within its drawers, visitors can discover the original, century-old architectural blueprints for the church's expansion. For ease of study, these plans are also displayed in frames upon the walls. Furthermore, an elaborately crafted period chest of drawers houses a collection of approximately twelve missals dating from the 17th and 18th centuries, several of which bear the personal signatures of Pál Zsigray and Ferenc Pásztor. A particularly significant textile relic preserved here is Pásztor's original deacon's stole, intricately embroidered with gold thread, representing a masterpiece of ecclesiastical vestment.

In a significant move to unify the village's spiritual and historical heritage, an original side altar from the church has been incorporated into the Memorial Room. This placement serves to re-sacralize the museum space, anchoring the historical artifacts—such as the 18th-century missals and the gold-embroidered vestments—within their original devotional context. Furthermore, the parish leadership views the current collection as a foundation for future growth; as noted in their vision for the site, they intend to continually expand the Memorial House's repository over time, 'with God's help,' as more artifacts of Dobóruszka's storied past are recovered.

The historical depth of the Memorial Hall was significantly enriched by a caretaker meeting in Vác. The book presentation, which

was hosted by the Franciscan monk P. Ferenc Hidász, was attended by the son of history teacher Judit Varga, Attila. The Hungarian translation of Paweł Wyszkowski's research titled Catholic Persecution in Ukraine and Subcarpathia 1917–1944–1991, was published at the event. When it turned out that the work documents the life of Ferenc Pásztor, a collaborative dialogue began between Father Hidász and the Varga family. This academic bridge culminated in the ceremonial opening of the memorial room in Dobóruszka with the participation of Father Hidász. In a moment of profound historical symmetry, almost exactly 120 years after Pásztor's ordination, he held his eulogy in tribute to his life.

In 1949, Father Ferenc Pásztor, as parish priest and episcopal vicar of Beregszász, was arrested by officers of the Soviet authorities on trumped-up charges. He was sentenced to complete confiscation of property and 25 years of forced labour. His earthly journey ended in 1951 in Camp No. 32 in Ozernyj, which is a subdivision of the infamous Steplag system. Decades later, his official rehabilitation decree officially stated that the charges of anti-Soviet activity were completely unfounded and that his alleged guilt had never been proven, thus officially restoring his honour as a martyr-priest.

The inauguration of the Ferenc Pásztor Memorial House and the centennial celebration of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross Church received extensive coverage in the Hungarian press across the Highland (Felvidék)[28]. Reporters and historians emphasized the indelible merits of the former parish priest. Originally from Ungvár (Uzhhorod), Pásztor's legacy is defined by his visionary leadership during

[28] Vályi Edit: *„The reconstructed Exaltation of the Holy Cross Church in Dobóruszka was consecrated 100 years ago."* Felvidék.ma, August 2022. Available at: felvidek.ma. (Downloaded: July 17, 2024.)
https://felvidek.ma/2022/08/100-eve-szenteltek-fel-az-atepitett-doboruszkai-szent-kereszt-felmagasztalasa-templomot/;
BY: BY. „The Secrets of Dobóruszka: I write the summary of the marble sarcophagus." Csatangolók Blog (Wanderers), July 12, 2022. Available at: csatangolok.blog.hu. (Downloaded: July 17, 2024.) / https://csatangolok.blog.hu/2022/07/12/doboruszka_titkai

the church's reconstruction and expansion between 1914 and 1922. The press accounts poignantly contrasted his architectural and spiritual building work with his tragic end—his deportation to the GULAG[29] and his subsequent martyrdom in 1951—honouring him as a figure who built stone cathedrals and spiritual monuments alike.

[29] Father Ferenc Pásztor's legacy went beyond historical documentation and became an object of spiritual devotion. The Catholic faithful of Felvidék (Felvidék) formally and passionately supported his beatification. This movement recognizes Pastor not only as a visionary priest and a victim of the GULAG, but also as a martyr of the faith, whose sacrifice reflects the „Via Crucis" (lat. via crucis, via dolorosa) of the Catholic Church under communist persecution. His possible elevation to the altars would serve as a definitive ecclesiastical confirmation of his life's work and his final sacrifice in the Ozernyj camp.

CHAPTER 2.
THE ARCHDEACON OF BEREG IN THE SERVICE OF GOD AND NATION

2.1. DURING THE YEARS OF PEACE (1923–1941)

On May 1, 1932, the forty-two-year-old parish priest **Ferenc Pásztor** was **transferred** from Dobóruszka to **Beregszász**. Shortly thereafter, within the same year, he was appointed **Archdeacon of Bereg**. For the next seventeen years, he served as the respected pastor and vicar of the Roman Catholic Parish of **Beregszász**.

At the recommendation of the Diocese of Szatmárnémeti, the Vatican appointed him as a councillor of the Holy See. He devoted himself wholeheartedly and tirelessly to supporting the church school and the Árpád-era church.

The earliest historical records of one of the outstanding monuments of Transcarpathian ecclesiastical art, the Church of All Saints, are found in a charter issued by King Béla IV in 1247. In the Middle Ages, members of its clergy often rose to higher ecclesiastical ranks. By the Reformation, the number of altars in the church had increased to twenty-four.

According to the inscription, the current church was constructed in 1418, during the reign of King Sigismund. It underwent two renovations in the sixteenth century, under the patronage of Queen Mary of Habsburg, the consort of King Louis II. On the southern window, the year 1518 is engraved upon a stone band, while the year 1522 is inscribed on the facade of the ornate southern portal. These contemporary stoneworks serve as prime examples of the region's sophisticated architectural culture. However, the town suffered immense devastation during the Tatar incursion of 1556; the invaders plundered and burned the settlement and deported a significant portion of the population. Later, in 1657, George II Rákóczi's failed campaign to secure the Polish throne brought severe retaliation upon the region. After repelling his forces,

the Polish troops invaded Hungary, wreaking havoc and carrying out brutal destruction across the counties of Bereg, Ugocsa, and Szatmár. On June 17, 1657, while the inhabitants of Beregszász were gathered for Sunday worship, the enemy launched an assault on the town. Massacres occurred at the church enclosure, and the building was set ablaze; only the sections constructed of ashlar (hewn stone) survived the fire. Although Zsófia Báthory later commissioned the reconstruction of the church, it was again destroyed by fire in 1686 and remained in ruins until 1837. Following the turmoil of the Reformation, the parish was reorganized in 1715. During the interim, Holy Mass was celebrated in the adjacent Gothic St. Michael's Chapel, which was restored in 1743 by the local estate (manor).

St. Michael's Chapel, which stood adjacent to the main church, was demolished in 1846. The parish church had been taken over by the Calvinists in 1565. Following several subsequent fires—most notably the conflagration of 1686—the building remained roofless and dere-



Photo source: *"The Roman Catholic Church of Beregszász," Örökségtúra, https://www.oroksegtura.hu/orokseghelyszinek/beregszaszi-romai-katolikus-templom*

lict until 1837. Its restoration then commenced based on the designs of Albin Tischler, assistant pastor of Beregszász and later titular canon. The project was completed in 1846 through the patronage of Count Schönborn. On November 1, 1846, Bishop János Hám consecrated the edifice. This three-aisled hall church, reconstructed in the Neo-Gothic style, was then dedicated to the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Its organ, a protected artistic monument, was crafted in 1899 by the Rieger Brothers of Budapest (The Rieger Brothers (German: Gebrüder Rieger) name is one of the most important brands in the history of organ building, especially in the territory of the Monarchy. Although the company's headquarters were in Austrian Silesia (Jägerndorf, today Krnov), their factory in Budapest played a key role in supplying instruments to Hungarian churches. The company was founded by Franz Rieger, but it was his sons, Otto and Gustav, who made it world famous. The Budapest branch was established so that Hungarian orders (such as the one in Beregszász) could be fulfilled more quickly and duty-free. In the era, Rieger organs were symbols of technical innovation and reliability). The interior furnishings, including the pulpit and the altars, were completed in the Neo-Gothic style in 1907.[30]

This edifice has historically remained the most significant ecclesiastical monument in the region's most quintessentially Hungarian city. Following the First World War, the parish administered several filial churches (filials), including Alsóremete, Asztély, Badaló, Beregdéda, Gát, Halábor, Kígyós, Kovászó, Macsola, Makkosjánosi, Mezőgecse, Nagybégány, Nagybereg, Nagyborzsava, Nagymuzsaly, and Tiszacsoma. Since 1993, its jurisdiction has extended to Beregardó, Bulcsú, Kismuzsaly, Macsola, Nagybégány, and Nagymuzsaly. Ferenc Pásztor succeeded Sándor Ekkel[31] as parish priest, continuing the pastoral work begun by his predecessor as if receiving a baton in a relay.

[30] „History of the Parish of Beregszász," Diocese of Munkács, accessed April 25, 2026, https://munkacs-diocese.org.

[31] **Lajos Ekkel (1871–1932) -** The career of Lajos Ekkel unfolded within the framework of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Szatmár, and he was indeed one of the most prominent Catholic leaders of modern-day Beregszász (Beregove). Born on

The **Ferenc Pásztor** manuscript (1944–1949), held in the library of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász, has been meticulously examined by the Jesuit Father **Béla Bohán** and the local historian **Anita Szendrey** in their respective works. Their research illuminates the papal prelate's extensive and multifaceted **ministry** dedicated to the Hungarian Catholic community throughout the years of peace, the hardships of war, and the subsequent period of transition.

Ferenc Pásztor reflected in his manuscript on his arrival in the town on the Vérke River: "I arrived in Beregszász in 1932. The Czechoslovak authorities sought to suppress our Hungarian Catholic school, which stood as the sole bastion for the Hungarian community in the field of education in Beregszász. Under the pretext of tax arrears, they placed all our assets under sequestration. In response, I organized a communal fundraiser and contributed my own modest savings of 20,000 Czechoslovak koruna to the institution. Through these efforts, we not only succeeded in preserving our school but also

February 27, 1871, in Beregszász, he was a native of the town, a fact that undoubtedly contributed to his profound local authority and prestige. Ecclesiastical Career: Ordination: August 30, 1893. Early Ministry (Chaplaincies): Following his ordination, he served as a curate in Nagymajtény (1893), later in Szinérváralja and Szatmár (1896). In 1897, he was appointed President of the Catholic Young Men's Association (*Katolikus Legényegylet*) in Szatmár, a position that signaled his exceptional organizational skills early in his career. In 1902, he continued his service in Felsőbánya and Máramarossziget. Parochial Appointments: He served as parish priest in Rónaszék from 1903 to 1921, marking his longest tenure in a rural assignment. Service in Beregszász (1921–1932): In 1921, Ekkel returned to his birthplace to assume leadership of the parish during the challenging years following the Treaty of Trianon. In 1922, he was appointed Archpriest (*főesperes*), a role that entrusted him with the supervision and representation of the Catholic clergy in the region under the Czechoslovak administration. Legacy and Succession: Lajos Ekkel passed away in Beregszász on January 15, 1932. Historical records confirm that following his death, Ferenc Pásztor was appointed to the parish of Beregszász in 1932. As his direct successor, Pásztor inherited Ekkel's legacy and continued the constructive communal and spiritual work that Ekkel had established during the era of post-war reconstruction.

managed to add an additional storey to the building and further its development.[32]

His testimony further underscores his profound commitment to the poor. To this end, he organized an annual charity fair held before Christmas through a charitable organization that he had established. Most notably, he introduced the 'Eger Model' (Eger Norma), thereby promoting a structured form of poor relief based on this 'Hungarian System' within the city. This initiative was implemented through an ecumenical framework, fostering cooperation across different Christian denominations. At his request, the relief efforts included the participation of two Franciscan Sisters dedicated to the care of the poor, two deaconesses, and an Israeli (Jewish) nurse—all serving to the general satisfaction of the local community. This collaboration stands as a testament to his inclusive approach to social welfare.

Ferenc Pásztor's civic engagement was equally significant. Beyond his ecclesiastical duties, he initiated the establishment of the Transcarpathian Hungarian Choral Association (*Kárpátaljai Magyar Dalosszövetség*) in Beregszász on March 10, 1934. At the inaugural assembly, the archdeacon and Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász was elected president. The executive position was entrusted to Béla Nyitrai, the Reformed pastor of Bátyú, further demonstrating the interdenominational cooperation of the era. The statutes were officially ratified by the provincial office on April 30, 1934, bearing the signatures of President Ferenc Pásztor and Notary Béla Várady.

Under the president's leadership, the primary objective of the choral association was to unify the various Hungarian singing societies operating throughout Transcarpathia. Its mission focused specifically on the cultivation and advancement of Hungarian choral literature

[32] Szabolcs Bunda, comp., „Emlékezés Pásztor Ferenc beregszászi plébánosra" [Remembering Ferenc Pásztor, Parish Priest of Beregszász], based on the research of Béla Bohán SJ, *Új Hajtás*, no. 9 (2007), https://ujhajtas.net.ua/emlekezes-pasztor-ferenc-beregszaszi-plebanosra/ (accessed July 17, 2024).

and musical heritage. Furthermore, the association's statutes explicitly renounced all political involvement, ensuring that its activities remained strictly cultural and non-partisan in nature.[33]



Ferenc Pásztor, Parish Priest of Beregszász, in the 1930s.
(Photo archive: Nóra Mészöly)

On May 21, 1934, under his presidency, the 2nd National Hungarian Song Festival (II. Országos Magyar Dalosünnep) was organized in Beregszász. This prestigious event served as a grand assembly for fifteen Hungarian choirs from across Transcarpathia, marking a milestone in the region's cultural cohesion.

[33] Csilla Fedinec, *Iratok a kárpátaljai magyarság történetéhez 1918–1944: Törvények, rendeletek, kisebbségi programok, nyilatkozatok* [Documents on the history of Hungarians in Transcarpathia 1918–1944], Fontes Historiae Hungarorum 2 (Somorja-Dunaszerdahely: Fórum-Lilium Aurum, 2004), 326.



Ferenc Pásztor with his family in front of the ***Beregszász vicarage*** *in 1933.*
(Photo archive: ***Nóra Mészöly****)*

In June 1935, the Hungarian boarding school "built from the sacrifices of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia" was opened in Beregszász. On this occasion, the choir of Hungarian teachers from Transcarpathia performed publicly for the first time. The Transcarpathian Hungarian Song Association organized the 5th National Song Festival in Hust on May 17, 1937. Roman Catholic and Reformed church choirs, as well as children's choirs, performed with great success at these events. Ferenc Pásztor also shared his thoughts on the cultivation of Hungarian song culture with those present.[34]

[34] Kárpátaljai magyarság történeti kronológiája 1918–1944" [Historical Chronology of the Hungarian Community in Transcarpathia 1918–1944], *Adatbázisok – HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Minority Studies*, accessed July 17, 2024, https://kisebbsegkutato.tk.hun-ren.hu/adatbazis/karpataljai-magyarsag-torteneti-kronologiaja-1918-1944.

The editor-in-chief of Egyházi Értesítő, published in Beregszász, mentions that the newspaper appeared between 1933 and 1935, and again in 1941 and 1945.

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In front of the vicarage Beregszász, 1940. (Photo archive: ***Nóra Mészöly****)*

From the memoirs mentioned above by **Ferenc Pásztor**, we can also learn that in the spring of 1939 he was able to celebrate with his followers the "return to the thousand-year-old Hungary" in the town on the bank of the Vérke.

Then, on Sunday, October 23, of the same year, the Anthem was sung for the first time in the Roman Catholic and Reformed churches. Even in the days before the changeover, the Czechoslovak authorities demanded an explanation from the Roman Catholic parish priest and papal prelate **Ferenc Pásztor**, and the Reformed pastor **Jenő Szutor**, and threatened them with reprisals.

The announcement by Budapest Radio on November 2, 1938, that Érsekújvár, Léva, Losonc, Rimaszombat, Rozsnyó, **Kassa**, Ungvár, Munkács, and **Beregszász** had been re-annexed to Hungary, was met with **widespread public jubilation**.



*Ferenc Pásztor with his family, Beregszász, 1940. (Photo archive: **Nóra Mészöly**)*

According to Ferenc Pásztor's notes, the Hungarian army's entry into Beregszász on the morning of November 9, 1938, was met with cheers from the population in Kossuth Lajos Square. Welcoming speeches were delivered by Jenő Ortutay[35], a Greek Catholic deacon

[35] **Jenő Ortutay** (Tarna, 1889 – Abes, 1950) Jenő Ortutay (1889–1950) was a prominent figure in the Hungarian community of Transcarpathia and a prominent leader within the Greek Catholic Church during the interwar period and its aftermath. As a priest, canon, and councilor of the Holy See, he earned distinction as an eloquent preacher and a dedicated ecclesiastical organizer. Between 1928 and 1938, he served as the city judge (városbíró) of Beregszász—a role equivalent to that of a modern-day mayor. Ortutay was a staunch advocate for the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia; following the re-annexation of Transcarpathia in 1938, he was appointed to the Hungarian Parliament, serving until 1944. His career was tragically curtailed in 1945 when Soviet authorities arrested him on fabricated charges. Sentenced to ten years of forced labor in the Gulag, he perished in the Abez labor camp on Christmas Day, 1950.

and city judge, and Zoltán Fekésházy[36], leader of the United Hungarian Party and future vice-governor of the united county of Bereg and Ugocsa. Regarding the transition, Fekésházy noted: "Since there were no fixed borders, passage was free. Attending church was never a problem."

On May 17, 1939, the archdeacon served as a member of the organizing committee for the successful reception of the Holy Right Hand (The national tour of the **Holy Right Hand** (*Szent Jobb*) between 1937 and 1939 was facilitated by a specially commissioned,

[36] **Zoltán Fekésházy (1881–1945)** was born in 1881 in Botfalva, Ung County (present-day Botfalva, Ukraine). Following the completion of his legal studies, he began his career as an assistant clerk in Szerednye between 1901 and 1902. From 1901 to 1906, he served as a volunteer in the 66th Infantry Regiment. In 1908, he commenced his administrative career as an intern in Ungvár (Uzhhorod), later serving as a junior clerk until December 3, 1909. On January 1, 1910, he was appointed deputy district administrator (*szolgabíró*), and from 1917, he served as the chief district administrator (*főszolgabíró*) of Szobránc. **Military and Political Career:** He participated in the administrative efforts surrounding the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. During World War I, he served as a civilian commissioner during the battles of Takcsány, for which he was awarded the Silver Medal for Bravery, Second Class. In 1920, he joined the **United Magyar Party**. During the period of Czechoslovak administration, he was a prominent leader and coordinator of national patriotic movements within the county. His political influence was instrumental in ensuring that neither President Masaryk nor President Beneš was granted honorary citizenship of Beregszász. **Administrative Leadership and Humanitarian Work:** Following the re-annexation of Subcarpathia to Hungary, Fekésházy was appointed **Deputy Lieutenant** (*alispán*) of Bereg County. In this capacity, he worked tirelessly to alleviate the hardships caused by the war, providing extensive support to war widows, orphans, and the families of soldiers serving at the front. Notably, he sought to mitigate the impact of racial laws through all available administrative means. **Final Years and Martyrdom:** He retired from public service in 1942. In 1944, he saw no reason to flee Beregszász, believing he had no enemies in the city. However, his convictions were met with tragedy. In the spring of 1945, he was arrested and brought before a military tribunal on trumped-up charges. According to the testimony of a fellow prisoner, he died sometime in 1945 near Lemberg (Lviv) aboard a transport train carrying convicts. His final resting place remains unknown to this day.

luxuriously decorated railway carriage known as the **'Gold Train'** (*Aranyvonat*). This initiative was part of the **Saint Stephen Year** (1938), commemorating the 900th anniversary of the death of Hungary's first Christian king. The tour served a dual purpose: it was a profound act of religious devotion and a powerful symbol of national revisionism and unity. The arrival of the relic in territories returned to Hungary, such as Beregszász in 1939, represented the spiritual and political 'reunification' of the nation.) in Beregszász. During the ceremony held in the square in front of the church, the papal prelate addressed a crowd of several thousand from the Bereg region. In his speech, he characterized the event as a historical milestone, marking the reunification of the previously separated ecclesiastical communities within the Diocese of Szatmár.

On February 25, 1940, a solemn thanksgiving service was held to mark the 20th anniversary of the election of **Miklós Horthy** [37] as governor.

[37] **Miklós Horthy** (Kenderes, 1868 – Estoril, 1957) Miklós Horthy (1868–1957) was one of the most influential and controversial figures in 20th-century Hungarian history, serving as the Regent of the Kingdom of Hungary from 1920 to 1944—a period commonly known as the „Horthy Era." Having established his reputation in the Austro-Hungarian Navy, his most notable military achievement was commanding the fleet at the Battle of Otranto (1917); he subsequently rose to the rank of Vice Admiral as the Monarchy's final fleet commander. Following the collapse of the Hungarian Soviet Republic in the chaotic aftermath of World War I, Horthy entered Budapest at the head of the National Army. Since Hungary remained a kingdom with a vacant throne, he was elected Regent on March 1, 1920. His tenure was marked by the socio-economic stabilization of the country, conducted alongside Prime Minister István Bethlen, and a foreign policy primarily driven by the revision of the Treaty of Trianon. This pursuit of territorial restitution led to the partial recovery of Upper Hungary and Transcarpathia in 1938–1939. Although he attempted to exit the war on October 15, 1944, he was deposed and imprisoned by German forces. Following the war, Horthy was not prosecuted as a war criminal—appearing instead as a witness at the Nuremberg trials—and lived in exile in Estoril, Portugal, until his death. His remains were repatriated in 1993 and reinterred in Kenderes.

2.2. DURING THE WAR YEARS (1941–1944)



*Ferenc Pásztor with his sister, Erzsébet Pásztor (bottom row), Beregszász, 1941. (Photo archive: **Nóra Mészöly**)*

In 1941, Ferenc Pásztor was appointed **papal prelate**. However, the significance of this honour was overshadowed by the outbreak of World War II, which cast a dark shadow over his prospects for the future.

In a **papal bull** dated July 28, 1941, **Pope Pius XII** (Pope Pius XII (r. 1939–1958) guided the Catholic Church through the immense challenges of World War II and the early Cold War. A seasoned diplomat, his papacy was marked by efforts to maintain the Church's neutrality while overseeing vast humanitarian initiatives. For the Hungarian Catholic Church, his 1941 decree was a pivotal legal and spiritual act that recognized the reunification of the Diocese of Szatmár, thereby reinforcing the local ecclesiastical structure in a period of

intense political transition. Under his pontificate, the Vatican and various ecclesiastical institutions provided sanctuary to numerous Jewish refugees. Following his explicit directives, the Church's extensive network—as exemplified by the actions of Ferenc Pásztor in Beregszász—actively assisted the persecuted and those seeking refuge from the horrors of the war.) restored the **Diocese of Szatmár** to its former territorial extent. Ferenc Pásztor announced the decree to his congregants with great satisfaction, noting that the diocese—which had been fragmented and severed from its episcopal seat by the **Treaty of Trianon**—had finally regained its unity and independence. Following the outbreak of World War II, Pásztor also played an active role in humanitarian efforts, coordinating the provision of food, warm clothing, and shelter for **Polish refugees** seeking asylum in Beregszász.

Pásztor held solemn services to pray with his congregants for the souls of Hungarian soldiers who had fallen on the front lines. On August 28, 1941, he was formally awarded the title of papal prelate. Nevertheless, this personal milestone was dampened by the harsh realities of the war; by order of the State Munitions Institute, church bells were confiscated and requisitioned for military production, a loss that deeply affected the local religious community.

On May 31, 1942, Pásztor consecrated the World War I memorial in Kossuth Square, which had been erected through public donations. Following the dedication, the Church regularly conducted requiem masses at the site, a tradition of communal remembrance that continued until the end of the Second World War.

On January 16, 1944, believers in Beregszász celebrated the canonization of Saint Margaret of the Árpád House with the rest of the nation. However, this religious devotion was soon overshadowed by the atrocities of the Holocaust. Ferenc Pásztor expressed his deep indignation when the forced deportation of the Jewish population of Beregszász and its surroundings began. These victims were mostly deported to German extermination camps, where the vast majority of them perished.

The city was on constant air defence alert, and the population was repeatedly warned to prepare for the imminent attacks. As the Soviet

troops advanced, the strategic situation of the Hungarian army became increasingly desperate. During this period, Beregszász suffered a catastrophic blow that claimed many lives[38]: on October 9, 1944, a devastating air raid killed approximately 250 people. Father Ferenc Pásztor took an active role in the funeral ceremony, both for the fallen soldiers of the Hungarian army and for the civilian victims of the bombing.

[38] Today, a memorial plaque on the wall of the Beregszász railway station honors the memory of the victims. In the municipal cemetery, situated along the banks of the Vérke River, a meticulously maintained war grave plot serves as the final resting place for the fallen Hungarian soldiers. Commemorative ceremonies are held annually at both locations to preserve the memory of those who perished.

2.3. STEADFASTNESS DURING THE ERA OF FORCED SOVIETIZATION

Between 1945 and 1949, he continued to serve as parish priest and episcopal vicar.

In the autumn of 1944, Ferenc Pásztor was forced to confront the sombre reality that the arrival of Soviet troops signalled a return to foreign administration for both the city and the Roman Catholic Church of Beregszász. Despite having the opportunity to flee, he refused to abandon his post, remaining steadfastly faithful to his congregation in their time of tribulation.[39]



The photograph shows Ferenc Pásztor, parish priest of Beregszász, before his arrest

[39] See Károly Hetényi Varga, *Papi sorsok a horogkereszt és a vörös csillag árnyékában* [Priestly Fates in the Shadow of the Swastika and the Red Star], vol. 3 (Abaliget: Lámpás Kiadó, 1996), 404.

He witnessed the purges carried out with the assistance of local communists in Beregszász, the forced Sovietization, and he could do nothing but console his followers.

To the great astonishment of the townspeople and **Ferenc Pásztor**, **Kálmán Benda**, a member of the Upper House of the Hungarian Parliament, [40] was arrested in early November 1944 and executed in Ungvár in January 1945. After that, a series of blows hit the community.



On November 24, 2021, a memorial plaque dedicated to Kálmán Benda was unveiled on the memorial wall in the courtyard of the Hungarian House of Europe. Donated by the Nyíregyháza-based Foundation for Beregszász, the bronze relief is the work of sculptor Tibor Lengyel.

[40] **Kálmán Benda** (Beregszász, Feb 5, 1883 – Ungvár, Jan 25, 1945) served as a board member for several Hungarian civic associations during the period of Czechoslovak administration. He was the president of the County Casino (the local social and civic club) and, following the re-annexation of the town to Hungary, was elected to the Upper House of the Hungarian Parliament. In November 1944, he was forcibly removed from his home in Beregszász and taken to Ungvár, where he was executed on January 25, 1945, following a show trial based on fabricated charges.

In accordance with the infamous **Decree No. 0036** issued by the **Military Council of the 4th Ukrainian Front** on November 13, 1944, all Hungarian and German male residents of Transcarpathia—including the Bereg region—between the ages of 18 and 50 were required to register with the authorities. The official justification claimed that their labour was needed to repair war damages, and that this service—later known in local collective memory as **'malenky robot'**—would last only three days. However, the 1,547 men from the district (including 1,020 from the town of Beregszász alone) were instead marched on foot through Munkács to the **internment camp** at Szólyva. This 'malenky robot' ultimately claimed the lives of 343—or by other accounts, 349—residents of Beregszász. In total, the town suffered 452 casualties. Furthermore, arrests and convictions continued throughout 1945, as numerous local patriots were convicted in **politically motivated show trials**.[41]

In light of all this, the Hungarian population lived in constant fear, never knowing who would be taken away next or when. We can also learn from the diary of **Ferenc Pásztor** that during Advent, on December 13, 1944, he announced to the believers that *"every weekday at 3 p.m. we will perform the Stations of the Cross here in the church. Let the believers, whether they have a cross or have none, come and take part in this devotion, and let us lay down our pains at the feet of the cross, so that we may find relief there."*[42]

Despite the enormous difficulties of the period, the parish priest of Beregszász refused to flee. His courage was further demonstrated by his efforts to re-establish Catholic education. In the spring of 1945,

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41 The monumental memorial and plaque in Beregszász, unveiled in memory of the deportees and those who perished in the autumn of 1944–1945.

42 Anita Szendrey, „A beregszászi római katolikus egyház helyzete a szovjetrendszer kiépítésének kezdetén (1944–1949)" [The Situation of the Roman Catholic Church of Beregszász at the Beginning of the Establishment of the Soviet System (1944–1949)], *Acta Beregsasiensis* 10, no. 1 (2011): 128, accessed July 17, 2024, https://adoc.pub/a-beregszaszi-romai-katolikus-egyhaz-helyzete-a-szovjet-rend.html.

he submitted a petition signed by 177 parents to the Ministry of Public Education of Transcarpathian Ukraine, requesting permission to begin Hungarian-language education in the elementary boys' and girls' schools maintained by the Roman Catholic Parish of Beregszász. This initial request was rejected. Undeterred, he applied again, ensuring that his proposal complied with the applicable state laws. Nevertheless, on November 19, 1946, the parish priest was officially ordered to hand over the school to the state, nationalizing the institution, effectively eliminating its denominational character.

In his masses and sermons, he offered constant prayers for peace, instilling faith and hope in those whose relatives.

At Mass and in his sermons, he constantly prayed for peace, instilling faith and hope in all those whose relatives had been deported.



Blessed János Scheffler (1887–1952), Bishop of Szatmár and Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Nagyvárad, who died a martyr in prison

On April 15, 1946, **János Scheffler**, Bishop of Szatmár, appointed Archdeacon Ferenc Pásztor of Bereg as special vicar of the territory, which, due to the redrawing of the country's borders, became part of Ukraine. Because of the new situation, the governance of the diocese of Szatmár from the episcopal seat was by no means possible since all of Transcarpathia had come under Soviet control. Atheistic education

was one of the basic instruments used to establish the Soviet system, which greatly endangered the life of the Church.

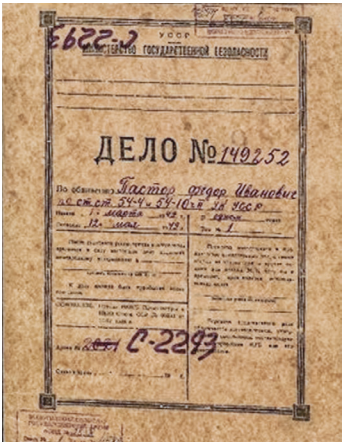
In 1948, he was praying publicly with his believers in the church when several young Catholics from Beregszász, who were subject to military service, were dragged away with force to work in the coalmines of the Donets Basin.

From the summer of 1947 to the end of February 1949, the assistant of the parish priest **Ferenc Pásztor** was **Lajos Hudra**.

CHAPTER 3.
THE GOLGOTHA OF A VICAR WHOSE FAITH WAS FIRM

3.1. PRESENTATION OF THE PÁSZTOR FILE

Having obtained the necessary permits, I was granted access to the original documents regarding the persecution of Ferenc Pásztor held in the **State Archives of Zakarpattia Oblast** and the **Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) in Zakarpattia**. These records include the files of his **show trial** (File No. 149252[43], available in Russian and Ukrainian), which contains investigative material No. 2230, comprising **interrogation transcripts** and other related legal documents.



The criminal case file of Ferenc Pásztor (No. 149252). State Archives of Zakarpattia Oblast (DAZO).

[43] KTÁL, Fond-2293. Opisz: 4582, 4583, 4584, 2293. Пастор Федор Иванович/ Pásztor Fedor Ivanovich file number 149252. The file is original, typewritten, handwritten, pp. 1-151. Hereinafter KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, original, typewritten, handwritten.

In this volume, the documents are presented in my own translation. As far as possible, I have endeavoured to remain faithful to the original texts, which are cited below as accurately as possible in chronological order.

The archival records concerning Ferenc Pásztor consist of two complementary files. The smaller of the two contains a detailed inventory of his confiscated property and personal effects.

The archival documents in question comprise nearly two hundred pages. I have endeavoured to present the trial records in their entirety to provide the reader with a comprehensive overview of the proceedings.

After a thorough examination of the trial documents of the persecuted Roman Catholic priest, in my professional opinion, the documents presented below should be read with caution and a critical eye. With the exception of basic biographical data and dates, the interrogating officers of the Investigative Department (Transcarpathian Directorate) of the Ministry of State Security (MGB) of the Ukrainian SSR[44] manipulated the information in order to construct a fictitious criminal case.

Based on the documents recovered to date, the outlines of a large-scale show trial unfold before us. These records reveal the methods by which the officially ordained Vicar of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia was systematically humiliated during successive interrogations, all based on falsified charges fabricated by investigating officers.

The wicked tormentors ("Bezpekás": A term widely used by the Hungarian community in Transcarpathia to refer to agents of the state security apparatus. It is derived from the Ukrainian word bezpeka (security). Historically, it specifically denoted officers of the MGB (Ministry of State Security) or KGB. In the local vernacular, the word became synonymous with political terror, clandestine surveillance, and the ruthless machinery of the Soviet show trials.), with the help of false witnesses, deliberately removed the defendant from his

[44] UMGBU USSR (Upravleniye Ministerstva Gosudarstvennoy Bezopastnosti Ukrayinskoy SSR) – Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

church, priestly ministry, and public life. Under the communist dictatorship, they used atheist propaganda and intimidation to frighten the flock left without its shepherd in order to break the ranks of the determined Christians.

In the person of the martyr Ferenc Pásztor, we encounter a steadfast servant of the Creator and His Church—a man whose fidelity to moral principles remained unshaken even unto death. He was a devoted priest who never wavered in his calling and a Hungarian patriot of profound integrity. Throughout a harrowing series of tortures, he remained resolute. With a clear conscience and without fear, he consciously embraced his destiny, even prophesying the ultimate collapse of the godless Soviet regime.

The investigating officers could not break the vicar. Therefore, all unreliable and implausible investigative materials were aimed at presenting the vicar as a fierce enemy of Soviet power. Therefore, with the exclusion of the public and the defence, he was tried not by the Transcarpathian Regional Court, but by the main state security officers of the Central Military Commission based in Moscow. In a closed trial, he was sentenced to 25 years in a forced labour camp to bring about the suffering and death of the 69-year-old archpriest. Divine providence vindicated his justice, the cruel atheistic empire that persecuted him and the Church collapsed, but he was officially rehabilitated.

The Pásztor file may be regarded as a historical document or a profound drama about the fate of a priest. It presents and brings to light the self-proclaimed "lords of life and death" who organized the violent Sovietization of the region and pronounced judgment on our protagonist - a man who rose from the long-suffering Hungarian community of Transcarpathia to bear witness for his church and nation. With the strength of his God-given role and the truth he embraced, he contributed to the final victory over the forces of evil.

Presented below are the faithful translations of the case files pertaining to Ferenc Pásztor (File No. 149252), as compiled by the investigative authorities in both Russian and Ukrainian.

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Documents 1-2 relating to the presentation of the Pásztor file can be read below in my literal translation of the original texts.

1.
00001-2 [45]
March 1, 1949 - Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, datasheet on file no. 149252

(Hand-completed form)[46]

Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
Ministry of State Security
Case No.: 149252

Defendant: Pásztor Ferenc Jánosovics
Convicted under Article 54, Section 4 and Article 54, Section 10, Paragraph 2 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR.
Arrested: March 1, 1949
Investigation of the case: lasted until March 12, 1949.
The material comprises a single volume.
Following the judicial review and the finality of the judgement, this case file shall be returned immediately: **No. 278709**
Ref. No. П278700 – A copy must be attached to the case file.
A copy of the **ruling** shall be appended to the case file.
Basis: Decree No. 00359 of the NKVD, the Procurator's Office, and the People's Commissariat of Justice of the USSR, dated April 10, 1939.
Archive numbers: C-2293, 5046.

[45] The number of copies in my possession made from the original documents of the Pásztor file; the subsequent numbering refers to the published documents, facilitating their retrieval.

[46] 1. KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, investigation file number: 2230, original, handwritten.

The transfer of ongoing investigations, as well as cases retrieved from the archives, to other departments or bodies of the MGB—even on a temporary basis—is permitted exclusively...

(Assigned accounting apparatus)

The transfer of the investigative case is made by a decision approved by the competent head of department of the MGB or his deputy.

Seal: Registration number in Department "A" of the MSS USSR: 74622

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2.
00003-4
List of case files created between 1948 and 1989

(Hand-completed form)[47]

In Case File No. 149252, the investigative records—exceeding 151 pages—were not compiled in chronological order; however, the source materials, comprising over 40 archival units, has been marked with page numbers. The consolidated list of these records is presented in the table below.

N/o	Date of creation of the document	Name of the document	Page of the document
1.	*1949*	*List of Individuals Involved in the Proceedings*	*1.*
2.	*1949*	*Ruling on the conduct of the case and the commencement of the pre-trial investigation*	*2.*
3.	*1949*	*Order for Arrest*	*3-4.*
4.	*1949*	Resolution on the selection of a preventive measure	*5.*

[47] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, investigation file number: 2230, original, handwritten.

5.	*1949*	*Warrant for the Arrest of Ferenc Pásztor*	*6.*
6.	*1949*	*Ferenc Pásztor's arrest profile*	*7-8.*
7.	*1949*	*Search report, receipt and documents*	*9-19.*
8.	*01. 03. 1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*20-27.*
9.	*01-02. 03. 1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*28-35.*
10.	*1949*	*Decision to indict*	*36.*
11.	*09. 03. 1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*37-42.*
12.	*12. 03. 1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*43-47.*
13.	*28. 03. 1949.*	*Decision on acceptance of the case*	*48*
14.	*07.04.1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*49-54*
15.	*08.04.1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*55-61*
16.	*08.04.1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*62-68*
17.	*11.04.1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*69-74*
18.	*12.04.1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*75-80*
19.	*13.04.1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*81-90*
20.	*25.04.1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*91-95*
21.	*11.05.1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*96-99*
22.	*12.05 1949.*	*Ferenc Pásztor's interrogation record*	*100-103*
23.	*09.01.1948*	*Witness Marosi's interrogation report*	*104-106*
24.	*10.01. 1948.*	*Witness Fábián's interrogation report*	*107-108*
25.	*10.01.1948.*	*Witness Capf's interrogation report*	*109-116*
26.	*10. 01. 1948.*	*Witness Varga's interrogation report*	*117-119*
27.	*10.01.1948.*	*Witness Posztler's interrogation report*	*120-123*
28.	*11.01. 1948.*	*Witness Seffer's interrogation report*	*124-127*
29.	*26.01. 1948.*	*Witness Lozán's interrogation report*	*128-131*
30.	*26.01. 1948.*	*Witness György's interrogation report*	*132-137*
31.	*1949*	*Decision on the release of investigative materials from the production department*	*138*
32.	*1949*	*Decision on the transfer of the case file*	*139*
33.	*1949*	*Decision on the arrest process*	*140*
34.	*1949*	*Decision to extend the investigation process*	*141-142*
35.	*1949*	*Decision on confiscated material evidence*	*143*
36.	*1949*	*Report on the completion of the investigation*	*144*
37.	*1949*	*Medical certificate*	*145*
38.	*1949*	*Indictment*	*146-149*
39.	*1949*	*Decision on determining the place of punishment*	*149-151*
40.	*1949*	*Other additional documents*	*151-154.*

The list of documents listed was compiled by:
Second Lieutenant **Molnar**

3.2. SURVEILLANCE, FALSE TESTIMONIES

From the witness-interrogation minutes prepared in January 1948, it can be clearly established that the investigators of the Beregszász District Office - within the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR - kept Ferenc Pásztor under strict surveillance from late 1947 or early 1948 until his arrest.

The interrogation records of the eight witnesses, which were placed in the vicar's file, constitute source material that can be evaluated as documentary evidence. These documents were written between January 9 and January 26, 1948.

Based on the minutes, it can be hypothesized that the Transcarpathian state security authorities had already ordered the documented surveillance of the target person in December 1947, through the covert operational deployment of espionage agents.

The case file lists eight witnesses from Beregszász who testified against Pásztor: **Ferenc Marosi, Zoltán Fábián, Salamon László Czopf, Sándor Varga, Albert Vilmos Pasztler, Ernő Mihály Seffer, Polikarp Mihajlovics Lozán and Ferenc Ferenc György.**

List of Witness Interrogation Protocols (January 1948)

N	Time of interrogation	Witness interview transcript, number of pages of the document	Interrogating officers	Interpreters
1.	09.01. 1948	***Ferenc Marosi*** (1898) resident of Beregszász, farmer, 104-106	*Lieutenant* ***Negotov***	***Viznécki Mihály Illés***
2.	10. 01. 1948.	**Zoltán Fábián** (1892) resident of Beregszász, painter, 107-108	*Lieutenant* ***Negotov***	***Margitics János Mihály***
3.	10.01. 1948	***Czopf László Salamon* (1898)** resident of Beregszász, farmer, 104-106	*Lieutenant* ***Negotov*** *Lieutenant* ***Koval***	The witness speaks Ukrainian.

4	01. 10.1949	***Sándor Sándor Varga (b. 1905),*** a resident of Beregszász and a member of the local branch of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union).117–119.	*Lieutenant* ***Negotov***	***Margitics János Mihály***
5.	10. 01.1948	***Pasztler Vilmos Alber***t (1882) (1882) resident of Beregszás, carpenter, 120-123.	*Lieutenant* ***Negotov*** *Lieutenant* ***Koval***	The witness speaks Ukrainian
6.	11. 01. 1948.	***Ernő Mihály Seffer*** (1887) resident of Beregszász, teacher- principal, 124-127	*Lieutenant* ***Negotov*** *Lieutenant* ***Koval***	The witness speaks Ukrainian
7.	26. 01.1948.	***LozanPolikarpa Mihajlovics*** *(1908) resident of Beregszász, worker, 128-131.*	*Major* ***Knish***	The witness speaks Ukrainian
8.	26. 01.1948.	***Ferenc György (1885)*** *resident of Beregszász, church servant, 104-106*	*Major* ***Knish,*** *Lieutenant* ***Koval***	***Viznickij Mihály Illés***

The witnesses examined authenticated their statements, as recorded in the minutes, with their own signatures. These documents were countersigned by Lieutenant Negotov, Lieutenant Kovaly, and Major Knish, investigating officers of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR and its Berehove (Beregszász) District Department. Furthermore, the documents were signed by Mihály Illés Viznécki and János Mihály Margitics, who served as interpreters for the Berehove district.

The fabricated charges and false testimonies—tailored to the expectations of the interrogating officers—serve to corroborate and substantiate Ferenc Pásztor's alleged 'anti-Soviet guilt' and his 'counter-revolutionary contact with foreign nationals'.

These points are illustrated below through selected excerpts from the testimonies. These records clearly demonstrate that, acting upon the 'suggestions' of KGB officers, the witnesses aimed to discredit the parish priest of Beregszász (Berehove). By employing contrived epi-

thets, they attempted to substantiate the alleged crime of spreading 'anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation' through his ecclesiastical and public activities, thereby establishing a formal basis for his conviction and subsequent deportation to the Gulag.

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On 9 January 1948 (File No. 3), Ferenc Marosi, a resident of Beregszász (Berehove) and a waiter at the Kaszony restaurant, was the first to be interrogated. The interrogation was conducted by Lieutenant Negotov, an authorized operational officer of the 'O' Operational Group within the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR. During the proceedings, Marosi rendered incriminating testimony against Ferenc Pásztor.

Regarding the activities of the parish priest, he stated the following:

'During the Czechoslovak era, he was an active member of the Hungarian National Party. I am aware of this because I was employed as a waiter at the Kaszony restaurant, where party members regularly convened. Father Ferenc Pásztor also attended these meetings; I personally witnessed his presence there on several occasions.

When the Hungarian troops occupied Subcarpathia, the party was renamed the Hungarian Life Party, and **Ferenc Pásztor** also participated in the party's work. During the party's reorganization, he was elected into the leaders' board. (...) what I also know regarding Ferenc Pásztor is that he took advantage of the opportunity presented by the Hungarian occupation of Subcarpathia. When the Hungarian military units arrived in Beregszász (Berehove), the leadership of the Beregszász District organized a formal reception for the commanders and officers of the Hungarian troops, in which Father Ferenc Pásztor also participated. This formal reception was held at the Kaszony Restaurant, where I was employed as a waiter.

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On January 10, 1948 (File No. 4), Lieutenant Negotov, assisted by interpreter János Margitics, interrogated the painter Zoltán Fábián, a

native of Beregszász residing in Bene. Regarding the Roman Catholic priest, Fábián stated: "He took an active role in consolidating the power of the occupying Hungarian troops and maintained close ties with the Beregszász leadership; I am aware of this because I maintained a good relationship with him myself. (...)"

Ferenc Pásztor ceremoniously welcomed the Hungarian troops entering Subcarpathia.

„In 1942 or 1943, a famous writer, **László Mécs**[48] visited Beregszász. The guest was welcomed in Beregszász within a ceremonial reception framework and was accommodated. **Ferenc Pásztor** also attended this ceremonial reception, where he welcomed **László Mécs** and publicly praised his national and literary activities, speaking of him as an outstanding scholar..."

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[48] **László Mécs (1895–1978):** László Mécs (born László Martoncsik) was a preeminent figure of 20th-century Hungarian lyric poetry, a representative of the so-called „Pannonian spirit," and a vital spiritual leader for Hungarian minorities living in the successor states. Born in 1895 in Hernádszentistván, he completed his secondary education in Kassa (Košice) before entering the Premonstratensian Order in Jászó in 1914. He finished his theological studies in Budapest and was ordained as a priest in 1918. His monastic and priestly vocation remained inseparable from his poetry, where Christ-centered love and humanism served as core motifs. In the early 1920s, he served as a parish priest and preacher in Ungvár (Uzhhorod). His literary breakthrough came in 1923 with the publication of his first volume, Hajnali harangszó (Dawn Angelus), which brought him nationwide acclaim and established him as a cornerstone of Hungarian literary life in the northern territories (Felvidék). During the interwar period, Mécs's career reached its zenith. He was a member of the prestigious Kisfaludy Society and, in 1935, was awarded the Corvin Wreath. His lyricism bridged classical forms with modern, occasionally expressionist influences. His oratory-like, declamatory style made him immensely popular at public readings, where he often spoke out for the poor and the marginalized, earning him the moniker „the poet of the people." Following World War II and the rise of the communist dictatorship, Mécs faced political persecution. In 1953, he was arrested on trumped-up charges and sentenced to prison, only to be released in 1956. He spent his final decades in seclusion at the Archabbey of Pannonhalma, continuing his creative and pastoral work until his death in 1978. He is buried in the monastic cemetery of Pannonhalma.

On January 10, 1948 (Document No. 5), László Czopf, a retired teacher from Beregszász, provided testimony regarding Ferenc Pásztor to Lieutenant Negotov and Lieutenant Koval. The statement, translated by interpreter János Margitics, was formally recorded in the minutes. Czopf stated: '(...) he actively assisted the Hungarian forces during the occupation of Subcarpathia and contributed to the consolidation of Hungarian authority.

On or around November 9, 1938, marking the entry of Hungarian troops into Beregszász (Berehove), a ceremony was organized in honour of the arriving soldiers at Kossuth Lajos Square. (...) Standing on the rostrum, Ferenc Pásztor addressed the assembled crowd with the following words of welcome:

"My Dear Hungarian Brethren!

I respectfully present to you this regimental colour, which belonged to a unit of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Since 1926 I have been guarding this flag in the local Roman Catholic church and have been awaiting your return.

This flag was confiscated in 1918 on behalf of the Hungarian nation by Mr. Jenő Répay, who stands before us today." (...) In honor of the ceremonial handover of the flag, the church choir sang the National Anthem.

In 1939, the **Holy Right** (*Szent Jobb*), the relic of King Saint Stephen, was brought to Beregszász. To commemorate the event, a formal ceremony was organized adjacent to the Roman Catholic church.

Pásztor did not deliver a speech at this event in his capacity as a Roman Catholic parish priest. (...) The symbolic objective of the proceedings was to **consolidate Hungarian authority** in **Subcarpathia**. (...) During the era of Czechoslovak administration, as a member of the **United Hungarian Party**, he advocated for Hungarian national interests.

Following the Hungarian occupation of Subcarpathia, Ferenc Pásztor (...) was referred to as a leading figure and director of the Party of Hungarian Life (*Magyar Élet Pártja*).

(...) At the initiative of the Hungarian occupying forces, a Verification Committee (*Igazoló Bizottság*) was established.

Ferenc Pásztor was also a member of this body. (...) All those who were members of the Communist Party during the Czechoslovak period were excluded from educational institutions. (...) Arriving in Beregszász, Pásztor organized the Catholic Youth Club, whose membership consisted primarily of school-age youth. Furthermore, he taught religious education in educational institutions with fervent zeal, considering the Pope as his main role model.

(...) Ferenc Pásztor actively helped consolidate the power of the Hungarian occupying forces, fought against communism and communist ideology in Subcarpathia. (...)

Ferenc Pásztor published a diocesan periodical titled Egyházi Értesítő (Church Gazette). In one of its articles, he asserted that Albert Czabán and Pál Ilku—who had allegedly introduced students to communist ideology in schools—were actively campaigning against religion. Following the Hungarian entry into the region, and based on the decision of the Verification Committee, the aforementioned teachers were dismissed from their positions.

Currently, Albert Czabán and Pál Ilku have emigrated to Hungary.

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On January 10, 1948 (File No. 6), Lieutenant Negotov conducted a meeting without an interpreter with Sándor Varga, a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) for the Beregszász District and an employee of the local grapevine sovkhoz. Varga submitted the following written testimony:

As I came to know Ferenc Pásztor, it was evident to me that he was a staunch opponent of communism; at that time, he actively campaigned against the ideology of the Communist Party and its growing popularity. During the Hungarian administration of Beregszász, the relic of King Saint Stephen was brought to the town in 1939 and was received with great solemnity. The relic was displayed on a platform adjacent to the Roman Catholic Church in the central square, where a ceremony was held in the presence of a vast number of Beregszász residents.

Ferenc Pásztor, in his capacity as the Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász, addressed the assembly. In his speech, he delivered the following remarks:

A year ago, in this very place where we now behold the relic of Saint Stephen, communists, bandits, and swine held their celebrations. Now, God has granted us the opportunity to rid ourselves of these communist bandits and to successfully rebuild our lives.

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On January 10, 1948 (file no. 7), Vilmos Pasztler, a cabinetmaker from Beregszás, also gave false testimony against Ferenc Pásztor to Lieutenant Negotov and Lieutenant Koval. The interpreter was János Margitics. Details from the minutes:

He executed all decisions and directives upon the instructions of the occupying power. Even during the Czechoslovak regime, he conducted Hungarian national agitation within the territory of Subcarpathian Rus, serving the interests of the Hungarian state. He was an active member of the so-called Hungarian National Party, which was operational at that time. (...) I learned from newspaper reports that Ferenc Pásztor had been elected as one of the leaders of the Party of Hungarian Life in Beregszász. (...)

When the invading Hungarian troops entered Beregszász (...), Ferenc Pásztor delivered an address at the ceremony organized in their honor.

(...) In 1939, the relic of King Saint Stephen was received in Beregszász within a solemn ceremonial framework. The ceremony took place adjacent to the Roman Catholic Church, where the city's leadership delivered addresses, and Ferenc Pásztor stated the following on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church: "God has aided the Hungarian army in liberating Subcarpathia from Czechoslovak rule, and our territory has once again been united with the Hungary founded by King Saint Stephen."

(...) Ferenc Pásztor is a member of the Verification Committee (Igazoló Bizottság). His task was to identify undesirable persons within Hungarian state workplaces. In this capacity, he served the interests of

the Hungarian occupying army. Purges were carried out in state offices, during which individuals who professed communist ideology—as well as Russians and Ukrainians—were eliminated from their positions.

(...) ***Ferenc Pásztor*** *currently runs a church organization in Beregszász. It is called the Mary's Congregation[49] prayer association. Its members were young girls aged 16-18, to whom he provides zealous religious education."*

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On January 11, 1948 (file no. 8), the teacher **Ernő Seffer** from Beregszász also gave false testimony against **Ferenc Pásztor** to Lieutenant **Negotov** and Lieutenant **Koval.** (**János Margitics** was the interpreter):

"(...) Under the Czechoslovak administration, Ferenc Pásztor held membership in the Hungarian National Party.

Following the Hungarian occupation of Subcarpathia, Ferenc Pásztor provided active assistance to the occupying forces in his capacity as a member of the Party of Hungarian Life and head of its regional organization. These activities are documented in the contemporary Hungarian-language press.

He served as a member of the Verification Committee, a body tasked with purging 'undesirable elements' from the state apparatus—specifically by dismissing individuals who had been members of the

[49] Latinul:Congregatio Marianna - The Congregation of Mary (Sodality of Our Lady) played a vital role in Catholic youth education during the priestly activity of Ferenc Pásztor. The Latin designation, Congregatio Mariana, was standard in official church correspondence and featured prominently on congregational banners. For the Soviet prosecutor, the inclusion of the Congregation of Mary in the indictment served as "unequivocal evidence" of a Vatican-led "spy network" or "clerical reaction." Since the movement was founded by the Jesuit order—often described by the Soviets as the ideological vanguard of imperialism—membership in such an organization was considered a significant aggravating circumstance during Pásztor's trial.

Communist Party or had propagated communist ideology during the Czechoslovak era.

During the period of Hungarian rule, a local branch of the Party of Hungarian Life was established in Beregszász (Berehove), with the Roman Catholic priest Ferenc Pásztor serving as one of its foundational members. Pásztor played an active role in implementing the directives and decisions of the Hungarian occupying authorities. During this tenure, he was granted the honorary title of Papal Prelate[50]. Subsequently, in 1946, the Bishop of Szatmár (Satu Mare) appointed him Vicar General of Subcarpathia. This information was obtained through interviews with members of the local Roman Catholic community.

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The following is an excerpt from the minutes of an interrogation conducted by Major Knish, who questioned Polikarp Lozán, a worker from Beregszász, dated 26 January 1948 (File No. 9):

At present, he serves as my confessor. (...) Both through his actions and his sermons, he expressed displeasure with the Soviet Union, consistent with the stance of the Church. I consider it immoral for a priest to zealously persuade his followers against the Orthodox [Pravoslav] religion. (...) In May 1947, following the closure of the Greek Catholic monastery in Munkács, Pásztor told me the following in his own home:

[50] The rank of Papal Prelate (prelato d'onore di Sua Santità) does not constitute a further level of ordination—such as the episcopate—but is rather an honorific distinction. Recipients are entitled to the title of ‚Monsignor.' In the historical context of the 1940s, this appointment afforded Ferenc Pásztor significant social and ecclesiastical prestige. Prelates are distinguished from the lower clergy by specific vestments: they are entitled to wear a cassock with red (or amaranth) piping and buttons, complemented by a purple sash (cingulum). The bestowal of this title during the period of Hungarian administration suggests that Pásztor's activities were recognized not only by secular authorities—such as the Party of Hungarian Life—but also by the highest levels of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. This reinforces his status as a ‚pillar member' of both the local community and the political landscape of the era.

"The Stalinist constitution guarantees most democratic rights; however, although they exist in theory, in practice the authorities have ignored these rights.

The Soviet constitution formally enshrines the right to religious freedom; in practice, however, this provision has never been implemented. Instead, it has been replaced by the closure of monastic orders and the deportation of priests and monks. We have become helpless. The authorities systematically act at their own discretion, believing that by "cutting off the head of the serpent," they can practically deprive us of all fundamental freedoms."

During the anti-Soviet conversation, Pásztor conducted anti-Soviet agitation among his acquaintances. (...) He also informed the population that although the Soviets were preparing five-year plans, they were not implementing them because the Soviet authorities did not recognize God; consequently, God was withdrawing His blessing from the five-year planned economy."

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The following is an excerpt from the minutes of an interrogation conducted on January 26 1948 (File No. 10), by Major Knish and Lieutenant Kovály with Ferenc György, a former employee (sacristan/lay official) of the Roman Catholic parish of Beregszász:

"Following the Hungarian annexation of Subcarpathia, Pásztor Ferenc Ivánovics maintained active cooperation with the military command and assisted in stabilizing the Hungarian occupation administration.

Ferenc Pásztor served as a member of the Beregszász District Verification Committee. Following the expulsion of the Hungarian occupying forces and the establishment of Soviet rule in Subcarpathia,Pásztor Ferenc Ivanovich continued his clerical ministry, serving as Vicar General and Papal Prelate. During this period, he waged an overt campaign of anti-Soviet agitation, actively opposing the Soviet Union and its legal framework.

In the spring of 1948 — around April or May, I cannot recall precisely — Pásztor Ferenc Ivanovich, speaking with nostalgia for the

bygone Hungarian era, remarked the following to the parish chaplain[51] in my presence:

[51] **HUDRA Lajos** – Ljudvig Jevgenyevics (Lalovo, Munkács district, March 19, 1919 – Munkács, December 15, 1995) Hudra Lajos was a Roman Catholic priest and confessor who was sentenced to the Gulag. He is a defining figure in the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia, remembered as a witness to the faith and a victim of Soviet religious persecution. Early life and studies: He was born on March 19, 1919 in Beregleányfalva, from his mother's second marriage. His parents lived in modest financial circumstances; his father, originally from Budapest, served as a local notary. After World War I, his father refused to accept Czechoslovak citizenship, which led to the family's unemployment and subsequent poverty. The young Hudra Lajos completed his primary schooling in Ruthenian, German and Hungarian. At the age of 12, he enrolled in the Hungarian Gymnasium in Beregszász. Due to his family's financial difficulties, he supported himself by tutoring his peers. As an excellent student, in 1939, after graduating from the Faculty of Law of the Pázmány Péter University in Budapest, where he studied for two years. However, recognizing a divine call, he interrupted his law studies in 1941 to join the Seminary of the Diocese of Szatmár. In addition to his theological training, he completed his law degree through private studies. His ordination and persecution: Due to the border closures after 1945, he was forced to complete his theological studies individually under the guidance of Bernát Bujaló, Ferenc Pásztor and Jenő Szegedi, who prepared him for the priesthood. Since the Soviet authorities refused entry to Bishop János Scheffler of Szatmár, Hudra was ordained in Uzhhorod on June 13, 1947, the feast of the Sacred Heart, by Greek Catholic Bishop Todor Romzsa. This was just months before the fatal assassination attempt on the bishop. (Following the assassination attempt, while Romzsa was recovering in the hospital in Munkács, a KGB agent disguised as a medical staff member administered a lethal injection to him, leading to the bishop's death on the night of November 1, 1947.) Lajos Hudra began his pastoral career as a chaplain and catechist at the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Beregszás, serving under the papal prelate and vicar general, Ferenc Pásztor. Father Pásztor was the first to be arrested in 1949; He died in Siberia on October 15, 1951. Arrest and imprisonment: Father Hudra was arrested shortly thereafter. The authorities tried to recruit him as an NKVD informant, even promising him a bishopric in exchange for his cooperation. He flatly refused, remaining loyal to the Church. As a result, he was branded a „Vatican agent" and arrested in his hometown on October 14, 1949. On December 12–13, 1949, the Transcarpathian Regional Court, citing Article 54/10 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code

"This is what we have come to: the authorities have seized our lands, our vineyards, and our plantations; because of these infidels, we are destined to starve."

I have heard similar statements from Pásztor Ferenc Ivanovich on several occasions; however, I cannot recall the precise dates.

After about ten months of preparation, investigators of the Subcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR finalized and thoroughly substantiated the arrest warrant issued in Uzhhorod against Ferenc Pásztor. This warrant was based on the confessions containing fabricated slander collected between January 9 and 26, 1948.

That is why a comprehensive examination of these confessions is essential.

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Minutes Nos. 3-10 regarding the questioning of witnesses in my literal translation based on the original texts, see below.

(anti-Soviet agitation), sentenced him to 25 years of forced labor in a reformatory camp, with deprivation of rights and confiscation of property. He was deported to Karaganda, then to Vorkuta, where he spent seven years as a coal miner and bricklayer. Return to service and legacy: He was released on July 2, 1956. He resumed his priestly ministry in Beregszász, then Kiszelmence, while also providing pastoral care in Perecseny, Huta and Turjaremety. Between 1965 and 1975 he served in Dovha, then in Huszt, and finally in Aknaszlatina, as parish priest of the Church of St. Stephen the King. After the death of vicar József Csáti, he was appointed vicar of Transcarpathia and moved to Munkács. He was officially rehabilitated on October 1, 1991, and died on December 10, 1995. Commemoration: His life and suffering are presented in a separate panel at the thematic exhibition „The Persecution of the Church in Transcarpathia 1944–1991" held at the Árpád House Saint Elizabeth Community Center in Tyisabökény. His memory is a symbol of loyalty and perseverance in Transcarpathia, as he was one of the few priests ordained by Blessed Tivadar Romzsa who survived the Gulag to witness the „resurrection" of the church.

3.
00123-125
January 9, 1948, Berehove – Ferenc Marosi
Interrogation minutes

(Hand-completed form)[52]

I, Lieutenant Negotov, authorized operational officer of Operational Group 'O' of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, interrogated the following witness:

Ferenc Jánosovics Marosi, born in 1892 in Kaszony, Subcarpathia (Beregszász District). Nationality: Hungarian; Marital status: Unmarried; Education: General primary education; Occupation: Farmer; Residence: Town of Beregszász, 4 Stefinka St.

According to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, one bears criminal liability for the correct content of his testimony. Own signature: **/Marosi/**

Question: Where did you live and what did you do when the Hungarian troops occupied Transcarpathian Ukraine?

Answer: When Hungarian troops occupied Transcarpathian Ukraine, I lived in Beregszász. Until 1942, I was an employee of the local Kaszony restaurant. From 1942, I did not work in the restaurant officially, I started working there again after the Red Army occupied Transcarpathian Ukraine.

Question: How long have you known **Ferenc Pásztor**, the parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász? What kind of relationship did you have with him?

Answer: I have known **Ferenc Pásztor**, the parish priest of Beregszász, since 1926. Our relationship was normal, we did not have any conflicts, and I have had no objections to his personality.

[52] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, January 9, 1948. Interrogation report of Ferenc Marosi, original, handwritten 3 pages, 104-106.

Question: Will you tell us please what you know about Ferenc Pásztor's activity?

Answer: About the activity of **Ferenc Pásztor,** I know the following: he was an active member of the Hungarian National Party during the Czechoslovak Regime. I know this because I was a waiter at the Kaszony restaurant. The party members often organized meetings in this restaurant. Father **Ferenc Pásztor** also participated in these meetings; I saw him there in person several times.

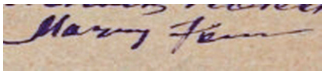
When the Hungarian troops occupied Transcarpathian Ukraine, the party was renamed the *Hungarian Life Party*, and **Ferenc Pásztor** also participated in the work of the party. During the reorganization of the party, he was elected into the leaders' board, as far as I know.

In addition to the above-mentioned facts, I also know about **Ferenc Pásztor** that he fed with the advantage the occupation of the Transcarpathian Ukraine granted. I know for instance that when the Hungarian troops occupied Beregszász, the leadership of the Beregszász district organized a ceremonial reception for the command and officers, which was also attended by Father **Ferenc Pásztor**. The ceremonial reception was at the Kaszonyi restaurant, where I worked as a waiter.

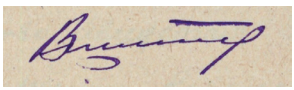
Question: What else would you like to add to your testimony?

Answer: I have nothing to add to my testimony.

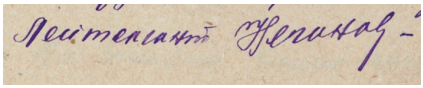
I have read the interrogation protocol in Hungarian, which I understand, and the text included in the protocol is recorded exactly on the basis of my own answers. Own signature:/**Marosi**/



According to Article 168 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, the interpreter **Illés Mihály Viznickij**, representing the UMGB of the Beregszás district, bears criminal liability for the correct content of the witness's testimony. Own signature: /**Viznickij**/



The interrogation was conducted by:
Lieutenant **Negotov,**
authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, own signature.



***

4.
00126-128
January 10, 1948, Berehove – Zoltán Fábián
Interrogation record

(Hand-completed form)[53]

I, Lieutenant **Negotov**, authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, interrogated the following witness.

Zoltán Fábián, born in Beregszász in 1892, Ukrainian by nationality, educated, non-partisan, family man, painter by profession, residing in Bene, Bohdán Hmelnickij Street 87.

According to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, one bears criminal liability for the correct content of his testimony. Own signature: /**Fábián**/

Question: Please give the full name of the parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász: surname, first name and patronymic!

[53] KTAL, Pásztor -file 149252, January 10, 1948. Zoltán Fábián's interrogation record, original, 3 handwritten pages, 107-108.

Answer: The Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász is called **FerencPásztor**, unfortunately I do not know his patronymic. He is about 55-60 years old. (Actually 68 – ed. note)

Question: How long have you known Father **Pásztor,** the Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász, what kind of relationship did you have with him?

Answer: I have known Father **Pásztor** for more than 10 years. From the very first moment of our acquaintance until now, we have had normal friendly relationship.

Question: Will you tell us please what you know about Ferenc Pásztor's activity as a parish priest in Beregszász?

Answer: I know about him as a Roman Catholic priest the following: when we were occupied by the Hungarian troops, he actively helped consolidate their power, he maintained close contact with the Beregszász leadership. I know this about him as a friend.

Besides, I also know that **Ferenc Pásztor** welcomed the Hungarian troops entering Transcarpathia within ceremonial framework.

In either 1942 or 1943, a renowned writer, **László Mécs**[54], visited Beregszász. The guest was received in Beregszász with formal honors and

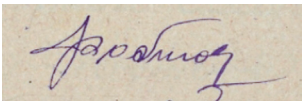
[54] **László Mécs** (1895–1978): **László Mécs** (born László Martoncsik) was a preeminent figure of 20th-century Hungarian lyric poetry, a representative of the so-called **„Pannonian spirit,"** and a vital spiritual leader for Hungarian minorities living in the successor states. Born in 1895 in Hernádszentistván, he completed his secondary education in Kassa (Košice) before entering the **Premonstratensian Order** in Jászó in 1914. He finished his theological studies in Budapest and was ordained as a priest in 1918. His monastic and priestly vocation remained inseparable from his poetry, where Christ-centered love and humanism served as core motifs. In the early 1920s, he served as a parish priest and preacher in **Ungvár** (Uzhhorod). His literary breakthrough came in 1923 with the publication of his first volume, *Hajnali harangszó* (**Dawn Angelus**), which brought him nationwide acclaim and established him as a cornerstone of Hungarian literary life in the northern territories (Felvidék). During the interwar period, Mécs's career reached its zenith. He was a member of the prestigious **Kisfaludy Society** and, in 1935, was awarded the **Corvin Wreath**. His lyricism bridged classical forms with modern, occasionally expressionist influences. His oratory-like, declamatory style made him immensely popular at public readings, where he often spoke out for the poor and the marginalized, earning him the moniker **„the poet of the people."** Following World War II and the rise of the communist dictator-

provided with accommodation. **Ferenc Pásztor** also attended this ceremonial reception; he welcomed **László Mécs** and publicly lauded his national and literary contributions, describing him as a scholar of immense erudition. Beyond this, I no longer recall the specific subjects of his discourse.

Question: Is there anything further you wish to add to your testimony?

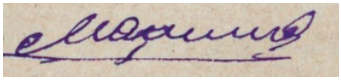
Answer: I have no additional information to supplement this deposition. I have read the interrogation protocol in Hungarian, understandable to me, the text included in the protocol is recorded authentically on ground of my answers. Own signature: /**Fábián**/

According to Article 168 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the



Ukrainian SSR, interpreter **János Mihály Margitics**, representing the Beregszász District of the MSS:

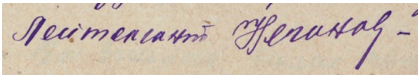
According to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, one bears criminal liability for the correct content of the witness's testimony. Own signature: /**Margitics**/



The interrogation was led by:

Lieutenant **Negotov,**

authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, ő*w*n signature.



***

ship, Mécs faced political persecution. In 1953, he was arrested on trumped-up charges and sentenced to prison, only to be released in 1956. He spent his final decades in seclusion at the **Archabbey of Pannonhalma**, continuing his creative and pastoral work until his death in 1978. He is buried in the monastic cemetery of Pannonhalma.

5.
00129-136
January 10, 1948, Berehove – László Czopf
Interrogation record

(Hand-completed form)[55]

I, Lieutenant **Negotov**, authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, and Lieutenant **Koval**, authorized officer of the Beregsaz District Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, interrogated the following witness:

László Salamon Czopf, born in 1882 in the village of Velkenye (present-day Slovakia), of Slovak nationality, non-partisan, retired teacher, resident of Beregszász, residing at 43 Lenin St.

Pursuant to Article 89 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR, the deponent bears criminal liability for the veracity of their testimony. Signed by own hand: **/Czopf/**

Question: For what duration have you known Father Pásztor in his capacity as the Roman Catholic Parish Priest of Beregszász, and what was the nature of your relationship?

Answer: I have known **Ferenc Pásztor** since he was translated to and arrived in Beregszász, where he became a Roman Catholic parish priest. Our friendly relationship is normal; I cannot say anything bad about him.

Question: Please provide a detailed account of what you can state regarding the activities of Ferenc Pásztor, the Roman Catholic Parish Priest of Beregszász.

[55] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, January 10, 1948. Interrogation report of László Czopf, original, handwritten 8 pages, 107-116.

Answer: I can state the following regarding **Ferenc Pásztor:** he actively assisted the Hungarian occupying forces during the occupation of Transcarpathian Ukraine and likewise provided aid in the consolidation of Hungarian rule.

On November 9, 1938, when Hungarian troops occupied Beregszász, a ceremonial event was organized in Lajos Kossuth Square to honour the arriving soldiers.

I was personally present at this event, where a large multitude of the population of Beregszász had gathered. Representing the Roman Catholic Church, Parish Priest Ferenc Pásztor took part; he was accompanied by **Mr. Jenő Répay**[56], who carried an unfurled flag dating from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy—presumably a regimental color.

When **Pásztor** and **Répay** reached the dais, they ascended the platform, and Pásztor addressed the assembled crowd with the following friendly words and speech:

"My Dear Hungarian Brethren!

Allow me to present to you, with the utmost respect, this flag, which was once the property of a regiment under the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. I have preserved this flag within the local Roman Catholic church since 1926, so that I might welcome you with it upon your return.

This flag was brought back in 1918 by Mr. Jenő Répay, who stands here today as a representative of the Hungarian nation."

After his speech, **Ferenc Pásztor** handed over the flag to the Hungarian officers being present at the tribune. In honour of the cere-

[56] **Jenő Répay** (Székő, Slovakia, 1895-Beregszász, 1942) engineer, retired engineer of the Bereg Flood Relief Society, public figure of Beregszász. Active member of the church council of the Beregszász Roman Catholic parish, designer and builder of the Roman Catholic elementary school and community center. At his funeral, Papal Prelate **Ferenc Pásztor** delivered his heartfelt eulogy. The former World War I prisoner of war wrote a diary about his capture and life as a prisoner in Russia. See:Répay Jenő: Életre ítélve. (Naplójegyzetek/1916-1920). Kárpátaljai magyar Könyvek, 66. Intermix Kiadó, Ungvár-Budapest, 1994. https://mek.oszk.hu/23400/23484/23484.pdf

monial handing over of the flag, the church choir sang the National Anthem.

In addition, I would like to share the following information: in 1939, the Holy Right Hand, King Stephen's relic was brought to Beregszász. On this occasion, a ceremony was also organized next to the Roman Catholic church.

As a Roman Catholic parish priest, **Pásztor** did not speak at this event. However, the event was spiritually touching, I cannot describe it to you in words. The symbolic purpose of the event was to strengthen the power of the Hungarians in Transcarpathia.

Question: Which parties was **Ferenc Pásztor** a member of during the Hungarian occupation of Transcarpathia to your knowledge?

Answer: As a member of the *United Hungarian Highland Party of the Hungarian National Party*, **Ferenc Pásztor** fought for Hungarian national interests during the Czechoslovak rule already.

When Transcarpathian Ukraine was occupied by Hungarian troops, **Ferenc Pásztor** was elected to the leadership of the Hungarian Life Party in the Beregszász district. I personally learned this information from newspaper articles published by the Hungarian occupying forces, in which Pásztor is mentioned as the leading personality of the party, the leader of the Hungarian Life Party.

Question: Please describe the role Pásztor played within the Beregszász District Council following the Hungarian occupation?

Answer: During the Hungarian occupation, a Verification Committee (*Igazoló Bizottság*) was established in Transcarpathian Ukraine[57] at the initiative of the Hungarian occupying forces. Ferenc Pásztor was, of course, a member of this committee. The objective of the committee was to consolidate Hungarian power in Transcar-

[57] The investigators of the Zakarpattia Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security (MGB) of the Ukrainian SSR consistently refer to the region as „Transcarpathian Ukraine" in their interrogation protocols and other official documents. This terminology was employed deliberately to suggest that the territory had inherently belonged to Ukraine, and had merely been subjected to subjugation by Hungarian conquerors.

pathia and to identify "undesirable individuals." As an example, it may be noted that all individuals who had been members of the Communist Party during the Czechoslovak era were purged from educational institutions. These included Hungarian and Ukrainian communists alike, but their history—much like Czechoslovakia itself—vanished into the "sink of history."

Question: Which churches, congregations or social organizations was led by**Pásztor?**

Answer: When Pastor Ferenc arrived in Beregszász, the Catholic Youth Club was organized – its members were usually young people of school age – and Pastor Ferenc fanatically taught religious education in educational institutions, considering the Pope of Rome as his role model.

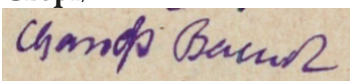
Question: Is there anything else you want to add to your testimony?

Answer: I would furthermore like to add that, in addition to his active assistance in consolidating the power of the Hungarian occupying forces, Pásztor fought against communism and communist ideology within Transcarpathia.

In 1939 (more exactly in the 1930s, ed. note), **Ferenc Pásztor** published a church newspaper called *Egyházi Értesítő*. In an article of this paper, he launched an attack against Albert Czabán and Pál Ilku, who instilled communist ideology to the students in schools and stood up against religion. During the Hungarian occupation, on ground of a decision of the commission the above-mentioned teachers were fired from their jobs.

Presently, **Albert Czabán** and **Pál Ilku** emigrated to Hungary.

I have read the interrogation protocol in Hungarian, which I understand, and the text in the protocol, based on my own answers, is recorded authentically. Own signature: /**Czopf**/

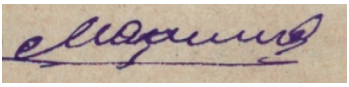


Pursuant to Article 168 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR, the interpreter, representing the Berehove District

Department of the Zakarpattia Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, is identified as: **János Mihály Margitics.**

Pursuant to Article 89 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR, the interpreter bears criminal liability for the veracity of the translation.

Own signature: /**Margitics**/

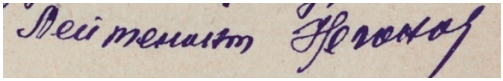


The interrogation was conducted by:

Lieutenant **Negotov**,

authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR,

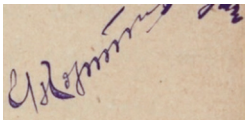
Own signature.



Lieutenant **Koval**,

authorized officer of the Beregszász District Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR,

Own signature.



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6.
00137-139
January 10, 1948, Berehove – Sándor Varga
Interrogation minutes

(Hand-completed form)[58]

I, Lieutenant **Negotov**, authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have interrogated the following witness:

Sándor Aleksandrovich Varga, born in 1905 in Uzhhorod (Ungvár), Transcarpathian Region; Hungarian by nationality; member of the Executive Committee of the Berehove (Beregszász) District Committee of the CP(b)U; married; employed at the local "Szőlő" (Grape) Cooperative. Residence: 13 Lysenko Street, Berehove.

Pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, the witness has been warned of the criminal liability incurred for providing false testimony./**Varg**a/

Question: How long have you known the Roman Catholic priest of Beregszász, **Ferenc Pásztor**? What kind of relationship did you have with him?

Answer: I have known the Roman Catholic priest from Beregszász since he arrived to serve as a parish priest. My personal relationship with Pastor can be considered normal, I have had no problems with him before, and I have none now.

Question: Please tell me what you know about the crimes and illegal activities of Roman Catholic priest Ferenc Pásztor?

Answer: I know the following facts about Ferenc Pásztor, a Roman Catholic priest from Beregszász. As I got to know Ferenc Pásztor, it was clear to me that he was a determined opponent of communism, actively resisting the ideology and expansion of the communist party

[58] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, January 10, 1948. Sándor Varga's interrogation minutes, original, 3 handwritten pages, 117-119.

of that time. In 1939, the relic of King St. Stephen was brought, which was received with a solemn ceremony. A platform was set up in the main square, next to the Roman Catholic church, and the solemn event was held here, where many residents of Beregszász were present.

Ferenc Pásztor, a Roman Catholic priest and parish priest of the city of Beregszász, spoke at this event. In his speech, he said the following:

"A year ago, in this very spot where we now behold the relics of Saint Stephen, communists, bandits, and swine held their celebrations. Now, God has granted us the opportunity to rid ourselves of these communist bandits and successfully rebuild our lives."

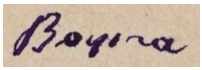
I could tell you the following about **Pastor Ferenc**. As we learned, in 1940 or 1941, the communist daughter of **János Horváth** was buried. At this funeral, the Roman Catholic priest Ferenc Pásztor was present. Pastor Ferenc wanted to bury the deceased according to Christian traditions. This led to a conflict with the girl's father, János Horváth. He told Pastor Horváth that we don't need your custom, your farewell. We can bury the deceased without you.

The next day I met **János Horváth**, who told me that **Pásztor's** testimony was also known to the Beregszász police, as **Horváth** had had several conflicts with the police and had been there several times. **János Horváth's** son can also confirm this. Horváth works as a loader at the local train station. **János Horváth** the elder died later.

Question: What else can you say?

Answer: I cannot provide any more information. I have read the interrogation report, in a language I understand, and the text included in the report is authentically recorded based on my own answers, which I confirm with my signature.

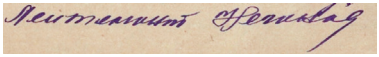
Signature:s.k.



The interrogation was conducted by:

Lieutenant **Negotov,**

authorized investigator of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, signature.



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7.
00140-144
January 10, 1948, Berehove – Witness Vilmos Pasztler Interrogation report

(Hand-completed form)[59]

I, Lieutenant **Negotov**, authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, and Lieutenant **Koval**, authorized officer of the Beregszassky District Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have interrogated the following witness:

Vilmos Albertovics Pasztler, born in 1882 in Nagybánya,[60] Hungarian nationality, non-partisan, Soviet citizen, completed seven years of schooling and came from a farming family, married, no criminal record, residence: Beregszász, Tarasz Shevchsenko Street 40. Employee of the local furniture plant, carpenter.

According to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, one bears criminal liability for the correct content of the witness's testimony. Own signature./P**asztler**/

Question: Please tell me how long you have known **Ferenc Pásztor**? What kind of relationship did you have?

Answer: I have known **Ferenc Pásztor** in his capacity as the Roman Catholic priest and parish priest of Beregszász since 1926, when he was transferred here. We were on good terms, and I have nothing negative to say about him.

Question: Will you please tell us in detail what you know about the crimes and illegal behaviour of the Roman Catholic priest Ferenc Pásztor, parish priest of Beregszász?

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[59] KTAL, Pastor file 149252, January 10, 1948. Interrogation report of Vilmos Pasztler, original, handwritten 5 pages, 120-124

[60] Nagybánya (Baia Mare) is a municipality in Romania and the capital of Maramureş County.

Answer: I can provide the following information regarding **Ferenc Pásztor**: while residing in Beregszász, he actively assisted the Hungarian occupying forces, implementing all decisions and directives upon the instructions of the occupying power. Furthermore, even during the Czechoslovak regime, he engaged in Hungarian nationalistic agitation within the territory of Transcarpathian Ukraine, serving the interests of the Hungarian authorities. He was also an active and prominent member of the so-called *Hungarian National Party*.

When Transcarpathian Ukraine came under Hungarian occupation, I learned from newspaper reports that Ferenc Pásztor had been elected as one of the leaders of the Party of Hungarian Life (Magyar Élet Pártja) in Beregszász.

When the occupying Hungarian troops entered Beregszász, - based on **Ferenc Pásztor's** expectations, in order to consolidate the power of the occupiers- the city leadership and **Kálmán Benda**[61]were also present at the festive event, where **Ferenc Pásztor** spoke. Like all illustrious local government leaders, he also gave a speech, but I do not remember the specific content of **Pásztor's** speech. What is certain is that his speech praised the occupying Hungarian troops.

In addition, I am aware that in 1939 the relic of King St. Stephen was received in Beregszász in a ceremonial setting. The ceremonial event took place next to the Roman Catholic church, where the city administration and **Ferenc Pásztor**, who spoke on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church, spoke and said the following:

"The Good Lord has aided the Hungarian troops in liberating Transcarpathian Ukraine from Czechoslovak rule, allowing our territory to reunite with the Hungary founded by King Saint Stephen."

[61] **Kálmán Benda** (Beregszász, Feb 5, 1883 – Ungvár, Jan 25, 1945) served as a board member for several Hungarian civic associations during the period of Czechoslovak administration. He was the president of the County Casino (the local social and civic club) and, following the re-annexation of the town to Hungary, was elected to the Upper House of the Hungarian Parliament. In November 1944, he was forcibly removed from his home in Beregszász and taken to Ungvár, where he was executed on January 25, 1945, following a show trial based on fabricated charges.

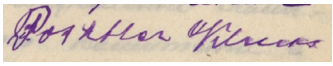
I cannot recall other statements by **Ferenc Pásztor**. **Ferenc Pásztor's** active participation in strengthening the Hungarian occupation power is known by the fact that he was a member of the *Verification Committee*. His task was to detect undesirable persons in Hungarian state workplaces, serving this way the interests of the Hungarian occupants. There were purges in state offices, they got rid of individuals, Russians, and Ukrainians, who professed communist ideology.

Ferenc Pásztor's actual illegal activities date back to the Soviet era. At that time, religious education for children was strictly prohibited, and as a vicar, his authority within his district was severely restricted.

Question: What else would you like to add to your testimony?

Answer: Currently, Pastor Ferenc Pásztor is leading a church organization in the city of Beregszász. It is called the Congregation of Mary Prayer Association[62]. (Its members were young girls aged 16-18, who were provided with a fanatical religious upbringing.)

I have read the interrogation protocol in a language understandable to me, the text, based on my own answers, entered in the protocol is authentically recorded, which I confirm with my signature.



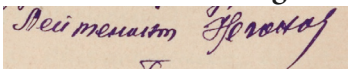
In accordance with Article 168 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, the interpreter on behalf of the Beregszász District MGB: **János Mihajlovics Margitics**.

In accordance with Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, the witness bears criminal liability for the correct content of his testimony. Own signature: / **Margitic**s/



The interrogation was conducted by:

Lieutenant **Negotov**,

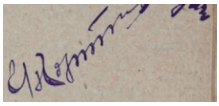


[62] Congregatio Mariana in Latin. *Marian Sodality (or: Sodality of Our Lady)*

authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR,

Own signature.

Lieutenant **Koval**,



Authorized officer of the Beregszász District Department of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR,

Own signature.

***

8.
00145-148
January 11, 1948, Berehove – Witness Ernő Seffer Interrogation record

(Hand-completed form)[63]

I, Lieutenant **Negotov**, authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, and Lieutenant **Koval,** authorized officer of the Beregszász District Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have interrogated the following witness:

Ernő Mihálylovics Seffer, born in 1887 in Munkács, Transcarpathian region, Hungarian by nationality, non-partisan, family man,

[63] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, January 11, 1948. Ernő Seffer's interrogation report, original, 4 handwritten pages, 124-127.

works as a teacher in Beregszász, residence: Beregszász, Sztálingrád u. 62.

According to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, one bears criminal liability for the correct content of the witness's testimony. Own signature. /**Seffer/**

Question: Where did you live in Transcarpathian Ukraine during the Hungarian occupation, and what did you do?

Answer: During the Hungarian occupation in Transcarpathian Ukraine, I lived in Beregszász, worked as a teacher and principal at the local school, and was also a member of the Roman Catholic Church Council of Beregszász.

Question: How long have you known **Ferenc Pásztor**, the Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász? What was your relationship with him like?

Answer: I have known Ferenc Pásztor, the Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász, since 1935. I met him after I moved to Beregszász. My cooperation with Ferenc Pásztor was normal. I cannot say anything bad about him.

Question: Will you please tell me in more detail what you know about the crimes committed by **Ferenc Pásztor** and what illegal actions of his you know?

Answer: What I can tell you about **Ferenc Pásztor**, the Roman Catholic parish priest of the city of Beregszász, is the following: he was a member of the *Hungarian National Party* during the Czechoslovak regime.

After Transcarpathian Ukraine was occupied by the Hungarian troops, **Ferenc Pásztor**, as a member of the *Hungarian Party of Life* and the leader of the regional party organization, actively assisted the occupation power. I learned about this from the Hungarian-language press published by the Hungarian state. The articles referred to Ferenc Pásztor as the leader of the *Hungarian Life Party*. As a member of the *Verification Committee*, his task was to remove undesirable elements from the state apparatus, and people, who had been members of the Communist Party during the Czechoslovak regime or who had disseminated such an ideology, were dismissed from their jobs.

I also have the following information about Ferenc Pásztor: he gave a speech at the ceremony organized by the city council in honour of the Hungarian occupying forces. However, I no longer remember the content of Ferenc Pásztor's speech, what he said at the time.

During the Hungarian occupation, a local group of the *Hungarian Party of Life* was organized in Beregszász. **Ferenc Pásztor,** a Roman Catholic priest, was a committed supporter of this organization. He participated in the implementation of the decisions and directives of the occupying Hungarian authorities.

Question: What else would you like to add to your testimony?

Answer: I would like to add to my own testimony that **Ferenc Pásztor** received a prelate's[64] honor and rank from the Pope during the Hungarian occupation. In 1946, the Bishop of Szatmárnémeti appointed him as the Vicar General of Transcarpathia. I learned about this from members of the Roman Catholic Church.

I have read the interrogation report, in a language I understand,

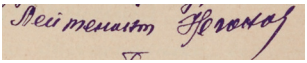
the text in the report is authentically recorded based on my own answers, which I certify with my signature. Signature: **/Seffer/**

The interrogation was conducted by:

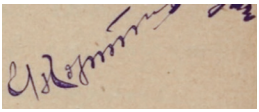
authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

[64] The rank of Papal Prelate (prelato d'onore di Sua Santità) does not constitute a further level of ordination—such as the episcopate—but is rather an honorific distinction. Recipients are entitled to the title of ‚Monsignor.' In the historical context of the 1940s, this appointment afforded Ferenc Pásztor significant social and ecclesiastical prestige. Prelates are distinguished from the lower clergy by specific vestments: they are entitled to wear a cassock with red (or amaranth) piping and buttons, complemented by a purple sash (cingulum). The bestowal of this title during the period of Hungarian administration suggests that Pásztor's activities were recognized not only by secular authorities—such as the Party of Hungarian Life—but also by the highest levels of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. This reinforces his status as a ‚pillar member' of both the local community and the political landscape of the era.

Lieutenant **Negotov**,Own signature.



Lieutenant **Koval,**
authorized officer of the Beregszász District Department of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR. Own signature.



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9.
00149-152
January 26, 1948, Berehove – Witness Palikárpa Lozán
Interrogation report

(Hand-completed form)[65]

The witness **Polikárpa Mihájlovics Lozán**, born in 1908, in the village of Hidegpatak, Volóc district, in the Transcarpathian region, comes from a poor, Christian family, Ukrainian by nationality, a Soviet citizen, non-partisan.

According to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, one bears criminal liability for the correct content of his testimony. Signature. /**Lozán**/

Question: Do you know the Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász, **Ferenc Pásztor**? What kind of relationship did you have with him?

[65] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, January 26, 1948. Polikárpa Lozán's interrogation minutes, original, 4 handwritten pages, 128-131.

Answer: Yes, I do. I know **Ferenc Pásztor**, the parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church of Beregszász. Simultaneously, he was the bishop's vicar in the territory of Transcarpathia. Our cooperation and friendly relationship always were normal.

Question: Who appointed **Ferenc Pásztor** as bishop's vicar to head the Transcarpathian region?

Answer: At that time, the Church was not well organized in the territory of Transcarpathia, and the Roman Catholic Church had no vicar. The management of our diocese was completely in the hands of Bishop **János Scheffler**, whose seat was in Szatmárnémeti (Romania). In 1944, when the Red Army liberated Transcarpathian Ukraine, Bishop **Scheffler**, in order to strengthen the Roman Catholic Church, appointed the Roman Catholic priest Ferenc Pásztor as the bishop's vicar, his deputy.

In March 1946, when I visited Ferenc Pásztor's house, I personally heard that a Roman Catholic priest from Kaszony (I don't know his name)[66] had visited him. He appointed Pásztor as an episcopal vicar, that is, the bishop's vicar. He provided this priest with professional guidance. However, I have no knowledge of whether he had a written authorization or a resolution from **Scheffler** regarding his appointment, I have no knowledge of this.

Question: Where and under what circumstances did you meet **Ferenc Pásztor**?

Answer: I knew Father **Ferenc Pásztor** as a priest from a very distant distance, I never had a personal relationship with him. I met him in 1945 when I was confessing in the confessional. He is currently my confessor.

Question: Please tell me what else you know about **Ferenc Pásztor?**

Answer: Father **Ferenc Pásztor** constantly insisted that from a religious point of view he condemned the structure of the Soviet Union and did not agree with it. He, like the Church, expressed his dislike for the Soviet Union in his own actions and sermons. I consider

[66] It is about **Lajos Károlyi**, the parish priest of Mezőkaszony at the time.

it immoral for a priest to persuade his followers so zealously against the Pravoslav religion.

Question: Please remember what anti-Soviet activities Ferenc Pásztor carried out!

Answer: In May 1947, after the Greek Catholic monastery in Munkács[67] was closed, **Ferenc Pásztor** spread provocative rumours about the validity of the Soviet laws in force, in connection with the events surrounding it. According to Ferenc Pásztor, the constitution of the Soviet Union, which had the most democratic rights, was endowed with the most democratic rights only in principle, but in practice these rights were not observed.

Yes, in May 1947, in his own house, after the Greek Catholic monastery in Munkács was closed, Pásztor told me the following:

"The Stalinist constitution included the right to freedom of religion, but in practice this point was not implemented. In practice, this point was replaced by the fact of closing monasteries and deporting priests and monks. We can't do anything. The authorities regularly act as they please, they thought that by cutting off the head of the snake, they were already entitled to deprive everyone of all freedoms."

During the anti-Soviet conversation, Pastor conducted anti-Soviet agitation among his own acquaintances. On August 29, 1946, during the Holy Mass, he preached the following:

"The Soviet intelligence is worth nothing, it is not practical. God will not bless what did not, does not and will not exist."

Ferenc Pásztor also informed the population that the Soviets were writing five-year plans, which they were not fulfilling, because the Soviet government did not recognize God, and therefore God did not give His blessing to the five-year planning.

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[67] This refers to the monastery in Munkács-Csernekhegy, which was founded during the medieval Hungarian Kingdom in honor of St. Nicholas and became, from the very beginning, the center of ecclesiastical life for the Rusyns of Hungary. Between 1646 and 1721, it entered into union with Rome, after which it became a stronghold of Greek Catholicism. Later, during the Soviet era, the institution came under Orthodox (Pravoslav) control.

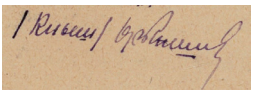
Question: What else can you add to what was said as to the anti-Soviet activities of Ferenc Pásztor?

Answer: I have nothing further to add to Ferenc Pásztor's anti-Soviet activities.

I have read the interrogation report in a language that I understand, the text included in the report is authentically recorded based on my own answers, which I confirm with my signature. Signature: /**Lozán**/



The interrogation was led by:
Major **Knish,**
authorized officer of the "O" Operational Group of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, own signature.



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10.
00153-156
January 26, 1948, Berehove – Witness György Ferenc Interrogation report

(Hand-completed form)[68]

Witness **Ferenc Ferencovics György**, born in 1885 in Beregszász, Transcarpathian region, Hungarian, non-partisan, Soviet citizen, came from a poor Christian family and was married to a person with a criminal record, an employee of the Roman Catholic parish in Beregszász. His address since July 1948: Beregszász, Liszenko Street 27.

[68] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, January 26, 1948. Polikárpa Lozán's interrogation report, original, 4 handwritten pages, 132-137.

According to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, one bears criminal liability for the correct content of his testimony. Signature:/**György/**

Question: Do you know the Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász, **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor**? How well do you know him?

Answer: Yes, I know **Father Pásztor Ferenc Ivanovics**, the Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász. I know him very well; we first met 16 years ago.

Our cooperation and friendship with **Father Pásztor Ferenc Ivanovics** are excellent; there have been no disagreements or misunderstandings between us throughout our acquaintance.

Question: Under what circumstances did you meet **Pásztor**?

Answer: We met in 1932. I was an employee of the Roman Catholic Church, working there as a church servant. At that time, the parish priest was a certain Father Ekkel.[69] After some time, he unfortunately passed away.

[69] Lajos Ekkel (1871–1932) - The career of Lajos Ekkel unfolded within the framework of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Szatmár, and he was indeed one of the most prominent Catholic leaders of modern-day Beregszász (Beregove). Born on February 27, 1871, in Beregszász, he was a native of the town, a fact that undoubtedly contributed to his profound local authority and prestige. Ecclesiastical Career: Ordination: August 30, 1893. Early Ministry (Chaplaincies): Following his ordination, he served as a curate in Nagymajtény (1893), later in Szinérváralja and Szatmár (1896). In 1897, he was appointed President of the Catholic Young Men's Association (Katolikus Legényegylet) in Szatmár, a position that signaled his exceptional organizational skills early in his career. In 1902, he continued his service in Felsőbánya and Máramarossziget. Parochial Appointments: He served as parish priest in Rónaszék from 1903 to 1921, marking his longest tenure in a rural assignment. Service in Beregszász (1921–1932): In 1921, Ekkel returned to his birthplace to assume leadership of the parish during the challenging years following the Treaty of Trianon. In 1922, he was appointed Archpriest (főesperes), a role that entrusted him with the supervision and representation of the Catholic clergy in the region under the Czechoslovak administration. Legacy and Succession: Lajos Ekkel passed away in Beregszász on January 15, 1932. Historical records confirm that following his death, Ferenc Pásztor was appointed to the parish of Beregszász in 1932. As his direct successor, Pásztor inherited Ekkel's legacy and continued the constructive communal and spiritual work that Ekkel had established during the era of post-war reconstruction.

Later, the bishop appointed Father **Ábrahám Tahi** as the Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász. In 1932, **Ferenc Pásztor** was also transferred to Beregszász, where he worked together with Father **Ábrahám Tahi**.

Question: What do you know about the activities of **Father Pásztor Ferenc Ivanovics** in Transcarpathian Ukraine during the Hungarian occupation?

Answer: During the Hungarian occupation, **Ferenc Pásztor** actively cooperated with the commanders of the Hungarian occupation troops in Transcarpathian Ukraine, and participated in the consolidation of the Hungarian occupants' power, too.

Ferenc Pásztor was a member of the *Verification Committee* Beregszász. I have no precise information regarding his specific role as a committee member or the activities he carried out. However, I am aware that he was a close associate of the occupiers, including **Zoltán Fekésházi**,[70] the deputy vice- governor,[71] and other Hungarian leaders.

[70] **Zoltán Fekésházy Zoltán Fekésházy (1881–1945)** was born in 1881 in Botfalva, Ung County (present-day Botfalva, Ukraine). Following the completion of his legal studies, he began his career as an assistant clerk in Szerednye between 1901 and 1902. From 1901 to 1906, he served as a volunteer in the 66th Infantry Regiment. In 1908, he commenced his administrative career as an intern in Ungvár (Uzhhorod), later serving as a junior clerk until December 3, 1909. On January 1, 1910, he was appointed deputy district administrator (*szolgabíró*), and from 1917, he served as the chief district administrator (*főszolgabíró*) of Szobránc. **Military and Political Career:** He participated in the administrative efforts surrounding the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. During World War I, he served as a civilian commissioner during the battles of Takcsány, for which he was awarded the Silver Medal for Bravery, Second Class. In 1920, he joined the **United Magyar Party**. During the period of Czechoslovak administration, he was a prominent leader and coordinator of national patriotic movements within the county. His political influence was instrumental in ensuring that neither President Masaryk nor President Beneš was granted honorary citizenship of Beregszász. **Administrative Leadership and Humanitarian Work:** Following the re-annexation of Subcarpathia to Hungary, Fekésházy was appointed **Deputy Lieutenant** (*alispán*) of Bereg County. In this capacity, he worked tirelessly to alleviate the hardships caused by the war, providing extensive support to war widows, orphans, and the families of soldiers serving at.

[71] **vice - govenor** - The vice-governor (Latin: vicecomes; German: Vizegespan) was the deputy of the ispán (or in modern times the chief ispán) of a medieval Hun-

Question: What can you say about **Ferenc Pásztor's** activities after the invading Hungarian troops were expelled and Transcarpathian Ukraine was annexed to the Soviet Union?

Answer: After the invading Hungarian troops were driven out and Transcarpathia came under the rule of the Soviet Union, Pastor Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor carried out priestly activities, was a vicar of an episcopal see and a papal prelate. He waged an open war of agitation against the Soviet Union and its laws.

Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor openly condemned communism among the population of Beregszász, engaging in anti-Soviet activities and spreading provocative rumors. He also cautioned the people that the Soviet authorities promised nothing good following the expulsion of Hungarian troops from Transcarpathian Ukraine. He claimed that the Red Army had reached this territory only through great atrocities, bringing the crimes of their own nation with them.

Question: Please give a specific example of Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor's anti-Soviet speech.

Answer: As I mentioned above, Pásztor Ferenc Ivanovics regularly shared anti-Soviet ideas in his sermons, both before his congregation and among the general public.

Answer: As I mentioned above, Ferenc Pásztor systematically preached anti-Sovietism during his sermons in the church, and in the public.

I can mention a specific date: recently, in early July 1948, during a sermon delivered in the Roman Catholic church in Beregszász, he said the following:

"We Christians have now suffered a very difficult fate, which we see and experience with our own eyes. God has placed this suffering on our shoulders as punishment for our sins. God has unleashed upon us the godless, faithless Soviet power together with the Red Army, so that we may receive redemption for our sins. We must not be weak and must stand

garian county. He served as the head of the county's administration and was the most influential figure after the chief. This position was typically held by the most prestigious and wealthiest members of the untitled nobility (the common gentry).

strong in all trials, because God also condemns the deportation of the innocent."

Around spring, April or May of 1948, I don't remember exactly, but **Pastor Ferenc Ivanovich**, in my presence, looked back with nostalgia to the past, to the Hungarian era, and said the following to the church chaplain[72]:

"Here is what we have achieved, the government has taken away our land, our vineyards, our plantations, and we will starve because of the infidels."

I have heard similar remarks from **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor** on several other occasions, but I can no longer recall exactly when they took place.

Question: When and by whom did **Pastor Ferenc Ivanovics** become the Vicar of the Roman Catholic Church of Transcarpathia?

Answer: In March 1948, when I was talking to János Palori, the church's office director, he was the last person to tell me that **Ferenc Pásztor** had been appointed as the episcopal vicar and vicar of Transcarpathia by **János Scheffler**, the diocesan bishop of Szatmár (Romania) in the spring of 1948 (the parish priest of Beregszász had been a vicar since 1945 – ed.). I have no idea how this appointment took place and whether Ferenc Pásztor had any documents from **János Scheffler** about this appointment.

Question: What else would you like to add to your testimony in connection with the provocative activities of the Roman Catholic priest **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor**?

Answer: I can say nothing more about the anti-Soviet activities of **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** in relation to the testimony given.

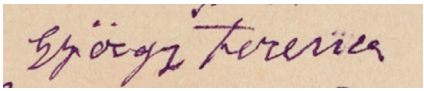
Question: You don't want to testify to **Pásztor,** do you?

[72] Father **Lajos Hudra** (Beregleányfalu, 19.03.1919 – Munkács, 10.12.1995) served as the chaplain of Beregszász and was ordained a priest by **Bishop Tódor Romzsa** in 1947. His subsequent assignments included Huszt, Aknaszlatina, and Munkács. In 1949, he was sentenced to 25 years of imprisonment. He later served as a vicar and passed away in Munkács at the age of 76.

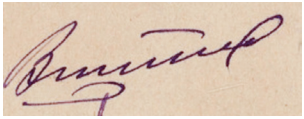
Answer: No, I can't say anything about **Pásztor,** I've already told you what I know about him.

I have read the interrogation minutes in a language that I understand,

the text included in the minutes is authentically recorded based on my own answers, which I confirm with my signature. Signature: s.k. / **György Ferenc**/



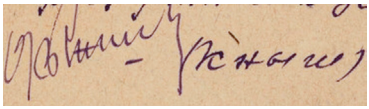
The interpreter **Viznickij** bears criminal liability for the correct content of the witness's testimony in accordance with Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR. Own signature. / **Viznickij**/



The interrogation was led by:

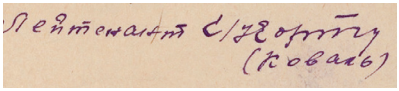
Major **Knish**,

Authorized officer of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, Signature.



Lieutenant **Koval**,

Authorized officer of the Beregszász District Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, Signature:



3.3. ARREST, SEARCH AND CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY

Based on the false testimonies discussed in the previous chapter, senior KGB officers in Uzhgorod drafted a plan to frame Vicar **Ferenc Pásztor**. In the first phase of this premeditated political act, they carefully laid out the schedule for the vicar's arrest, house search, and confiscation of property.

On February 11, 1949, First Lieutenant **Chernih**, acting on behalf of Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR—according to Document No. 11—reviewed the materials submitted on the vicar's criminal activities.

He established that he could be charged with the crimes stipulated in the second paragraph of the latter article, on the basis of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine. He drew the attention of his superiors to the following: **Ferenc Pásztor** is at large and may hide from the investigation and court trial. Therefore, he orders the suspect to be detained on the basis of the relevant articles of criminal procedure.

The Beregszász action plan was approved by: Colonel **Chernetsky**, Head of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

Sanctioned by: **Andrashko**, the regional prosecutor, a 3rd-rank state legal advisor.

The measure is agreed upon by: **Major Bogdanov**, Deputy Head of the Regional Department, and Lieutenant Colonel **Aksenov**, Head of the Investigation Department of the Regional Department.

According to the document, the "decision" is final and biding as of March 1, 1949.

***

On **February 26**, 1949, Lieutenant **Chernih**, in document No. 12, lists, among other things, the charges on which the vicar was arrested.

"1.) During the Czechoslovak occupation, as an active member of the leadership of the 'fascist' *Hungarian National Party*, he agitated among the population for seceding Transcarpathian Ukraine from Czechoslovakia and its re-annexation to 'fascist' Hungary.

2.) As a member of the *Verification Committee* established by the Hungarian government, he participated in purging educational institutions of communists and other undesirable individuals.

3.) As editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Egyházi Értesítő*, he published articles in the paper that were "anti-Soviet and sympathized with fascism."

4.) After the Soviet troops liberated the Transcarpathian region, the bishop of Satu Mare, **János Scheffler**, who lived in Romania, appointed **Ferenc Pásztor** as episcopal vicar and activated his anti-Soviet activities.

5.) Among his followers, he slandered the activities of the Soviets and "predicted the collapse of the Soviet Union and the return of the capitalist system."

According to Lieutenant **Csernih**, the listed offenses of the suspect are specifically supported by "**Czopf V. S.**, **Varga A. A.**, **Posztler V. A.**, **Seffer E. M.**, **Marosi F. I.**, **Lozán P. M.**, **György F. Sz.** and other witnesses, as well as material evidence."

Based on this evidence, the he orders "the vicar's arrest and a search of his house."

The Beregszász action plan was approved by: Colonel **Chernetsky**, Head of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

Sanctioned (authorized) by: **Andrasko**, the regional prosecutor and State Counsellor of the 3rd rank.

The measure is agreed upon by: **Major Bogdanov**, Deputy Head of the Regional Department, and Lieutenant **Colonel Aksenov**, Head of the Investigation Department of the Regional Department.

According to the document, the "decision" is final as of March 1, 1949.

***

On February 26, 1949, Lieutenant **Chernih**, referring to the "arrest and search order No. 1820 issued on February 26, 1949," initiated the "arrest and search of **Ferenc Pásztor** at his residence in Beregszász" in document No. 13. Colonel **Chernetsky**, head of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department, agreed to the execution of the order. Confirmed: "based on the registered sanction of the regional prosecutor on February 26, 1949."

***

In document No. 14 dated March 1, 1949, Major **Yeremichev**, commander of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department, confirms in investigation file No. 2230 that there is only one defendant, **Ferenc Pásztor**.

***

On **March 1, 1949**, according to file No. 15, Major **Yeremichev**, commander of the 4th Investigative Department of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department, made a "decision" on the initiation of a preliminary investigation of **Ferenc Pásztor's** case, based on Articles 54-4 and 54-10, second paragraph, of the Ukrainian Criminal Code. "Approved" by: Lieutenant Colonel **Aksenov**, head of the Investigative Department of the Territorial Department.

***

March 1, 1949, Beregszász. According to file no. 16, a house search was conducted at the residence of Ferenc Pásztor (located at 4 Voroshilov Square, Beregszász) between 10:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. In the words of the accused, the search was carried out "without complaint." The operation was executed by Lieutenant **Csornikh** and Lieutenant **Romanovsky**, officers of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security.

The search report, which also included an inventory of "seized material evidence," was signed by **Ferenc Pásztor**, as well as the fol-

lowing witnesses: **Anna Andrásné Csontos** and **Mária Józsefné Furman**, both residing at 4 Voroshilov Square, Beregszász.

The KGB officers also initialized the document.

To the Search Report, and to the list of physical evidence seized during the search other receipts, certificates of delivery and documents verifying the origin of the objects were attached. See case files Nos. 17, 18, 19, 20.

***

March 1, 1949. Ungvár. Case file no. 21 contains the arrested Data Sheet of **Ferenc Pásztor**. The signatory: **Martonov**, the investigating officer of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department, who recorded and summarized the vicar's detailed personal data and family status in a table.

The Data Sheet ends with the following entry. Date of arrest: March 1, 1949.

The charge against the arrested person: detained for committing a crime.

The arrest was ordered by: the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

Attached: the arrested person's photo, fingerprints and signature.

Place of investigation: Uzhgorod (Ungvár).

***

March 5, 1949, Uzhgorod. Case file No. 22 mentions the inventory of valuable material evidence (gold necklace, signet ring, approximately one and a half thousand rubles, etc.), with the participation of Major **Yeremichev**, Second Lieutenant **Krichna**, Platoon Leader **Pavlovich**, and interpreter.

According to case file No. 21, during the investigation in the Uzhgorod prison, prison inspector **Rohora** confiscated **Ferenc Pásztor's** personal belongings (money, pocket watch, film recorder, penknife, crucifix, house key, spoon, iron necklace with a cross, glass cup), which

"according to the rules, the accused must not have with him in the cell during his imprisonment."

***

April 16, 1949. Uzhgorod. File No. 23. According to the official certificate, there is no information about Ferenc Pásztor's previous punishment in the register of the 1st Special Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR.

***

May 18, 1949, Ungvár (Uzhgorod). File No. 24. A form attached to the investigative material. It shows **Ferenc Pásztor's** prison photo, fingerprints, and signature. File No. 25 certifies with illegible signatures that the arrested person underwent fingerprinting, and the material was submitted to Department "A" of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department.

***

The mixed documents Nos. 11-25 related to the arrest, house search, and confiscation of property are available below in my literal translation of the original texts in Russian.

11.
00009-10
February 11, 1949, Uzhgorod – Resolution on the choice of preventive measure

(The form is two-sided, typewritten, and filled out by hand)[73]

[73] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, original form, typewritten and handwritten, 5-6.

"I approve" Colonel **Chernetsky**, Head of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, own signature Round coat of arms stamp February 11, 1949.	"I sanction" **Andrashko,** Regional Prosecutor, state legal adviser of the 3rd rank own signature February 11, 1949

I, Senior Lieutenant **Chernikh**, authorized representative of the operational group "O" of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have reviewed the materials submitted on the crimes of:

Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor, born in 1880 in Uzhgorod, parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszasz, vicar of the Roman Catholic Church of Transcarpathia, non-partisan, has a higher theological education, Hungarian, Soviet citizen, bachelor, resident of Beregszász.

I have established that **Ferenc Ivanovich Pastor** is charged with crimes under Articles 54-4 and 54-10, paragraphs 2 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR (hereinafter referred to as the Criminal Code). I have established the following: Pastor is at large, he may hide from the investigation and court hearing. Guidelines Based on Articles 143 and 156 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR,

I ORDER

in accordance with Article 144 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, the detention of the suspect **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor**. In accordance with Article 158 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, a copy of the decision shall be sent to the prosecutor of the Transcarpathian region, a duplicate to the commandant of the prison, and the original shall be attached to the case-file.

Senior Lieutenant **Chernikh**,
Investigator of the "O" Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the State Security Service of the Ukrainian SSR, own signature.

Agreed by: Major **Bogdanov**,
Deputy Head of the Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, own signature.
Lieutenant Colonel **Aksenov,**
Head of the Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, with his own signature.

This decision shall enter into force on **March 1, 1949.**

12.
00007-8
February 26, 1949, Uzhgorod – Warrant for the arrest of Ferenc Pásztor[74]

"I accept" Colonel **Chernytsky**, Commander of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR own signature Round coat of arms stamp February 26, 1949	„I sanction" Andrashko, regional prosecutor, 3rd rank state legal advisor own signature February 26, 1949.

[74] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, original, typewritten, 5.

FERENC PÁSZTOR'S ARREST WARRANT
February 26, 1949. Uzhgorod

I, Senior Lieutenant **Chernykh**, the authorized representative of Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have reviewed the submitted materials regarding the following crimes:

Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor, born in 1880 in Uzhhorod, of Hungarian nationality, from a family of craftsmen. He holds a degree in higher theological education, is non-partisan, a Soviet citizen, unmarried, and has no prior criminal record. He is a parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász, currently residing in Beregszász, and

I FOUND:

when Transcarpathian Ukraine belonged to Czechoslovakia, **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor**held a leading position in the fascist *Hungarian National Party*. He tirelessly agitated among the population for the separation of Transcarpathian Ukraine from Czechoslovakia and its re-attachment to fascist Hungary.

When Transcarpathian Ukraine was occupied by the German-Hungarian fascist armies, **FerencIvanovics Pásztor** established contact with the leadership of the occupying forces from the first day and his activities were for their benefit.

He was elected as an authorized representative to the so-called *Verification Committee*, which was established by the command of the occupying forces to purge power of communists and other undesirable people, and was also the editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Egyházi Értesítő,* where he actively participated with his anti-Soviet, rather fascism-sympathizing articles.

When the territory of Transcarpathia was liberated from the Hungarian occupying troops, he was appointed episcopal vicar for the territory of Transcarpathia by order of Bishop **János Scheffler**, who lived in Romania, and he activated his anti-Soviet activities.

During this period, he actively engaged in anti-Soviet propaganda among the population. In his sermons, he regularly voiced his anti-Soviet views, spreading provocative and insidious propaganda among his

congregation, slandering the activities of the Soviets, and predicting the collapse of the Soviet Union and the return of the capitalist system.

Based on the above-mentioned facts, the criminal activity of Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor is supported by eyewitnesses: **Czopf V. S., Varga A. A., Posztler V. A., Seffer E. M., Marosi F. I., Lozán P. M., György F. Sz.** and others, as well as by material evidence.

In view of the above facts,

I ORDERED:

the arrest of **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor** and the search of his house.

Senior Lieutenant **Chernykh**,
Operational authorized investigator of the Main Department "O"
of the Transcarpathian Territorial Office of the Ministry of State
Security of the Ukrainian SSR,
Signature.

Concur:
Major **Bogdanov,**
Deputy Head of the Main Department of the Transcarpathian
Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR,
signature.

Lieutenant Colonel **Aksenov**,
Head of the Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian
Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the
Ukrainian SSR,
signature.

***

13.
00011
February 26, 1949, Uzhgorod – Arrest warrant against Ferenc Pásztor

(Form, filled in by hand)[75]

Arrest and search warrant No. 1820 issued by the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR on February 26, 1949.

On behalf of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, Chernih, I initiate the arrest of **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** and the search of his residence in Beregszász.

Colonel **Chernetsky**,
Head of the Main Department of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR,
Signature.

Confirmed:
by registered sanction of the territorial prosecutor 02/26/1949.

***

14.
00005

March 1, 1949, Uzhgorod - List of persons involved in the case based on the investigative material No. 2230

(Hand-filled form)[76]

[75] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, original, handwritten, 5-6.
[76] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, No of the ivestigation material: 2230, original, handwritten, 1.

The table contains the name of only one defendant: **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor** (1880).

The compiler of the short information sheet:

Major **Yeremichev**,
Commander of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR[77]

***

15.
00006

March 1, 1949, Uzhgorod - Decision to Initiate a Preliminary Investigation

(Form completed by hand)[78]

"I approve" Colonel **Aksenov**, Commander of the Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Round coat of arms stamp March 1, 1949 Illegible signature	Decision on the procedure of the case, on the initiation of the preliminary investigation. March 1, 1949.

[77] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, No of the ivestigation material: 2230, original, handwritten, 1

[78] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, No of the ivestigation material: 2230, original, handwritten, 2

I, Major **Yeremichev**, Commander of the 4th Investigative Department of the Transcarpathian Territorial Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have reviewed the materials submitted in connection with the crimes: I have established that **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor** asked for the reunification of Transcarpathia with the Hungarian State and its separation from Czechoslovakia during the Hungarian occupation. After the annexation of Transcarpathia to the Ukrainian SSR, he is guilty of anti-Soviet activities, charged with the crimes stipulated in Articles 54-4 and 54-10, paragraph 2 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR. Based on Article 93, Part 2 and Article 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, the following

I HAVE RENDERED A DECISION:

On the launch of a preliminary investigation into the case of Pastor **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor.**

A copy of the resolution is to be sent to the Prosecutor of the Transcarpathian Territory and to the Investigation Department "A" of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security.

Signed by:

Major **Yeremichev**,
Commander of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR[79]

***

[79] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, No of the ivestigation material: 2230, original, handwritten, 5.

16.
00018-19

March 1, 1949,Berehove- House search report, receipts and documents

(*Hand-filled form*)[80]

List of material evidence seized during the house search

N	Objects	Piece	Qualification
1.	Passport - №9586 Pastor Ferenc Ivanovich	1	Department „A”
2.	Black cassock	3	old
3.	Different books in Hungarian	40	
4.	Military publications	12	
5.	Posters in Hungarian	5	
6.	Photography camera LUDWIG – Dresden N 57B208 type	1	old
7.	Opera glasses	1	old
8.	Bullets for foreign pistol	11	
9.	National Defense Cross for the Fatherland award	1	
10.	Photo album with various photos	4	
11.	Various letters	200	
12	Chain – yellow/gold metal	1	
13.	Signet ring – yellow/gold metal	1	
14.	Money – Soviet rouble	1478	

The house search took place between 22:00 and 02:00.
No complaints were made during the house search.
Signature of the accused in the house search: Pásztor/signature/s.k./.
Witnesses:
Anna Csontos / signature/s.k./.
Mária Furman / signature/s.k./.

[80] KTAL, Pastor file 149252, original form, typewritten and handwritten, 9.9a.

The officer conducting the search of the house of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security: /illegible signature/ s.k.

All numbered certificates are attached to the investigative files; appeals can be filed with the Investigative Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

***

Additional receipts, certificates of delivery, and documents verifying the origin of the objects were attached to the Search Report and the list of material evidence seized during the search.

***

17.
00021

March 1, 1949, Uzhgorod – note on the transfer of seized valuables to the financial department of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security for safekeeping

(Typewritten text) [81]

Submit to the Financial Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

List of valuables: 1,478 rubles, a 14-link chain and ring made of yellow metal/gold.

[81] KTAL, Pásztor-file 142952, original, handwritten data on forms, 10.

"Approved" by Captain **Petrenko**, Commander of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Territorial Main Department of the Ministry of State Security s. k

March 1, 1949. Uzhgorod.
Registration is certified by:
Lieutenant **Chernykh**, investigator of the operational group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR

***

18.
00022
March 1, 1949, Uzhgorod – Receipts confirming the seized objects

(Form No. 2 handwritten data)[82]

The items seized during the search are listed in groups on the attached, numbered receipts. The receipt of the receipts was confirmed by signature:

Lieutenant **Chernik**, investigator of the Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

Receipt No. 1302 for the camera, the theatre telescope, and the cartridges for the foreign pistol;

Receipt No. 1303. For the 3 black cassocks;

Receipt No. 530. For the gold necklace, signet ring;

Receipt No. 351. For 1478 Soviet rubles.

***

[82] KTAL, Pásztor-file 142952, original, handwritten data on forms, 12.

19.
00023-24-25-30

March 1, 1949,Uzhgorod -List of personal belongings seized from the arrested accused. On form of the type 2

(Form No. 2 handwritten data)[83]

The Operational Group "O" of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR confiscated from Pastor Ferenc Ivanovich items that, according to the rules, the accused cannot keep in his cell during his detention:

1. Money, Soviet currency 229 rubles and 70 kopecks.
2. Pocket watch, light, iron-based.
3. OMEGA film recorder №6261992 type.
4. Blade knife 1 pc.
5. Crucifix, iron 1 pc.
6. House key 1 pc.
7. Spoon, 1 piece made of iron.
8. Iron necklace 1 piece.
9. Glass cup 1 piece.

The accuracy of the registered list is certified by their signatures:
The arrested **Ferenc Pásztor**. Signature.
The arrestee was checked by: Rohora. Signature.
The list was made in 3 copies, two of which are given to the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, and one to the representative of the family member upon receipt.

Attached are certificates, receipts, and certificates for the priestly vestments, the items listed above, and money.

***

[83] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, original, handwritten data on forms, 13., 14., 15., 16., 17., 18.

20.
00031-32
March 1, 1949, Berehove - List of all seized, locked movable property

(Handwritten data on the forms) [84]

Pursuant to the order issued by the leadership of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR dated February 26, 1949, Lieutenant Chernykh and Lieutenant Romanovsky seized the following movable property during a house search conducted in the presence of two witnesses:

Mária Joszipovna Furman, address: Beregszász, Voroshilov Square 4;

Anna Andrashovna Csontos, address: Beregszász, Voroshilov Square 4.

Description of the property belonging to the arrested **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor,** his address: Beregszász, Voroshilov tér 4.

Name of the objects	Amount	Condition
Desk	1	Old
Document case	1	Old
Side-table	2	Old
Dinnerware set	2	Old
Iron bed	1	Used
Painted bucket	1	Old
Washbasin, painted	1	Old
Washbowl	1	Used
Table lamp	1	Used
Wall clock	1	Old
Upholstered chairs	3	Old

[84] KTAL, Pásztor akta 149252, eredeti, formanyomtatványokon kézzel írt adatok, 13., 14., 15., 16., 17., 19., 19a.

Light sofa	1	Old
Car steering wheel, made of walnut wood	1	Old
Oak cabinet	2	Old
Serving table	1	Old
Oak table	1	Old
Large wall clock	1	Old
Stolinov component, oak	2	Used
Paintings in gilded (painted) frames	10	Used
Carpet and small room rugs	6	Old
6000 litres of wine in 33 litre barrels – wine of Nagyszőlős	6000 (six thousand)	
Money – Soviet currency	1478 rubles (one thousand four hundred and seventy-eight)	

The seized money, 1,478 rubles, was registered under register No. 14.
The list of seized and confiscated assets was compiled by:
1. **Romanovsky**/ signature/
2. **Chernikh** / signature/

Witnesses present during the house search:
1. Anna Csontos
2. Maria Furman

The above-mentioned movable property was seized from Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor and handed over for safekeeping.

March 1, 1949. Accepted, signature /**Pásztor**/

***

21.
00012-13-14
March 1, 1949, Uzhgorod – Arrestee's data sheet

(Form, filled in by hand) [85]

Full name of the arrested person	Ferenc Ivanovich Pasztor.
Place and date of birth	1880, Transcarpathia, Ungvár
Declared place of residence until the time of arrest	Transcarpathia, Beregszász, Vorosilov Sq. 4.
Occupation declared at the time of arrest	Parish priest, vicar of the Roman Catholic Church, vicar
Nationality	Hungarian
Citizenship/identification document	USSSR
Party affiliation	Non-partisan
Educational background of the person arrested	Higher education, church seminary, priest training
Criminal history	No criminal record
Participation in the Great Patriotic War	Did not fight
Was he considered an enemy in the occupied territory?	From 1939 he lived in Transcarpathia, which was occupied by the Hungarian army, and worked as a Roman Catholic priest.

Marital status

Father	**János Pásztor** (also known as Iván Ivanovics Pásztor), born in 1851 in the settlement of Ptrukša (Szirénfalva), present-day Slovakia.
Mother	**Julianna Pásztor** (also known as Julianna Fedorivna Pásztor), born in 1857 in the settlement of Homok, Uzhhorod District.

[85] KTAL, Pastor file 149252, original, handwritten, p.7.

Wife	unmarried
Children	No children
Siblings:	**Lajos Pásztor** (Ludvig Ivanovich Pásztor), b. 1888, Uzhhorod. Occupation: Worker.
	János Pásztor (also known as Iván Ivanovich Pásztor), born in Uzhhorod in 1883, currently residing in Hungary.
	Erzsébet Pásztor (Jelizaveta Ivanovna Pásztor), b. 1891, Uzhhorod. Occupation: Homemaker.
Body structure	180 cm tall, full build, gray hair, gray eyes, eyebrows are high, narrow, nose is small, thin, straight, horizontal, large mouth, thin lips, slanted chin, ears are oval-round.
Physical defects, changes	none
Characteristics and habits	none
Date of arrest	March 1, 1949
Charge against the arrested person	arrested for committing crimes;
His arrest was ordered by:	Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR

The data of the arrested person were recorded by the investigating officer of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

Photo, fingerprints, signature of the arrested person

Place of investigation: Uzhgorod

The investigation was conducted by **Martonov**, investigator of the Transcarpathian Territorial Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

***

22.
00020
March 5, 1949, Uzhgorod – Transfer Protocol for Seized Objects

(Handwritten text) [86]

Signatories:

Major **Yeremichev**, Head of the 4th Investigative Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR

Lieutenant **Krichna**, Investigator of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR

Junior Sergeant **Pavlovics**, Interpreter.

Ferenc Pásztor had no objections to the contents of the handover protocol, and he confirmed this with his signature.

***

23.
00017
April 16, 1949, Uzhgorod – Official Certificate of Clean Criminal Record

(Form, filled in by hand)[87]

There is no information regarding any prior criminal record of **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** in the files of the 1st Special Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR.

The operational officer s.k.

illegible signature

***

[86] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, original, handwritten text, 11.

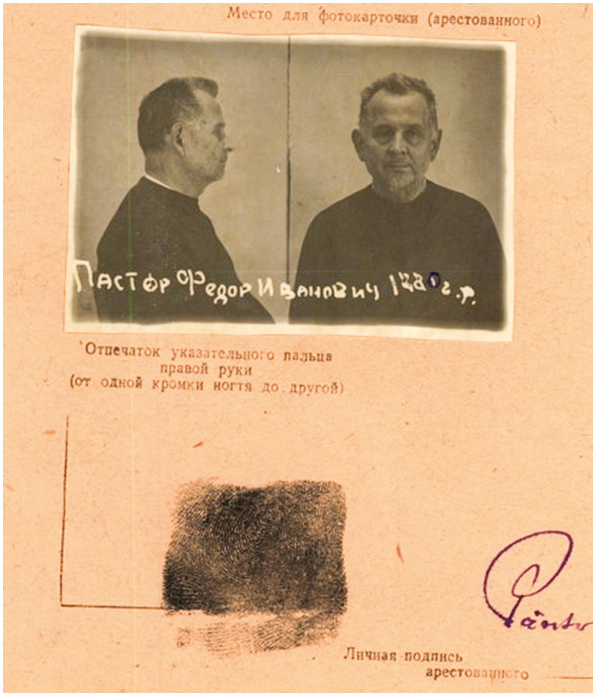
[87] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, original form, typewritten and handwritten, 8b.

24.
00015
18 May 1949, Uzhgorod – Ferenc Pásztor arrest profile

(Prison form with photo and fingerprint)[88]

Prison photo, fingerprint, signature of the arrested person.

Arrest registration card containing the booking photograph (front and profile) of Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor, the rolled fingerprint of his right index finger, and his personal signature.



***

[88] KTAL, Pastor file 149252, prison photo, fingerprint, original, handwritten, 7-8.

25.
00016

May 18, 1949, Uzhgorod – Attachment of the fingerprint to the arrestee's data sheet

(Form, filled in by hand)[89]

Proof of registration of personal data in the prison record:

Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor, born in 1880, has been fingerprinted and is to be detained in the internal prison of the Transcarpathian Territorial Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR until further notice.

The fingerprint material was submitted to Department "A" of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR:

Commander of the Transcarpathian Territorial Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, own signature.

(illegible signature)

Secretary of the Transcarpathian Territorial Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, own signature.

(illegible signature)

[89] KTAL, Pastor file 149252, original form, typewritten and handwritten, 8a.

3.4. INTERROGATIONS IN THE UZHGOROD PRISON

Ferenc Pásztor, languishing in the Uzhgorod Prison No. 1, was subjected to a series of interrogations between March 1 and March 12, 1949. The shortest interrogation lasted for one hour, the longest for 13 hours.

The exhausting, daily, nightly interrogations took their toll on the 69-year-old priest. Major **Nikolay Yeremechev** and Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov** questioned him five times.

The accused, who spoke neither Russian nor Ukrainian, was assisted by official interpreters from Uzhhorod, Máriás and Pavlovic, who facilitated communication between the father and the officers conducting the interrogation.

As an example, below is a chronological table of the pastor's interrogation records.

Chronology of the Uzhgorod interrogations
(March 1, 1949 – March 12, 1949)

No	**Place of interrogation, Uzhgorod, Prison No. 1, dates**	**Interrogation records of the accused, Ferenc Pásztor**	**Interrogation officer**	**Interpreter**
1.	1 March 1949 06:00-13:30.	***Ferenc Pásztor***, pp. 20-27.	*Major* ***Yeremichev Nikolay***	***Máriás***
2.	1-2 March,1949. 22:30 -11:00	***Ferenc Pásztor*** 28-35. oldal	*Major* ***Yeremichev Nikolay***	***Pavlovics***
3.	2 March, 1949. 20:30-02:30.	***Ferenc Pásztor*** pp. 37-42.	*Lieutenant Colonel* ***Kharitanov***	*Interpreter* ***Mariás,*** *stenographer* ***Sukhanova***

4.	9 March 1949. 20:10-01:10.	***Ferenc Pásztor*** pp. 43- 47	*Lieutenant Colonel* ***Kharitanov*** *Major* ***Yeremichev Nikolay***	***Pavlovics***
5.	12. March, 1949. 10:15-16:45.	***Ferenc Pásztor*** p. 48.	*Major* ***Yeremichev Nikolay***	***Pavlovics***

It is clear as day that the interrogation records were needed so that the investigating officers could coerce their victim into confessing to false charges.

This is evidenced by the fabricated facts, data, and statements contained within the documents, which deviate from reality and were coerced by the interrogating officers.

With all their efforts, with the multitude of questions they asked, they sought to break the faith of the humiliated vicar and to put into his mouth words and phrases that deeply compromised his personality.

We can openly say that, even in the face of his tragic fate, he was a faithful pastor and an exemplary patriot. With his consciously committed Hungarianness, he served his church and his people – even behind the bars of the Uzhhorod prison.

For example, at the first interrogation on March 1, 1949, Ferenc Pásztor stated the following about his priestly activities to the investigating officer, Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**: "*In the defence of Hungarian national interests, I carried out educational work among believers and youth. With my financial contribution, I helped build the Hungarian school in Beregszász...*"[90]

Kharitonov's answers to the interrogator's questions also reveal that he used the moral strength he received from God to defend his own truth and resist the blackmail of the KGB officers representing the atheist, tyrannical regime.

The second interrogation report of March 2, 1949 (in file No. 27) reads: "After the occupation of Transcarpathia, I did not engage in open

[90] KTAL, Pastor file 149252, interrogation record March 1, 1949, handwritten, 49-54.

anti-Soviet activity. I expressed my displeasure among the pastors regarding the unification of the Catholic Church with the Pravoslav (Orthodox) Church. I am loyal to my religion and to the Vatican."

"I also expressed my dissatisfaction with the Soviet government's separation of Church and school. I am convinced that children should be raised religiously."[91]

***

According to document No. 26 dated **March 1, 1949**, Ferenc Pásztor's first interrogation in prison No. 1 in Ungvár began at 6:00 in the morning and ended at 1:30 in the early afternoon.

The interrogation, which lasted more than seven hours, was led by Major **Yeremeychev**, commander of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, with the assistance of a state security interpreter named **Marias.**

According to the handwritten report, the accused answered the investigator's 11 questions succinctly. Judging by the handwriting, all seven pages of the A5-format sheet were signed by **Pásztor** himself. At the end of the document, **Pásztor's** signature confirms that he agrees with the content of the report. Below it are the personal signatures of the interrogating officer and the interpreter.

The document contains essential biographical information about the Roman Catholic prelate and the places of his priestly ministry. The investigating officer specifically asked the vicar about his church service and public activities. In this and other case documents, the investigating officer refers to the region as "Transcarpathian Ukraine" – this politically motivated designation also appears in the defendant's answers.

Furthermore, it is unacceptable that the competent Czechoslovak authorities referred to the legally registered, legally operating Hungarian parties in Upper Hungary and Subcarpathia—such as the United

[91] KTAL, Pastor file 149252, interrogation record March 1, 1949, handwritten, 49-54.

Hungarian Party (formed by the United Christian Socialist Party and the Hungarian National Party) and the conservative, right-wing Hungarian Party of Life—as 'fascist' and 'Hungarian nationalist' through the prism of communist ideology.

According to the conviction of the KGB chief officer - in Transcarpathian Ukraine - these parties and their members carried out anti-communist and anti-Soviet activities.

He accused **Ferenc Pásztor** of committing numerous 'crimes against the people' as an active member of Hungarian nationalist parties, as well as a servant of the Horthy regime—which had annexed Subcarpathia—and of the Royal Hungarian military units that occupied Beregszász.

According to the major, it can be considered a crime for the vicar to be a member of the Beregszász branch of the above-mentioned 'fascist parties' between the two world wars, and to have taken on leadership positions in the bodies.

The father listed, among other things, the various functions he had undertaken in other bodies.

In 1932, he led the "*Catholic Youth Club*" [92]and the "Sodality of Our Lady prayer group"[93], which were authorized by the **Czechoslovak** authorities. He carried out educational work among believers and the youth to protect Hungarian national interests.

Between 1933 and 1935, he published the church newspaper *Egyházi Értesítő* in the city of Beregszász, a publication in which—according to the KGB—anti-Soviet materials were also printed.

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[92] The **Catholic Youth Club** of Beregszász belonged to the Upper Land (Felvidék) and Subcarpathian network of the Catholic Youth Association of Slovakia (SzKIE), a denominational youth organization. It was the first of its kind in the Czechoslovak state and, for a short period, in Hungary (1928; 1933–1939). Organized in 1933 in line with Pope Pius XI's *Actio Catholica* (Catholic Action) movement, its aim was to promote the moral and material upliftment of young people.

[93] **Sodality of Our Lady** - Mary's Congregation: During the interwar period, the Sodality of Our Lady (Marian Congregation) was the most widespread devotional association among secondary school students in Subcarpathia. Its purpose was to foster within its members a deep fidelity to the Church and to encourage them toward apostolic activity.

Based on the decision of the Hungarian authorities in 1939, he was elected as an extraordinary authorized person to the Beregszász District *Verification Committee*. In his own words: "the schools had to be cleansed of undesirable teachers who had been members of the Communist Party during the Czechoslovak era."

In 1943, he also took part in the activities of the Beregszász District Administrative Committee. For instance, he monitored "the implementation of orders issued by the ruling power." However, he denied that he had indoctrinated the youth of the Bereg region against communism in his capacity as a catechist. According to his testimony, "*I did not carry out ideological activities of this nature among the youth.*"

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On March 1, 1949, after a break of about eight hours, Major **Jeremichev** resumed the so-called "marathon" interrogation at 10:30 pm that same evening, concluding it at 11:00 am the following day, March 2 (File No. 27). During this 13-hour interrogation, the major meticulously dissected **Ferenc Pásztor's** role in the party, using aggressive questioning to steer the vicar's confession toward anti-Sovietism. First, the investigator targeted the Christian Socialist Party—which had operated legally since 1928 during the two decades of the Czechoslovak regime to protect the interests of Hungarians in Upper Hungary (Felvidék) and Subcarpathia—as well as its action program. The defendant's responses reveal that he became an active member of this party in 1933, attended its most significant events, and expressed his views on the disenfranchisement of the Hungarian minority, the preservation of Hungarian identity, the importance of mother-tongue education, religious instruction, and other issues affecting the community.

The Christian Socialist Party merged with the *Hungarian National Party*[94] in 1935. In his testimony, he responded to the representative

[94] Hungarian National Party- The year of unification (1935 - 1936): A small historical clarification: the National Christian Socialist Party and the Hungarian National Party officially merged in June 1936 (in Érsekújvár) under the name

of the investigating authority, stating: "I was a simple member of the Hungarian National Party; I did not aim to separate Subcarpathian Ukraine from Czechoslovakia and re-annex it to Hungary."

He added: "*After the Hungarian troops occupied Subcarpathian Ukraine, the Hungarian National Party and the Party of Hungarian Life merged into a unified party under the name Party of Hungarian Life in 1940 or 1941, I don't remember exactly.* (...) *I am forced to admit that I played a leading role in organizing the work of the Party of Hungarian Life in the Beregszász district.* (...) *I was elected deputy chairman of the party in the Beregszász district, but I did not carry out any practical activities as a member of the Party of Hungarian Life*."

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On March 2, 1949, the third interrogation commenced at 11:30 pm (File No. 28). The new development in the case was that **Lieutenant Colonel Kharitonov**—who had arrived from Kyiv and served as the Deputy Head of the Investigative Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR—took over the interrogation from Major **Jeremichev** of Uzhhorod. A stenographer named **Sukhanova** typed up the 8-page, Russian-language transcript with the assistance of an interpreter named **Máriás**, which **Ferenc Pásztor** then verified with his signature.

The lieutenant colonel began the conversation by saying that a National Defence Cross[95] was seized from the accused during the

United Hungarian Party (although preparations had already begun in 1935).
Office holders: **Dr. István Polchy** (Beregszász, 1885): lawyer and **Royal Public Notary** in Beregszász. A member of the Hungarian Party since its founding, and its **chairman** after 1925.
Dr. Kálmán Hubay (Herincse, 1899): lawyer, minority Hungarian politician, mayor of Beregszász between 1939 and 1944, and **executive secretary** of the United Hungarian Party **district branch** in Beregszász.

[95] The **National Protection Cross**was established on December 11, 1940, by Prime Minister**Count Pál Teleki**, at the suggestion of the Governor of Nagybánya, **Miklós Horthy**. It was awarded, among others, to those Hungarian patri-

house search. He was curious as to when, from whom and for what reason the accused received this award. According to the defendant, he received it because "we were still part of Czechoslovakia and representing the interests of Hungary in Beregszász", he was engaged in educational activities among his followers.

He explained to the lieutenant colonel in more detail: "I informed the local population that we are temporarily under the Czech regime, and that Subcarpathia will soon be annexed to Hungary.

I carried out awareness-raising work among believers and youth in defence of Hungarian national interests. With my financial contribution, I helped build the Hungarian school in Beregszász, where children could study in Hungarian (...). As a teacher in this school, I taught the children Hungarian culture. (...) When Transcarpathian Ukraine came under Hungarian occupation, I took an active role in strengthening Hungarian power within the territory of Transcarpathian Ukraine."

Colonel Haritanov then returned to the issues raised earlier by **Major Yeremeychev**, which I have described above. This was related to the festive gathering organized in honour of the army entering Beregszász on November 9, 1938, where the father gave a welcoming speech and handed over the flag of the 1918 Hungarian Honvéd Regiment – which had been hidden in the church – to the commander of the Hungarian unit.

In May 1942, the heroes of the First World War were commemorated in the Roman Catholic church in Beregszász, where the commander of the Hungarian troops and the parish priest also delivered addresses.

According to the decision of the Hungarian government, every year on December 6, the priest celebrates a Mass in honour of Regent Miklós Horthy.

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ots who, in the difficult years of foreign occupation in the territories separated from Hungary and then reunited with the Holy Crown, fought with unbreakable Hungarian faith against the forces aimed at dismembering our country and weakening the Hungarian nation, and demonstrated self-sacrificing behavior, risking their lives for the survival of the Hungarians and Hungary.

He emphasized once again: *"Following the occupation of Subcarpathia, I did not engage in any overt anti-Soviet activity. Among the clergy, I expressed my disapproval regarding the question of integrating the Catholic Church with the Orthodox Church. I remain faithful to my religion and to the Vatican.*

I also expressed my dissatisfaction with the fact that the Soviet authorities separated the church from the school. I am convinced that children should be raised religiously.

I had no other comments against the Soviet regime. (...) As for the separation of schools and the church, the following Roman Catholic priests expressed their protest:

1. ***Lajos Károly*** [96] *– parish priest of Kaszony, Beregszász District;*
2. ***József Galambos***[97]*– parish priest of Bene;*
3. ***Bálint Szólics***[98]*- the parish priest of Királyháza in the Nagyszőlős district;*

[96] **Lajos Károlyi** (Kapos, 28 July 1914 – 10 November 2005) was a papal prelate. He studied theology in Ungvár and was ordained a priest on 29 June 1938. After serving as a chaplain for four years, he became the parish priest of Mezőkaszony, a position he held until his death. During the Soviet era, due to the severe shortage of priests, he provided pastoral care across a vast area stretching from Ungvár to Nevetlen. He passed away in Mezőkaszony in the 92nd year of his life and the 67th year of his priesthood. The people of Mezőkaszony laid their beloved pastor to rest in the garden of the local church. **For more details, see:** ZSUZSA PÁPAI: *Lajos Károlyi Passes Away*. Új Hajtás, 2005, Vol. X, No. 7. Available at: https://ujhajtas.net.ua/elhunyt-karolyi-lajos-atya/ (Accessed: 20 July 2024).

[97] **Father József Galambos (Donweber)** (Szentgotthárd, 3 March 1913 – Khust, 2 December 1985) was ordained a priest in 1939. His places of ministry included Bene, Aknaszlatina (from 25 February 1985), and Khust. In 1950, he was sentenced to 25 years of forced labour. He passed away in Khust at the age of 72.

[98] **Father Bálint Szólics** (Sárosoroszi, 9 February 1919 – Királyháza, 5 August 1980), after graduating from the Hungarian school in Beregszász, began his theological studies in Košice and later continued them in Nagyvárad. He was ordained a priest on 9 April 1944 by the retired bishop István Fiedler. He celebrated his first solemn Mass in Sárosoroszi. Among other assignments, he became a chaplain in Nyírmeggyes; however, when the „Trianon" borders were

*4. **Vencel Baranyai**[99] – parish priest of Szolyva, Szolyva District;*
*5. **Sörös, János** [100] – parish priest of Munkács;*
*6. **Árvay, Dezső** [101] – parish priest of the Nagyszőlős district, Tiszaújlak."*

He also informed the lieutenant colonel, as his superior, that he knew **János Scheffler**, the bishop of the diocese of Szatmár, well, since the Roman Catholic parishes of Transcarpathia also belonged to his diocese, and they met frequently until 1945. After that, the correspondence continued illegally through reliable church contacts (for example, **Vincent Baranyai**, parish priest of Nagyszőlős; **János Rónai**[102], pastor of Satu Mare; Sister **Gargulits**, head of the convent of

closed, he returned to his homeland. Under the direction of Archdeacon Ferenc Pásztor at the Episcopal Vicarage, he served as a chaplain in Beregszász. He continued his pastoral work in Nagyszőlős, and then from 1947, he served in Királyháza until his death. **For more details, see:** FR. IMRE: *Glory to You, Lord! In memory of Father Bálint Szólics 1919–1980*. Új Hajtás, 1997, Vol. II, No. 4. Available at: https://ujhajtas.net.ua/dicsseg-neked-uram-emlekezes-szolics-balint-atyara-1919-1980/

[99] **Vencel/Vincent Baranyai**was the parish priest of Szolyva in the Szolyva District, then replaced **Kálmán Bártfay** as the parish priest of Nagyszőlős, and finally continued his pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Szatmárnémeti (Satu Mare).

[100] **Father János Sörös (Pivovár)** (Szenna, 3 July 1892 – Munkács, 1958) was ordained a priest in 1915. His places of ministry included Munkács and Berezna. In 1951, he was sentenced to 25 years of forced labour. He passed away in Munkács at the age of 66 due to an illness contracted in the camp.

[101] **Father Dezső Árvay** (Szatmárnémeti, 1 May 1904 – Tiszaújlak, 25 August 1962) was ordained a priest in 1926. His place of ministry was Tiszaújlak. In 1950, he was sentenced to 6 years of forced labour. He passed away in Tiszaújlak at the age of 58 due to an illness contracted in the camp.

[102] **Father János Rónai** (Handalbustyaháza, 1 July 1884 – Szatmárnémeti, 6 November 1971) was a priest and teacher, ordained in 1906. His places of ministry included Csomaköz, Beregszász, Várpalánka, Nagyszőlős, Csap, and Ungvár. From 1941 to 1946, until his retirement, he worked as a high school teacher in Szatmárnémeti and headed the city's 2nd parish. He authored several works on church history, including *The History of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász* (Beregszász, 1907). He passed away in Szatmárnémeti at the age of 87. **Source:** Magyar Katolikus Lexikon (https://lexikon.katolikus.hu/Rónai.html)

Beregszász, and others). In these letters, he gave brief situation reports on the parishes of Transcarpathia, the persecuted priests, and other current affairs, including the arrest of **Péter Homolya**[103], parish priest of Domonya.

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On March 9, 1949, at 10:00 p.m., the fourth, so-called final interrogation, took place, conducted by two high-ranking officers representing the regional and republican state security agencies, Colonel **Kharitonov** and Major **Yeremechev** (in file number 29). **Ferenc Pásztor** was first informed that, based on the previous evidence, he had been found guilty under paragraphs 4 and 10 of Article 54 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR.

The vicar, who also signed the protocol, stated on the basis of the aforementioned articles: *"I admit my guilt. When Transcarpathian Ukraine belonged to Czechoslovakia, I became a member of the Christian Socialist Party in 1933, and this party merged with the Hungarian National Party in 1935. With my activities, I pursued a policy serving the interests of Hungary in the territory of Transcarpathian Ukraine."*

After Hungarian troops occupied Transcarpathian Ukraine, around 1941 the Hungarian National Party merged with the fascist Hungarian Life Party, where I served as vice-president of the Beregszász district organization.

The organization's main activities included strengthening the Hungarian community, searching for enemies in Transcarpathian Ukraine, and strengthening sympathy for Hungarians among Ukrainians, who later served with the Hungarian national defence forces.

[103] **Father Péter Homolya** (Kelecsény, 23 December 1903 – Beregszász, 22 November 2015) was ordained a priest in 1927. His places of ministry included Kőrösmező, Onokóc, and Beregszász. In 1951, he was sentenced to 25 years of forced labour. He passed away in Beregszász at the age of 77.

From 1932, I was the head of the Catholic Youth Club and the Congregation of Mary, educating young people in religious love and Hungarian national consciousness.

From 1939, based on a decision by the Ministry of the Interior, I was an elected member of the so-called Verification Committee. Our task was to cleanse the schools of the Beregszász district of communists and those who posed a threat to the Hungarian occupying forces.

In 1943, I was the head of the Beregszász district Verification Committee, and I was also delegated to the Beregszász district Administrative Committee. Our primary task was to assist the local authorities in fields of execution. We had to publish the decisions of the decrees of the Hungarian military command and distribute them in the occupied territory.

From the very first day when Beregszász was occupied by the Hungarian occupying forces, I actively participated in the welcoming ceremonies, where we saluted the Hungarian units. At one of these ceremonies, in front of the local population, I handed over to the commander of the Hungarian army a Hungarian flag, which I had kept for a long time. This flag was saved in 1918 after one of the defeated regiments during the First World War.

When I handed over the flag, I gave a speech on behalf of the local population, welcoming the command of the Hungarian occupying forces, as well as Regent Miklós Horthy, and welcoming the annexation of Transcarpathian Ukraine to Hungary.

Of course, I also admit my guilt in possessing anti-Soviet literature until the day of my arrest.

Furthermore, I also plead guilty to the fact that, after the borders – specifically the Soviet-Romanian border – were closed, I secretly maintained contact through unofficial correspondence with the high priest of the Roman Catholic Church, Bishop János Scheffler, who lived in Szatmárnémeti, in Romania."

The interrogation concluded at 1:10 AM.

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On March 12, 1949, at 10:15 a.m., the fifth and final interrogation took place in the Uzhhorod prison, conducted by **Major Yeremichev**

(file no. 30). In response to the questions posed, the accused stated, among other things, that in June 1945, **János Scheffler**, the Bishop of Szatmárnémeti, had appointed him as Vicar General to head the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia.

He also stated that, up until his own arrest, he had opposed the arrest of his younger brother, **Lajos Pásztor** (born 1927), and his younger sister, **Anna Pásztor** (born 1925), before the State Security Authority.

Furthermore, he sent his niece to Ungvár with the task, among other things, of visiting her mother, meeting **Bernát Bujaló**, the Roman Catholic parish priest of Ungvár, and handing over the document that the vicar had compiled on February 2, 1949. I quote:

"I*n this letter, I wrote the following to Bujaló: in the event that I am unable to fulfill my priestly obligations in my parish, I appoint him, with immediate effect, as my successor, Episcopal Vicar and Ordinary for the territory of Transcarpathia. (...) On February 2, the State Security organs arrested the Greek Catholic priest* ***József Kampó***[104]*. Following his arrest, it became clear to me that I would also be arrested, since I had previously actively assisted the Hungarians. This was the reason I wrote my letter. (...) My relative,* ***Anna Pásztor****, fulfilling my request, met* ***Bernát Bujaló*** *in the Roman Catholic church in Uzhhorod and delivered the document I had written. (...) Along with this document, I sent another letter in which I stated that he was to act in my stead as the authorized leader of the Church at the regional level*."

Following this fabricated, politically motivated line of investigation, the interrogating officers subsequently transferred **Ferenc Pásztor** to a prison in Kyiv—forcing him to plead guilty under Soviet criminal law, despite the fact that he was not a Soviet citizen during the interwar period, nor was Transcarpathia part of the Soviet empire, and thus it did not fall under the jurisdiction of Soviet law.

[104] **József (Ivan) Kampó** (born in Beregszász, 1897) was a Greek Catholic parish priest of Hungarian nationality in Ilosva. The Transcarpathian Regional Court sentenced him to 25 years' imprisonment on March 29, 1949. He was rehabilitated in 1992 (RIZO, 2003, vol. 1, p. 357)."

Below, I publish the interrogation records compiled in the Uzhhorod prison in their entirety and unaltered. The painful truth of the tortured and humiliated vicar clearly emerges from these documents.

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The transcripts of the Uzhhorod interrogations, covering files nos. 26–30, are presented below in my verbatim translation based on the original texts.

26.
00033-39
March 1, 1949, Uzhhorod – Interrogation Record of the Accused, Ferenc Pásztor (I)

(Handwritten text)[105]

March 1, 1949.
Date: March 1, 1949. The interrogation commenced at 6:00 a.m.

Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor was born in 1880 in Ungvár, in the Transcarpathian region of the Ukrainian SSR[106]. He is a citizen of the Soviet Union and of Hungarian nationality. He was born into a family of shoemakers and craftsmen, and has a higher theological education. He was previously a member of the fascist Hungarian National Party. He is the episcopal vicar of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia. He lives in Beregszász, at 4 Voroshilov Street.

[105] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, interrogation record of March 1, 1949. Original, 4 handwritten pages with the defendant's signature, fols. 20–23.

[106] **Note on the source**: This formulation represents a deliberate historical anachronism characteristic of Soviet investigative records. In 1880, Uzhhorod was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Following the annexation of Transcarpathia by the Soviet Union after World War II, Soviet authorities systematically backdated the official birthplaces in interrogation records to the Ukrainian SSR to retroactively establish legal jurisdiction over the accused.

Question: What language do you speak?

Answer: I speak Hungarian and Latin perfectly, but my command of German is poor.

Question: The interrogation will be conducted in Hungarian. Do you have any objections?

Answer: I have no objections. It is my native language.

Question: Our Hungarian interpreter, **Máriás,** will be present at your interrogation. Do you have any objections regarding the person of the interpreter?

Answer: I have no objection to the interpreter **Máriás** translating from the Hungarian language to the Russian language at my interrogation.

(Signed: m.p. F. Pásztor)

According to Article 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, interpreter Máriás is warned that she may be held criminally liable for incorrect interpretation under Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR.

(Signed: Máriás m.p.)

Question: Please tell me your biography.

Answer: I was born in 1880. I was born in Uzhhorod (Ungvár)—which is at present part of the Transcarpathian Region of the Ukrainian SSR—into a Roman Catholic family. At the age of seven, I was admitted to the elementary folk school (népskola) in Uzhhorod. After completing four grades, I entered the Hungarian grammar school. During my studies, I decided that I wanted to serve God as a priest. From the Uzhhorod grammar school, I transferred to the local Hungarian grammar school in Szatmárnémeti (Satu Mare, Romania). I completed my secondary studies in 1898. Subsequently, I was admitted to the Roman Catholic Theological Seminary in Szatmárnémeti, from which I graduated in 1902. Upon completing my theological studies, I served as an assistant priest (chaplain) in the following villages: Csomaköz (Ciumești, Romania), Nagybocskó (Velykyi Bychkiv), and Rakhiv (Rahó); I also served in the following towns: Nagybánya (Baia Mare), Szinérváralja (Seini), and the city of Szatmárnémeti (Satu Mare, Romania).

In 1908, the Bishop of Szatmárnémeti, **Gyula Meszlényi**, appointed me as the parish priest of the settlement of Szakasz (Săcășeni, România). I served as a parish priest there until 1911. Between 1911 and 1932, I was the parochial administrator (*plébánia-kormányzó*) of Dobóruszka (Ruská, Czechoslovakia).

From 1932 to 1946, I was the parish priest of the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Berehove (Beregszász), located in the Transcarpathian Region of the Ukrainian SSR. Since 1946, I have served as a bishop's vicar (vicar general) for the territory of Transcarpathia.

Question: Have you previously been a member of any political party?

Answer: Between 1932 and 1933, when Transcarpathian Ukraine was part of Czechoslovakia, I joined the Christian Socialist Party in Berehove (Beregszász), which later, in 1935, merged with its parent party, the fascist [107] Hungarian National Party[108]. Its primary goal

[107] It is extremely unlikely that such a statement and admission could have originated from Pásztor himself—namely, that he was a member of a „fascist" Hungarian party during the First Czechoslovak Republic. This also proves that the interrogating officer subjected Ferenc Pásztor to psychological coercion and drafted the answers entirely at his own discretion. This phenomenon can be systematically observed across other interrogation protocols as well.

[108] The **National Christian Socialist Party** was established, presumably in 1919, as an organization representing the workers and the petty bourgeoisie of the Upper Lands (*Felvidék*) and Transcarpathian regions, which had been annexed to Czechoslovakia. Its primary objective was supposedly to counterbalance the influence of Marxist parties. Later, on June 21, 1936, in Érsekújvár (Nové Zámky), the United National Christian Socialist Party and the Hungarian National Party formed an alliance, and subsequently merged to establish the United Hungarian Party. Between 1932 and 1935, János Esterházy was among the prominent leaders of this united Hungarian opposition in the Upper Lands and Transcarpathia. In the parliamentary elections of that era, the party secured over 260,000 votes, winning 9 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 6 in the Senate. For example, in 1935, **Endre Korláth** (1881–1945), a lawyer from Transcarpathia, was elected as a member of the Chamber of Deputies, while **Károly Hokky** (Szepsi, 1883 – Cleveland, 1971), a schoolteacher from Nagyszőlős

was to spread Hungarian culture and Magyarization, among others, among the population of Transcarpathian Ukraine.

Question: As a lover of social life, the fascist party, the *Hungarian National Party*, where you did Hungarian agitation work, the aim of which was the separation of Transcarpathian Ukraine from Czechoslovakia and its annexation to Hungary, do you confirm this? Why do you deny it? Tell the truth!

Answer: I cannot answer this question, as I had no knowledge of the true objectives of the neo-fascist *Hungarian National Party*.

Question: What position did you have in the *Hungarian National Party*?

Answer: I was just a simple member of the *Hungarian National Party*.

Question: Not true. He played a leading role in the fascist *Hungarian National Party*; the believers knew that the initial goal was the separation of Subcarpathian Ukraine from Czechoslovakia and the annexation of the area to Hungary.

Based on the investigation, it is important that you stop distorting the facts and tell the truth.

Answer: I can confirm to the investigators that I was a simple member of the *Hungarian National Party*. I was not aware of the party's goal, which was the separation of Transcarpathian Ukraine from Czechoslovakia and its annexation to Hungary.

Question: Tell me about your awards and decorations?

Answer: Following the occupation of Transcarpathian Ukraine by Hungarian troops around 1941, the *Hungarian National Party* merged with the fascist *Party of Hungarian Life*.

After the Hungarian troops occupied the territory of Carpatho-Ukraine in 1939, I was appointed a member of the *Verification*

(Vynohradiv) and a prominent Hungarian politician from the Upper Lands, was elected as a senator to the National Assembly in Prague. There, they consistently represented the minority interests of the Hungarian population. Historically, there was no fascist Hungarian party operating in the region. > *(Source: http://adatbank.sk/lexikon/orszagos-keresztenyszocialista-part/)*

Committee of the Beregszász District by a decision of the Hungarian Ministry of the Interior. My political task was to cleanse the schools of the Beregszász District of "undesirable" teachers who had been members of the Communist Party during Czechoslovak rule.

In 1943, the Beregszász District Council elected me to the Beregszász District Administrative Committee. The stated purpose of the committee was to monitor the implementation of the orders issued by the occupying administration.

In 1932, I was the leader of the *Catholic Youth Club*[109] and the *Mary's Congregation prayer association*.[110] I carried out educational work among believers and youth in order to protect Hungarian national interests.

Question: When you were educating young people, did you incite them against communism? Why do you deny this? Please tell the truth!

Answer: I did not carry out ideological activities in this direction among the youth.

Question: Please continue, what other functions did you have?

Answer: In Beregszász, between 1933 and 1935, I published the newspaper *Egyházi Értesítő*.

The interrogation ended at 1:30 p.m.

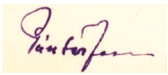
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[109] The **Catholic Youth Club** of Beregszász belonged to the Upper Land (Felvidék) and Subcarpathian network of the Catholic Youth Association of Slovakia (SzKIE), a denominational youth organization. It was the first of its kind in the Czechoslovak state and, for a short period, in Hungary (1928; 1933–1939). Organized in 1933 in line with Pope Pius XI's *Actio Catholica* (Catholic Action) movement, its aim was to promote the moral and material upliftment of young people.

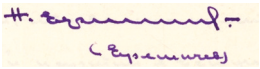
[110] **Sodality of Our Lady** - Mary's Congregation: During the interwar period, the Sodality of Our Lady (Marian Congregation) was the most widespread devotional association among secondary school students in Subcarpathia. Its purpose was to foster within its members a deep fidelity to the Church and to encourage them toward apostolic activity.

I have read the interrogation protocol based on the Hungarian translation; the statements are recorded in accordance with the facts. Signed in own hand: **Ferenc Pásztor**

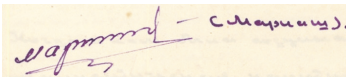
I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers. Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**



Interrogated by:
Major Yeremichev,
Commander of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Signed in own hand.



Máriás,
Interpreter of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



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27.
00040-46
March 1-2, 1949, Uzhgorod – Accused Ferenc Pásztor Interrogation record (II.)

(Handwritten text)[111]

Date: March 1, 1949. Interrogation began at 10:30 p.m.
Pursuant to Article 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR, the interpreter **Pávlovics** bears criminal liability for the accuracy of the interpretation, and pursuant to Article 89 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR, he has received a warning in this regard. Signed in own hand: /**Pávlovics**/

Question: Please clarify your statement: When did you speak at the meeting of the Christian Socialist Party?

Answer: I clarify my own testimony and declare to the investigating authority that as a member of the Christian Socialist Party[112], I spoke in this capacity in Beregszász in 1933.

Question: Who founded the *Christian Socialist Party* and when?

Answer: The Christian Socialist Party was founded around 1928[113] in what is now Transcarpathian Ukraine.

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[111] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, interrogation report of March 2, 1949 (I). Original, 4 handwritten pages with the defendant's signature, pp. 24–27.

[112] **The Role of Károly Hokky:**„Károly Hokky (born in Abaújsepsi, 1883) was a secondary school teacher, a Hungarian minority politician, a provincial assembly member, and a senator. A resident of Nagyszőlős, he served as the executive director of the Christian Socialist Party. He was one of the most significant political figures representing the Hungarian community in Subcarpathia during the interwar period. In his capacity as a senator and regional leader of the Christian Socialist Party, he advocated for the interests of Subcarpathian Hungarians in the Czechoslovak Parliament, focusing particularly on education and minority rights. In June 1939, he was summoned to the Hungarian Parliament."

[113] **Historical Clarification: The Christian Socialist Party** - „The Christian Socialist Party (National Christian Socialist Party) was not founded in 1928; rather, it was established earlier, at the end of 1919, through the consolidation of

Question: Do you remember the program of the *Christian Socialist Party*?

Answer: I do not remember the program of the *Christian Socialist Party*[114].

Hungarian Catholic associations in the territories of Upper Hungary (Felvidék) and Subcarpathia that had been annexed by Czechoslovakia. The year 1928 did not mark the party's founding but rather a period of intensive political campaigning and preparation for the regional elections in Subcarpathia. In November 1928, the party held a mass rally in Munkács (Mukachevo) to focus on their election campaign. Contemporary sources from the era (such as the *Kárpáti Híradó*) highlighted the necessity of opposition politics and the protection of the interests of the indigenous population. **The Role of József Kaminszki:** Earlier, in 1920, a party organizing committee led by József Kaminszki played a pivotal role in establishing the party in Subcarpathia. It was at this time that the party was officially declared established in the region, and Kaminszki was elected as its executive chairman. **The Role of Károly Hokky:** As previously noted, Károly Hokky was one of the most prominent Subcarpathian representatives and leaders of the party during this period (including the 1928 elections); however, he was not its founder, but rather a decisive political figure within the movement."

[114] **Historical Clarification: The program of the Christian Socialist Party** (Országos Kereszténységszocialista Párt) in Czechoslovakia during the interwar period was rooted in Catholic social teaching *(primarily inspired by the encyclical Rerum Novarum*). As a political organization representing the Hungarian minority, their program generally focused on the following pillars: 1. Social and Economic Advocacy - Protection of the Working Class: They advocated for the rights of workers, emphasizing fair wages and social security, while rejecting the radicalism of Marxist class struggle. Smallholder Support: The party strongly supported the interests of small farmers and agrarian workers, often opposing the uneven implementation of land reforms that disadvantaged the Hungarian minority population. Cooperatives: They promoted the creation of Christian-led agricultural and credit cooperatives to foster economic self-reliance within the community. 2. Minority Rights and Cultural Identity Educational Autonomy: A primary focus was the defense of Hungarian-language education. They fought against the state's efforts to suppress minority schools and lobbied for the right to establish and maintain their own educational institutions. Cultural Preservation: The party acted as a guardian of Hungarian cultural and religious traditions in Subcarpathia and the wider Felvidék (Upper Hungary) region, viewing the preservation of the language and church-affiliated schools as essential for the survival of the minority community. Religious Freedom: Given its foundation in Catholic associations, the party consistently

Question: This is not true. You remember it very well. Why are you denying this to the investigating authority? Please answer!

Answer: Based on the above, I have nothing to add to this question.

Question: Were you supposed to be a committee member of the Christian Socialist Party?

Answer: Yes, but I had always paid my membership fee.

Question: Tell us what your practical activities were like in the *Christian Socialist Party*?

Answer: As a simple member of the Christian Socialist Party, I had no special assignments or positions.

Question: You were an active member of the Christian Socialist Party and engaged in revisionist activities. The investigating authorities are demanding that you tell the truth. Answer!

Answer: I repeat to the investigating authorities that I did not perform any active duties as a member of the Christian Socialist Party.

Question: You mentioned earlier that in 1935 the *Christian Socialist Party* merged with the *Hungarian National Party*. Please tell me the party's program!

Answer: My activities in the *Hungarian National Party* were exclusively aimed at protecting the interests of the Hungarian population and spreading Hungarian culture in Transcarpathian Ukraine.[115]

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defended the rights of the Church against secularizing trends in the Czechoslovak administration. 3. Political Stance „Activist" Policy: For much of the 1920s, the party pursued an „activist" strategy—meaning they chose to participate in the democratic processes of the Czechoslovak state (entering parliament and local assemblies) to negotiate for minority rights from within the system. Opposition to Centralism: They were vocal critics of the centralized Prague-based administration, frequently advocating for greater regional autonomy for the territories where the Hungarian minority lived. In the context of Subcarpathia (where leaders like Károly Hokky were active), the party had to balance these broader national goals with the specific, often dire, socio-economic challenges faced by the region's rural population.

[115] **Core tenets of the Hungarian National Party's 1935 platform in Subcarpathia:**The 1935 program of the Hungarian National Party focused on the protection of minority rights, the preservation of our cultural identity, and the economic representation of the local agricultural population, all within the

Question*:* Why do you deny that the purpose of the *Hungarian National Party* was to separate Transcarpathian Ukraine from Czechoslovakia and annex it to Hungary?

Answer: I can confirm to the investigating authority that I was a simple member of the Hungarian National Party and that I never had the goal of separating Transcarpathian Ukraine from Czechoslovakia and annexing it to Hungary.

Question: During the first interrogation, you claimed that the *Hungarian National Party* merged with the Party of *Hungarian Life* in 1941. The investigation considers this a changed fact, as the merger of the aforementioned parties took place immediately after the Hungarian troops occupied Transcarpathian Ukraine. Do you have anything to add or supplement regarding what was said before?

Answer: After the Hungarian troops occupied Transcarpathian Ukraine, the Hungarian National Party and the Party of Hungarian Life merged into one party under the name Party of Hungarian Life in 1940 or 1941, I do not remember exactly.

Question: Investigative evidence has confirmed that you played a leading role in organizing the work of the fascist *Party of Hungarian Life* in the Berehove district.

Answer: I am forced to admit that I did indeed play a leading role in organizing the work of the *Party of Hungarian Life* in the Beregszász district.

Question: Do you remember your political activities; how did you organize the work of the Hungarian Life Party in the Beregszász district in your capacity as deputy?

Answer: I remember that the members of the *Party of Hungarian Life* informed me that I had been elected deputy leader / vice-chair-

framework of the laws in force. It was a legal political movement committed to representing the legitimate interests of the Hungarian community, rather than engaging in subversive activities. The MNP refused to participate in Prague government coalitions, which it considered a means of suppressing the Hungarian minority. This aloof political attitude was termed ‚negativism,' which the Soviet authorities later interpreted as ‚anti-state activity' or ‚sabotage against democracy.

man of the Beregszász district, but I did not carry out any practical activities as a member of the *Party of Hungarian Life*.

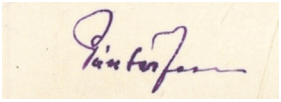
Question: As a member of the fascist *Party of Hungarian Life*, you actively participated in the party's activities. Why do you deny it, and why are you not telling the truth? Answer!

Answer: I have nothing further to add regarding the above question.

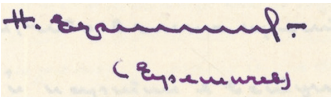
The interrogation ended on March 2, 1949, at 11:00 a.m.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

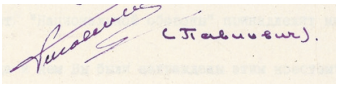
Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**



Interrogated by:
Major Yeremichev,
Commander of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Signed in own hand.



Pávlovics,
Interpreter of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



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28.
00046-54
March 2, 1949, Uzhgorod – Record of Interrogation of the Accused, Ferenc Pásztor

(Typewritten text)[116]

The interrogation began at 11:30 p.m.

Interpreter of the Transcarpathian Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, **Máriás.** Being aware of his criminal liability, he declares that, pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, he undertakes to provide an authentic translation of the interpretation and translates what was said.

Signature: /**Máriás**/

Question: During the search of your house, we found a *National Defense Cross*,[117] which we confiscated. Please tell me if the above-mentioned award is yours?

Answer: The *National Defence Cross* is my own property.

Question: When and from whom did you receive this award?

Answer: I received the National Defence Cross from the Royal Hungarian State in December 1941.

Question: For what merits did you receive the award?

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[116] KTAL, Pásztor File 149252, Minutes of the Interrogation of Ferenc Pásztor, March 2, 1949, typewritten, pp. 28–35.

[117] The **National Protection Cross**was established on December 11, 1940, by Prime Minister**Count Pál Teleki**, at the suggestion of the Governor of Nagybánya, **Miklós Horthy**. It was awarded, among others, to those Hungarian patriots who, in the difficult years of foreign occupation in the territories separated from Hungary and then reunited with the Holy Crown, fought with unbreakable Hungarian faith against the forces aimed at dismembering our country and weakening the Hungarian nation, and demonstrated self-sacrificing behavior, risking their lives for the survival of the Hungarians and Hungary.

Answer: I received the Hungarian government's decoration because, while we were still part of Czechoslovakia, I carried out propaganda in Beregszász, representing the interests of Hungary.

Question: What did your activity consist of?

Answer: Through my activities, I represented the interests of the Hungarian State under the Czechoslovak regime. It proceeded as follows: as I declare myself to be Hungarian, and furthermore, I am the Roman Catholic parish priest of Beregszász, I carried out educational and enlightenment work in defence of Hungarian national interests. I informed the local population of this conviction of mine: that we are temporarily under the Czech regime, and that Transcarpathia will soon be annexed to Hungary.

I carried out educational work among the faithful and the youth in defence of Hungarian national interests. With my material contributions, I helped build the Hungarian school in Beregszász, where the children were taught in Hungarian; at the same time, the students were exposed to the propaganda that Transcarpathia would be reunited with Hungary under the crown of Saint Stephen.

In this school, I taught the children about Hungarian culture.

Question: When Subcarpathia Ukraine came under Hungarian occupation, did you not cease your Hungarian propaganda activities?

Answer: Yes, when Subcarpathia Ukraine came under Hungarian occupation, I took an active role in strengthening Hungarian authority in the territory of Subcarpathia Ukraine.

Question: Also speak about what your participation and cooperation with the Hungarian occupiers consisted of.

Answer: My participation and cooperation with the command of the Hungarian troops was manifested in the fact that I took an active role in organizing a sympathy demonstration in honour of the Hungarian units entering Beregszász.

At the same event, in the presence of a large crowd, I publicly presented a Hungarian flag to the Hungarian commander. I had kept this flag illegally throughout the Czechoslovak regime since 1918; it is the flag that remained in my possession after a defeated Hungarian regiment.

When I presented this flag, I had the opportunity to state the following on behalf of the local population: I expressed my gratitude to the Hungarian commander for the reunification of Transcarpathia with the Kingdom of Hungary, and I reassured them that the population would assist the Hungarian troops in every way in consolidating their authority.

In May 1942, throughout the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary, including the region of Subcarpathia, we held a commemoration in memory of the Hungarian soldiers who had fallen on the Eastern Front during the First World War. We held the event in the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász. At the commemoration, the commander of the Hungarian troops also spoke on behalf of the local occupying authorities, and I also spoke representing the church.

All speeches, including mine, focused on strengthening the power of the Hungarian occupying forces in Transcarpathia; they emphasized the importance of spiritual values, as well as the mobilization of material goods and donations to support the Hungarian army in the fight against the Soviet army. I remember that we spoke at one microphone to the gathered population of Beregszász.

Question: Is this why you acted directly against the Soviet Union, colluding with the Hungarian occupiers?

Answer: Yes, I confirm that I made anti-Soviet statements among the local population.

Question: We are presenting to you a photograph in which you are visible speaking into a microphone before the local population. When did this event take place, and when was this address to the population made?

Answer: I am indeed the one captured in the above-mentioned photograph; I was photographed at the above-mentioned commemoration in May 1942, a ceremony held in honor of the Hungarian soldiers who died at the front in World War I.

Question: The Anti-Soviet activities during the Hungarian occupation of Transcarpathia were not limited to this event; do I understand correctly?

Answer: It was not limited to this. By order of the Kingdom of Hungary, we were obliged to commemorate **Miklós Horthy**, the Governor of Hungary, during Roman Catholic masses. We held these festive masses annually on December 6.

As the parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász, I prayed in my prayer intentions before the congregation for the health and longevity of Governor **Miklós Horthy**, as well as for the success of the Hungarian army, invoking God's blessing for victory over the Red Army.

Unfortunately, when the Red Army expelled the Hungarian troops from Transcarpathia, we naturally ceased holding these festive masses, and I no longer mentioned **Horthy** in my prayer intentions.

Question: Tell me the truth – after Subcarpathia Ukraine was annexed to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, you did not stop your anti-Soviet activities!

Answer: After Transcarpathia was annexed to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, I did not engage in anti-Soviet activities.

Question: Our investigators have information that you have repeatedly expressed your dissatisfaction within your own circle of acquaintances regarding events organized by the Soviet authorities. Why are you silent about this?

Answer: I emphasize once again that after the occupation of Transcarpathia I did not engage in open anti-Soviet activity. Among the pastors, I expressed my dissatisfaction with the issue of the unification of the Catholic Church and the Pravoslav (Orthodox) Church. I am faithful to my religion and to the Vatican.

I expressed my dissatisfaction with the fact that the Soviet authorities separated the Church from the school. I am convinced that children should be raised religiously.

I had no other comments regarding the Soviet authorities.

Question: Please name the people you know who have aversion to the events organized by the Soviet power?

Answer: To the best of my knowledge, regarding the church policy of the Soviet authorities, specifically concerning the separation of church and school, the following Roman Catholic priests expressed their protest:

1. **Lajos Károly**[118] – parish priest of Kaszony, Beregszász district;
2. **József Galambos**[119] – parish priest of Bene;
3. **Báint Szólics**[120] – parish priest of Királyháza, Nagyszőlős district;
4. **Vencel Baranyai** [121]– parish priest of Szolyva, Szolyva district;
5. **János Sörös** [122]– parish priest of Munkács;

[118] Father **Károly Lajos** (Kapos, July 28, 1914 – Mezőkaszony, November 10, 2005) was a Papal Prelate. He completed his theological studies in Uzhhorod. He was ordained a priest on June 29, 1938. After four years as a curate, he became the parish priest of Mezőkaszony, a position he held until his death. During the Soviet era, due to a shortage of priests, he served from Uzhhorod to Nevetlen. He passed away in Mezőkaszony in the 92nd year of his life and the 67th year of his priesthood. The people of Mezőkaszony laid their beloved pastor to rest in the garden of the local church. For further details, see: Pápai, Zsuzsa: ‚Elhunyt Károlyi Lajos' [Károlyi Lajos has passed away]. Új Hajtás, Issue 7, Year X, 2005. https://ujhajtas.net.ua/elhunyt-karolyi-lajos-atya/ (Accessed: July 20, 2024)."

[119] Father **József Galambos** (Donweber) (Szentgotthárd, March 3, 1913 – Khust, December 2, 1985) was ordained a priest in 1939. His places of ministry included: Bene, Solotvyno (Aknaszlatina) (until February 25, 1985), and Khust. In 1950, he was sentenced to 25 years in prison. He passed away in Khust at the age of 72."

[120] Father **Bálint Szólics** (Sárosoroszi, February 9, 1919 – Királyháza, August 5, 1980) began his theological studies in Košice (Kassa) after graduating from the Hungarian school in Beregszász, and later continued them in Oradea (Nagyvárad). He was ordained a priest on April 9, 1944, by retired Bishop István Fidler. He celebrated his first Mass in Sárosoroszi. Among other places, he served as a curate in Nyírmeggyes; when the ‚Trianon' borders were closed, he returned to his homeland. He served as a curate in Beregszász at the Episcopal Vicariate under the guidance of Archdeacon Ferenc Pásztor. He continued his priestly ministry in Nagyszőlős, and from 1947 he served in Királyháza until his death. For further details, see: Recorded by Fr. Imre, ‚Dicsőség neked uram! Emlékezés Szólics Bálint atyára 1919-1980' [Glory to You, O Lord! Remembering Father Bálint Szólics 1919–1980]. *Új Hajtás*, Issue 4, Year II, 1997: https://ujhajtas.net.ua/dicsseg-neked-uram-emlekezes-szolics-balint-atyara-1919-1980/ (Accessed: July 20, 2024)."

[121] „**Vencel (Vincent) Baranyai** – Parish priest of Szolyva, Szolyva district; later he replaced parish priest Kálmán Bártfay in Nagyszőlős, and finally continued his priestly service in the Diocese of Satu Mare (Szatmárnémeti)."

[122] Father **János Sörös (Pivovár)** (Szenna, July 3, 1892 – Munkács, 1958) was ordained a priest in 1915. He was a Counselor of the Holy See. His places of min-

6. **Dezső Árvay**[123] – parish priest of Tiszaújlak, Nagyszőlős district.

Question: Do you know **Scheffler**?

Answer: Yes, I know him. **Scheffler** serves as a Roman Catholic priest in Satu Mare, Romania; he is the Bishop of Szatmár, and the Roman Catholic parishes of Transcarpathia also fall under his.

Question: What was your role in the relationship with **Scheffler**?

Answer: My official relationship with Roman Catholic Bishop **Scheffler** lasted until 1945. Then, since I remained in Beregszász and the Romanian-Soviet border was closed, **Scheffler** offered me the position of his deputy to lead the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia. After I accepted his request, I was officially appointed as the Bishop's Vicar, and thus I became the vicar of all Roman Catholic parishes in Transcarpathia.

Furthermore, **Scheffler** instructed me to educate the faithful in the love of the Christian faith, as taught by the Roman Catholic Church, and to remain loyal to the High Priest of our Church, His Holiness the Pope.

Following the issuance of instructions regarding the reorganization of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia, **Scheffler** returned to Romania, and we ceased all further contact.

Question: Did you meet **Scheffler** after 1945?

Answer: No, I did not meet **Scheffle**r after 1945.

Question: Nevertheless, you maintained contact with him.

Answer: Yes, I did maintain contact with him, despite the fact that the Romanian-Soviet border was closed. I remained in contact with **Scheffler**, but illegally. For instance, in November 1946, after

istry included: Munkács and Berezna. In 1951, he was sentenced to 25 years in prison. He passed away in Munkács at the age of 66 due to an illness contracted in the labor camp."

[123] Father **Dezső Árvay** (Satu Mare [Szatmárnémeti], May 1, 1904 – Tiszaújlak, August 25, 1962) was ordained a priest in 1926. His place of ministry was Tiszaújlak. In 1950, he was sentenced to 6 years in prison. He passed away in Tiszaújlak at the age of 58 due to an illness contracted in the labor camp.

Kálmán Bártfay[124], the parish priest and dean of Nagyszőlős, emigrated to Romania, he, with Scheffler's authorization, appointed his own relative, **Vincent Baranyai**, as the parish priest of Nagyszőlős.

Baranyai was in Romania for an audience with the Bishop of Szatmár, **János Scheffler**. Upon his return, **Baranyai** brought me a brief letter from **Scheffler**, in which **Scheffler** instructed me to continue managing the Roman Catholic Church in the territory of Transcarpathia and, as far as possible, to inform him about the state and situation of the Roman Catholic parishes that had fallen under the jurisdiction of the Soviet state authorities.

Furthermore, in October and November 1948, Scheffler sent his second letter to me via the priest **János Rónai**[125] of Satu Mare, informing me that the Roman Catholic Church was functioning normally in Romania and that he would continue to hold the office of Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Satu Mare.

Towards the end of 1947, I sent two more letters to Romania through **Módesztó Gurgulics**, who included them with his own correspondence and sent them by mail to the superior of the monastery in Satu Mare, **Leonárd Marosán**, who then delivered my letters to **Scheffler**.

In August and December 1948, I sent two more letters to **Scheffler** through the priest **János Rónai** of Szatmárnémeti.

In these letters, I informed **Scheffler** that the operation of the Roman Catholic Church in Subcarpathia was undisturbed. Further-

[124] Father **Kálmán Bártfay** (born in Eperjes on July 15, 1886; died in Ungvár on June 22, 1964) was ordained as a priest in 1909. He served in Nagyszőlős and Perecseny. In 1949, he was sentenced to 25 years in prison. He passed away in Ungvár at the age of 78.

[125] **János Rónai** (Handalbustyaháza, July 1, 1884 – Szatmárnémeti, November 6, 1971): priest, teacher. Ordained as a priest in 1906. His places of service in Subcarpathia, among others, between 1906–1939: Csomaköz, Beregszász, Várpalánka, Nagyszőlős, Beregszász, Csap, Ungvár; 1941–46: until his retirement, a high school teacher in Szatmárnémeti and he leads the 2nd parish of Szatmárnémeti. His writings: he also published church history writings. He wrote, among others, *The History of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász*. Beregszász, 1907. He died in Szatmárnémeti at the age of 87. Source: https://lexikon.katolikus.hu/Rónai.html

more, I informed him about my work as episcopal vicar. Naturally, I informed him about the rotation and transfer of priests, as well as the reception of new priests.

However, I must admit that in my last letter sent to Romania in 1948, I informed Bishop **Scheffler** through **János Rónai** that pressure from the Soviet authorities on several priests had occurred repeatedly, and I also informed him that **Péter Homolya**[126] , the parish priest of Domonya in the Uzhhorod district, had been arrested.

Question: However, according to our information, you also passed on other news to **Scheffler**. Why do you deny it, why don't you tell us?

Answer: Despite the information provided, I can confirm that I did not relay any further reports to **Scheffler.**

The interrogation concluded at 2:30 a.m.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**



Interrogated:
Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature.

Máriás,
Interpreter for the
Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of
the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.

[126] Father **Péter Homolya** (Kelecsény, December 23, 1903 – Beregszász, November 22, 1981.) was ordained a priest in 1927. He served in Kőrösmező, Onokóc, and Beregszász. In 1951, he was sentenced to 25 years in prison. He passed away in Beregszász at the age of 78.

Sukhanova, Stenographer and Typist
Own signature.

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29.
00056-61
March 9, 1949, Uzhgorod – Record of interrogation of the accused Ferenc Pásztor

(Handwritten text) [127]

The interrogation began at 20:10 p.m.

Pursuant to Article 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR, the interpreter **Pávlovics** bears criminal liability for the correct interpretation, and pursuant to Article 89 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR, he received a warning in this direction. Own signature:
/ **Pávlovics** /

Question: You have been found guilty, based on the evidence presented, of violating Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of Part II of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR. Do you plead guilty to the aforementioned charges?

Answer: The charges brought against me under Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR are clear to me. I plead guilty to the aforementioned charges. When Transcarpathian Ukraine was part of Czechoslovakia, I became a member of the Christian Socialist Party in 1933; this party subsequently merged with the *Hungarian National Party* in 1935. Throughout my tenure, I pursued

[127] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, 6-page Pásztor-minutes dated March 9, 1949, handwritten, 37-42.

a policy that favoured Hungarian interests in the territory of Transcarpathian Ukraine.

Following the occupation of Carpatho-Ukraine by Hungarian troops around 1941, the *Hungarian National Party* merged with the fascist *Party of Hungarian Life*, of which I served as the vice-president for the Beregszász district."

The organization's primary activities included strengthening the Hungarian community, identifying the enemy within Transcarpathian Ukraine, and cultivating sympathy for the Hungarian cause among the Ukrainian population, who later served alongside the Hungarian Army.

From 1932, I served as the leader of the *Youth Catholic Club* and the *Mary's Congregation prayer association*, the objectives of which were to educate young people in religious devotion and Hungarian national consciousness.

From 1939, pursuant to a directive from the Hungarian Ministry of the Interior, I was appointed a member of the so-called *Verification Committee*. Our task was to purge the schools in the Beregszász district of communists and individuals deemed a threat to the Hungarian occupation forces. In 1943, I served as the head of the Beregszász District Verification Committee, and I was also delegated to the *Beregszász District Administrative Committee*. Our primary objective was to assist the local authorities in the implementation of policy. This included the printing and distribution of decrees issued by the command of the Hungarian occupation forces throughout the occupied territory.

From the very first day when Beregszász was occupied by the invading Hungarian troops, I actively participated in the welcoming events where we paid tribute to the Hungarian units. At the welcoming event, in front of the local population, I presented a Hungarian flag to the commander of the Hungarian Army, which I had kept for a long time. I managed to save this flag during the First World War in 1918 after one of the defeated regiments.

When handing over the flag, I greeted the command of the Hungarian occupying forces and Governor **Miklós Horthy** on behalf

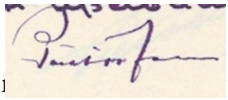
of the local population, and welcomed the annexation of Transcarpathian Ukraine to Hungary.

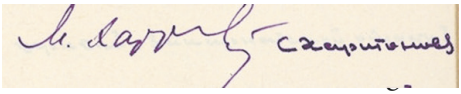
I even admit my guilt in having kept anti-Soviet literature with me until the day of my arrest.

Furthermore, I admit my guilt for having maintained unofficial, secret, correspondence-based contact with the Roman Catholic Bishop **János Scheffler**, residing in Satu Mare, Romania, during a period when the Soviet-Romanian border was closed.

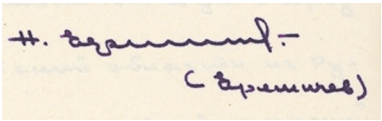
The interrogation concluded at 01:10 a.m.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

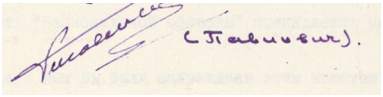
Own signatu



Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation
Department, Ministry of State Security of
the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature.



Major Yeremichev,
Commander of the 4th Investigation
Department of the Transcarpathian
Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry
of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature.



Pávlovics,
Interpreter of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.

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30.
00062-66
March 12, 1949, Uzhgorod – Record of interrogation of the accused Ferenc Pásztor

(Handwritten text)[128]

The interrogation began at 10:15 a.m.

Pursuant to Article 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR, the interpreter **Pávlovics** bears criminal liability for the correct interpretation, and pursuant to Article 89 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR, he received a warning in this direction. Own signature:
/ **Pávlovics** /

Question: When were you appointed as the Episcopal Vicar (Vicar General) of the Roman Catholic Church for the territory of Transcarpathia onethnic grounds?

Answer: My appointment took place in June 1945 in Transcarpathia, in Beregszász, when **János Scheffler**, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Satu Mare, came to me from Romania. When we met in person, he

[128] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252. The five page Pásztor-minutes of March 12, 1949, handwritten, pp. 43-47.

offered me that if the Soviet-Romanian border were closed, I should represent and direct the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia.

Question: Please tell me what you opposed at the State Security Office up until the day of your arrest!

Answer: Until the day of my arrest, I continuously protested at the State Security Office the arrest of my brother, **Lajos Ivanovics Pásztor** (born in 1927) and my sister **Anna Ivanovna Pásztor** (born in 1925), as well as members of my family.

Question: During your arrest, who did your family members send to you in Uzhgorod?

Answer: In early February 1949, my relative, Anna Lajosovna Pásztor, was sent to me.

Question: At what cost?

Answer: At such a price that he could meet her own mother, **Anna Pásztor**, who lived in Ungvár, next to the city fire department.

Question: And what was the point of it?

Answer: She knew nothing about her mother; I entrusted her to fulfil my request in Ungvár.

Question: What request?

Answer: I instructed my relative, **Anna Pásztor**, that after she arrived in Uzhgorod, she should meet with **Bernát Bujaló**, the parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Uzhgorod, and hand him the document I compiled on February 2, 1949.

Question: Please tell me the contents of the letter you wrote to **Bernát Bujaló.**

Answer: In the letter I wrote to **Bujaló**, I stated the following: Should I be unable to fulfil my priestly duties in my parish, I hereby appoint him as my successor, the bishop's vicar, with immediate effect over the territory of Transcarpathia.

Question: For what purpose did you write this letter?

Answer: On February 2, the State Security Authority arrested the Greek Catholic priest **József Kampó**.[129] After he was arrested, it was

[129] **József János/Ivan Kampó (Beregszász, 1897**) was a Hungarian Greek Catholic parish priest in Ilosva. On March 29, 1949, the Transcarpathian Regional

clear to me that I would also be arrested. Since I had actively helped the Hungarians earlier. That is why I wrote my letter.

Question: Was this letter delivered to Bernát Bujaló?

Answer: This is what happened word for word. My relative **Anna Pásztor**, following my request, met **Bernát Bujaló** in the Roman Catholic church in Ungvár and handed him the document I had written.

Question: Apart from this letter, what else did you send to **Bujaló** through **Anna Pásztor**, which you compiled?

Answer: Along with this document, I sent another letter in which I wrote that he was to be the authorized leader of the church at the county level in my stead.

The interrogation ended at 16:45 p.m.

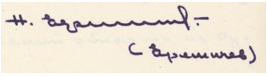
I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**

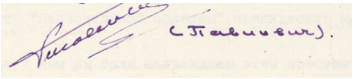


The interrogation was led by:

Major Yeremichev,
Commander of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



Pávlovics,
Interpreter of the Transcarpathian Territorial Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature.



Court sentenced him to 25 years in prison. He was rehabilitated in 1992 (RIZO, 2003, 1: 357).

3.5. INTERROGATIONS IN THE KYIV PRISON

During nine interrogations in the KGB prison in Kiev, Lieutenant Colonel **Haritanov**, deputy head of the 1st Investigation Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, "hurled a multitude of accusations" at **Ferenc Pásztor**.

The interrogation was also attended by Lieutenant Molnár, an interpreter in the service of the State Security Office, who, by signing the minutes, assumed criminal liability for the accuracy of the translation from Hungarian to Russian.

Every page of the handwritten interrogation record was signed by the defendant, the interrogating officer, and the interpreter.

From the documents we learn that Ferenc Pásztor – as they put it – stated: "*I read it in Hungarian, understandable to me, the text included in the minutes was authentically recorded based on my own answers.*" He authenticated these with his own signature, and even signed the bottom of each page with his own signature in Hungarian.

Chronology of the Kyiv interrogations

1.	April 7, 1949 8:00 p.m. – 4:00 a.m.	***Ferenc Pásztor,*** *49-54*	*Lieutenant Colonel* ***Kharitanov***	Second Lieutenant **Molnár**
2.	April 8, 1949 2:00 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.	***Ferenc Pásztor***, 55-61	*Lieutenant Colonel* ***Kharitanov***	Second Lieutenant **Molnár**
3.	April 8, 1949 11:00 p.m. – 4:40 a.m.	***Ferenc Pásztor***, 62-68	*Lieutenant Colonel* ***Kharitanov***	Second Lieutenant **Molnár**
4.	April 11, 1949 1:00 p.m. – 4:40 p.m.	***Ferenc Pásztor***, 69-74	*Lieutenant Colonel* ***Kharitanov***	Second Lieutenant **Molnár**
5.	April 12, 1949 12:00 p.m. (Noon) – 4:00 p.m.	***Ferenc Pásztor*** 75-80	*Lieutenant Colonel* ***Kharitanov***	Second Lieutenant **Molnár**

6.	April 13, 1949 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	***Ferenc Pásztor***, 81-90	*Lieutenant Colonel* ***Kharitanov***	Second Lieutenant **Molnár**
7.	Apr 25, 1949 11:00 p.m.-02:00 a. m.	***Ferenc Pásztor***, 91-95	*Lieutenant Colonel* ***Kharitanov***	Second Lieutenant **Molnár**
8.	May 11, 1949 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	***Ferenc Pásztor***, 96-99	*Lieutenant Colonel* ***Kharitanov***	Second Lieutenant **Molnár**
9.	May 12, 1949 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	***Ferenc Pásztor***, 100-103	*Lieutenant Colonel Kharitanov, Deputy Prosecutor of the Ukrainian SSR*	Second Lieutenant **Molnár**

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The defendant's first exhaustive interrogation in Kiev, which lasted eight hours, began at 8:00 p.m. on April 7, 1949, and concluded at 4:00 a.m. (Case File No. 31). Lieutenant Colonel Kharitanov inquired about the merits for which the archdeacon had been awarded the honorary title of papal prelate by the Vatican, and through whose mediation it had been delivered to him in Beregszász.

The archdeacon's reply reveals that the award was presented on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of his ordination. Upon returning from Rome, Bishop **István Madarász**[130] of Kassa helped facilitate its delivery to Transcarpathia; he stopped by the Diocese of Szatmár to deposit the award, from where **Károly Takács**, the diocese's messenger, personally collected the package and delivered it to the parish priest of Beregszász.

Pásztor also answered questions regarding his visit to Rome, stating that he spent three to four days there in 1921 as a member of a

[130] **István Madarász** (born István Maszárovits until 1907; Nagyszombat, July 10, 1884 – Hejce, August 8, 1948) was the Bishop of the Diocese of Košice, a papal prelate, and a canon of Nagyvárad.

Greek Catholic pilgrimage group from Transcarpathia. During this visit, he managed to attend an audience with **Pope Pius XI**,[131] where

[131] **Pope Pius XI** (born Achille Ratti; 1857–1939) was one of the most influential yet controversial popes of the 20th century. His tenure (1922–1939) coincided with a turbulent interwar period during which the Church had to confront the challenges posed by totalitarian regimes (Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and the Soviet Union).**Diplomatic Activities (Concordats):** Pope Pius XI is often referred to as the „Pope of Concordats." His strategy involved using treaties to guarantee the rights and freedom of the Catholic Church in newly formed states. **Lateran Treaty (1929):** This was the greatest diplomatic success of his pontificate. By reaching an agreement with Mussolini, he resolved the „Roman Question" that had persisted since 1870. This led to the creation of the Vatican City State as a sovereign territory, finally liberating the Church from its status as a „prisoner in the Vatican." **2. Critique of Totalitarianism:** Pope Pius XI recognized the atheistic and inhumane nature of 20th-century dictatorships and condemned them in several encyclicals: ***Non abbiamo bisogno*** **(1931):** He condemned the efforts of Mussolini's Fascist regime to suppress Catholic education and marginalize Church-affiliated youth organizations. ***Mit brennender Sorge*** **(1937):** He wrote this encyclical directly against Nazi Germany. It was drafted in German and smuggled into the country; it sharply attacked the racial ideology of National Socialism and the persecution of the Church. ***Divini Redemptoris*** **(1937):** In this document, he summarized his stance against communism, labeling it an „atheistic and godless" ideology. **See also: Pope Pius** XI, Encyclical *Divini Redemptoris* on Atheistic Communism (March 19, 1937). This document provides a detailed analysis of the foundations of communist ideology and the Church's social mission in opposition to totalitarian ideologies. Available at: https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19370319_divini-redemptoris.html
Vatican Radio: In 1931, he established Vatican Radio, thereby placing modern mass communication at the service of the Church. **Science:** He modernized the Pontifical Academy of Sciences to foster dialogue between faith and modern science. **In the Context of the Pásztor Case (Interrogations):** Within the context of the interrogation of Pásztor mentioned in your book, the relationship with Pope Pius XI was a critical point for the Soviet anti-religious authorities because: In the 1920s and 1930s, the Vatican was considered the primary ideological enemy of communism. Any priest who had received a Vatican award or had participated in a papal audience was automatically viewed by the Soviet secret services as a „spy," an „agent of the Vatican," or an „anti-communist subversive." The title of „papal prelate," which the subject of your book received, sig-

he received a papal blessing. However, he did not speak with the Pope personally, nor did he establish any acquaintance with the senior officials of the Holy See; thus, he maintained no personal connections with anyone there.

Developments regarding the persecution of the Catholic Church in Transcarpathia were certainly monitored from Rome. Bishop **János Scheffler** of Szatmár, who maintained ecclesiastical relations with his subordinate, **Ferenc Pásztor,** submitted diocesan reports on these matters as well. He last visited Beregszász in July 1945, where he met with János Sörös, the Dean of Munkács, and **Dr. Bernát Bujaló**, the Archdeacon of Ungvár."

I note that it became known from the statement of Dominican Sister **Gabriella Anna Melega**[132]that, in addition to Vicar **Ferenc Pásztor**, Father **Sörös** and **Bujaló** were the two vicars general pre-appointed by Bishop **János Scheffler**.

After the closure of the Soviet-Romanian border, the Bishop of Szatmár and the Vicar of Beregszász maintained contact solely through secret correspondence. In the course of his duties, the Vicar regularly informed his superior about the Catholic parishes suffering under the pressure of the communist regime and the priests serving there, as revealed in the candid confessions of the Vicar of Beregszász.

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During the second interrogation on April 8, Lieutenant Colonel ***Haritanov*** tried to reveal the anti-Soviet nature of the relationship between the Bishop of Szatmár and the Vicar of Beregszász, and he wanted to extract a confession about this (case file no. 32). Driven by political motives, he was particularly interested in the topics discussed during the 1945 meeting in Beregszász

nified direct loyalty to the Holy See, which was considered one of the gravest charges in Stalinist Soviet Union (and in occupied Transcarpathia in 1949).

[132] Paweł Wyszkowski, *Katolikusüldözés Ukrajnában és Kárpátalján* (n.p., OMI, 2013), 238.

The lieutenant colonel accused the defendant, among other things, of regularly engaging in anti-Soviet subversive activities among his followers while living in Nagyszőlős, specifically in connection with the annexation of the region to Hungary. The **prelate** admitted to these agitational activities, as in his view, the Hungarian-populated regions of Ugocsa and Bereg should have been annexed to Hungary. The interrogating officer further demanded that the vicar openly confess what other information he had passed on to Bishop János Scheffler regarding the situation of the Church, beyond reports on the persecution of Greek Catholic and Protestant brethren.

The lieutenant colonel was not satisfied with the defendant's answer that, in the districts where he did not oversee the Church, Bishop **János Scheffler** was not interested in any other information.

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The continuation of that day's (April 8, 1949) interrogation, the third questioning, lasted from the evening until the early hours of the morning. The detailed examination of the history of the relationship between the defendant and Bishop **Scheffler** was once again on the agenda (Case file No. 33). The lieutenant colonel emphatically demanded that he name the intermediaries of the legal and illegal correspondence.

Father **Pásztor** did not hide anything in this regard either. Among the letter couriers, he named **Vince Baranyi**, the parish priest of Nagyszőlős, later an associate of the Diocese of Szatmár; Sister **Gurgulits**, the superior of the Roman Catholic convent in Beregszász; Sister **Leonardo**, the head of the convent in Szatmárnémeti; Dezső **Árvay**, the parish priest of Tiszaújlak; and **János Seres**, the dean of Munkács.

According to his recollection, he sent the last two letters to Bishop **János Scheffler** in 1948, in which he mentioned that, despite the prevailing situation, the local population remained committed to the Roman Catholic faith. He did not conceal that the Soviet authorities had repeatedly pressured the Roman Catholic clergy. Furthermore, he informed the Bishop that **Péter Homolya**, parish priest of Felsődo-

monya, and **István Lőrincz**[133], a Roman Catholic priest in Őrdarma, had been arrested by the authorities on charges of anti-Soviet activities. He stated: *"I did not share any other information with Bishop Scheffler, nor did I send any other letters abroad. (...) I did not maintain any contact with the Vatican, nor did I provide them with any information. (...) I had no knowledge whatsoever regarding the nature of the relationship between Bishop Scheffler and Rome."*

Finally, one of the questions asked concerned the vicar's relationship with the leadership of the Greek Catholic Church in Uzhhorod. The defendant stated that he had no professional relationship with the Greek Catholic Church. However, he was forced to mention that he had met Bishop **Tódor Romzsa**[134]several times and subsequently

[133] Father **István Lőrincz** (Nagykároly, August 19, 1889 – Kincseshomok, June 24, 1978) was ordained in 1912. He served in Őrdarma and Kincseshomok. In 1955, he was sentenced to three years of imprisonment. He died in Kincseshomok at the age of 89.

[134] **Blessed Theodore Romzsa** (1911–1947) was one of the most defining figures of the 20th-century Greek Catholic Church in Transcarpathia, whose life and martyrdom are inextricably linked to his courageous stance against Soviet oppression. **The Life of Blessed Theodore Romzsa:** Theodore Romzsa was born in Nagybocskó in 1911. He completed his theological studies in Rome and was ordained a priest in 1936. In 1944, at the age of only 33, he was appointed Bishop of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo. **Episcopal Ministry:** His tenure coincided with the end of the Second World War and the onset of the Soviet occupation. As bishop, his primary goal was to protect his faithful and his clergy from the attacks of the atheist state power. **Martyrdom:** He firmly opposed the forced integration of the Greek Catholic Church into the Russian Orthodox Church (the Stalinist „unification" efforts). Consequently, in October 1947, Soviet authorities (internal security agencies) orchestrated an assassination attempt against him: his carriage was forced off the road by a truck, and the injured bishop was subsequently poisoned by an injection while in the hospital in Mukachevo. Pope John Paul II beatified him in 2001. **Relationship with Father Ferenc Pásztor:** The relationship between Roman Catholic parish priest Ferenc Pásztor (1883–1958) and Bishop Theodore Romzsa was rooted in mutual respect, shared pastoral concern, and Christian unity under difficult political circumstances. **Ecclesiastical Cooperation:** Although they belonged to different rites (Roman and Greek Catholic), the Soviet authorities viewed both

attended his funeral in Uzhhorod. Furthermore, he had been an invited guest at numerous Greek Catholic religious ceremonies.

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During the fourth interrogation on April 1, 1949, Lieutenant Colonel Kharitanov questioned the defendant regarding the role he allegedly played in the persecution of *"individuals who professed communist views"* (Case file no. 34). To refresh his memory, the officer specifically mentioned the teachers **Albert Czabán** and **Pál Ilku** from Beregszász.

"The pastor stated that he knew them. He considered it morally incompatible that during the Czechoslovak period, Czabán—who was known for his anti-religious views—openly preached and taught communist ideology at the Macsola school, while Pásztor himself taught Christian religious doctrine to the children. The case caused a great stir in Beregszász after **Ferenc Pásztor**, together with his fellow priests, published a revealing and critical article in 1936 in the religious journal *Egyházi Értesítő* (Church Bulletin), which he edited. In it, they addressed **Czabán's** atheistic conduct and his alleged corruption of minors, noting that this had a *"harmful effect on society as a whole."*

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as enemies of the regime. In his testimonies and memoirs, Father Ferenc Pásztor emphasized that he had met with Bishop Romzsa on several occasions, and the bishop's steadfastness left a deep impression on him. **Funeral and Solidarity:** Father Ferenc Pásztor personally attended the funeral of Theodore Romzsa in Uzhhorod. In that era, with church leaders under constant surveillance by the authorities, this was considered a courageous act of solidarity. **Through the Lens of Interrogations:** In the contemporary Soviet interrogation records (which you are researching), the authorities consistently attempted to link Ferenc Pásztor and Bishop Romzsa to justify allegations of „conspiratorial contact" or „secret cooperation with the Vatican." However, in his testimonies, Father Pásztor consistently spoke only of a religious and pastoral relationship, handling the matter with great caution to avoid bringing further harm upon the Church. **Summary:** For Father Ferenc Pásztor, Theodore Romzsa was a model of a faithful Christian bishop. In the eyes of the Transcarpathian faithful, the two figures symbolized the unity of the Church and a readiness for martyrdom during the period of Soviet religious persecution.

The court in Beregszász also addressed the **Czabán** case and ultimately banned him from teaching. The defendant did not deny that, as a member of the *Verification Committee* in 1937, he had been involved in **Czabán's** dismissal from his position, which was carried out upon higher orders. He could not provide any noteworthy information regarding **Pál Ilku**.

The lieutenant colonel also inquired about **László Czopf**, a teacher in Beregszász who had testified against the defendant, alleging that the parish priest of Beregszász had persecuted him for teaching communist views in school in 1939. During the interrogation, the defendant rejected **Czopf's** testimony as slanderous, stating that he had not concerned himself with the persecution of **László Czopf**, who had openly promoted atheistic principles in his teaching during the Czechoslovak era. However, he admitted that in 1939, during a similar court proceeding, he had expressed reservations regarding the teacher, as he had been actively promoting godless principles.

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"The central topic of the fifth interrogation, held on April 12, 1949, and conducted by Lieutenant Colonel Kharitanov, was the case of **Zoltán Bakó**[135], the parish priest of Kisszelmenc, regarding his alleged

[135] **Father Zoltán Bakó** (Zólyom, May 1, 1911 – Munkács, 1966) was ordained a priest in 1938. He served in Kisszelmenc until he was sentenced to 25 years of imprisonment in 1950. He died in Munkács at the age of 55 from an illness contracted during his time in the labor camp." In the context of the 1949 interrogations conducted regarding Ferenc Pásztor and other Transcarpathian priests, the following points must be considered: „Fabricated Charges" as a Soviet Method:Soviet internal security agencies (NKVD/MGB) frequently utilized allegations of „disgraceful" or „immoral" conduct against priests to achieve two primary objectives: Moral Discrediting: To undermine the priest's moral authority in the eyes of the faithful, thereby isolating him from his community. Political Neutralization: In show trials, an „immoral act" was often easier to „prove"—or easier to coerce a confession for—than charges of „disloyalty" or „maintaining contact with the Vatican." Such accusations effectively diverted

'criminal offense' (Case File No. 35). He was accused of raping a nurse in his rectory. The lieutenant colonel considered it a serious dereliction of duty that the competent authorities had not been notified of this incident."

According to **Pásztor's** response, Father **Zoltán Bakó** was *"outraged and denied having raped the woman in question."* Furthermore, in agreement with **Dr. Bernát Bujaló**, the Archdeacon of Ungvár representing the ecclesiastical investigative committee, and Father **Antal Heveli**, Pásztor stated that he did not notify the prosecutor's office because, as he explained, "*had this fact been revealed and brought to light, it would have resulted in a negative perception of the honour and priestly commitment of the Roman Catholic clergy in Transcarpathia"*

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attention from the broader goal of silencing political and religious resistance. The Case of Zoltán Bakó:According to historians and church records, the 25-year sentence handed down to Zoltán Bakó—effectively a slow death sentence at the time—was disproportionately severe for an alleged „moral offense." Had a genuine criminal offense occurred, it would have been handled by the courts as a standard civil matter according to Soviet legal standards. The fact that this accusation was introduced as part of a political interrogation before Lieutenant Colonel Kharitanov indicates that the charge was merely a tool designed to break the priest. Zoltán Bakó's life trajectory—his steadfastness in prison and his eventual death due to an illness contracted in the camp—is inconsistent with the profile of an ethically compromised individual; rather, it reflects the fate of a persecuted clergyman. The Function of the Interrogations:The interrogation records I have researched were often structured in such a way that the lieutenant colonel intentionally introduced „embarrassing" cases to the defendants (e.g., confronting Ferenc Pásztor with the case of Zoltán Bakó) to turn them against one another or to cast doubt on the priests' responsibility for maintaining the „purity of their community." Summary: Based on historical documents and the operating mechanisms of the era, the accusation against Zoltán Bakó was part of a broader political strategy. The objective was not the administration of justice, but the destabilization of the church hierarchy and the intimidation of the clergy. Consequently, the charge was, in all likelihood, unfounded and politically motivated.

During the sixth interrogation, held on the afternoon of April 13, 1949, Ferenc Pásztor (Case File No. 36) was asked about his role in Carpathian Ruthenia and how he had assisted the activities of the 'Hungarian occupation troops.

In his honest testimony, the defendant admitted that, as a Hungarian, his views aligned with the interests of Hungary. He did not deny that the entry of the liberating Hungarian troops into Beregszász on November 9, 1938, was a joyous occasion for him as well. He was present at the four-hour-long celebration held at the then-Kossuth Square to welcome the army; he even delivered a speech and solemnly presented the commander of the troops with a Hungarian flag from World War I, dating back to 1918, which he had preserved in the church.

Among other things, he mentioned that he had delivered a speech at the swearing-in ceremony for new recruits, where he urged the population *"to support the Hungarian Royal Army's fight against the Soviet Red Army by every means possible. He further added, (...) We prayed for the health of Governor* ***Miklós Horthy*** *and for the homeland during our Holy Masses."*

According to his recollection, he served as an organizer in Beregszász for the reception of the 'Golden Train,' which brought the relic of **King Saint Stephen**, the Holy Right Hand, to the town. Furthermore, he admitted to participating in the vetting of educational institutions to remove communist teachers as a member of the *Verification Committee* established by the Hungarian government. They reviewed the cases of approximately 150 individuals. Additionally, he served on the county's municipal committee, where he was responsible for verifying information and ensuring the implementation of various control measures.

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After a fourteen-day interval, on the night of April 25, 1949, Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov** continued his seventh interrogation of **Ferenc Pásztor** (Case File No. 37). The questions recorded in the handwritten minutes once again focused on which public adminis-

tration employees and public law dignitaries the parish priest knew personally, and what joint activities they had carried out against the Soviet regime.

The vicar singled out his fellow priest, **József Martoncsik**, whom he had met during his priestly service in Doboruszka. He had been on friendly terms with the priest—who served in Nagykapos and later in Királyhelmec—since 1926. This priest was widely known by his pen name, **László Mécs**[136]; he had achieved prominence in literary circles

[136] **László Mécs**, born József Martoncsik (Hernádszentistván, January 17, 1895 – Pannonhalma, November 9, 1978), was a Hungarian Premonstratensian monk, poet, and newspaper editor who received the Corvin Wreath. Between 1920 and 1929, he served as a parish priest in Nagykapos and later in Uzhhorod. His first work, *Hajnali harangszó* (Dawn Bell-ring), was published in Uzhhorod in 1923. In 1953, he was sentenced to 10 years in prison on trumped-up charges, only to be rehabilitated in 1956. László Mécs cannot, by any means, be classified as a ‚Hungarian Nazi'; the accusation leveled against him by the Soviet lieutenant colonel was a typical, baseless, and ideologically motivated political stigmatization common to that era. Historical evidence confirms that Mécs was not a Nazi; in fact, he was explicitly in conflict with National Socialist ideology: **Anti-Hitler poetry:** In 1942, Mécs published his poem ‚Imádság a nagy Lunátikusért' (Prayer for the Great Lunatic) in the journal *Vigília*, in which he unequivocally referred to Hitler as an insane ‚mad mutant.' This poem so offended the pro-German political line of the time that legal proceedings were initiated against him. **Persecution under German occupation:** Due to his openly anti-fascist views, he was considered an enemy by both Nazi Germany and the Hungarian Arrow Cross Party. According to historical records, it was only through the personal intervention of Regent Miklós Horthy and Mécs's previous merits that he was spared from being deported by the Germans. **Humanist poetry:** His life's work—including poems such as *Hajnali harangszó*—focused on compassion for human suffering, brotherly love, and social justice. He explicitly condemned the incitement of ethnic tensions and the persecution of the innocent. **The context of Soviet accusations:** During interrogations, Soviet authorities frequently used the labels ‚Nazi' or ‚fascist' to stigmatize any Hungarian intellectual, priest, or public figure who remained faithful to Christian-national traditions or rejected communist ideology. This served as a political instrument designed to discredit the accused and coerce confessions. In summary, when the lieutenant colonel labeled László Mécs a "Nazi Hungarian," it was not a statement based on historical fact, but an ideological label used to corner and intim-

through his recognized research and creative work as a "priest-poet." His thought-provoking sermons also caused a significant stir among the Catholics of Beregszász. From 1938 onward, he was a frequent guest at the vicar's residence.

In his testimony, **Ferenc Pásztor** firmly stood by his fellow priest, attempting to convince the Lieutenant Colonel that during his guest's stay, the priest *"had not engaged in any anti-Soviet activities and, in fact, had not mentioned any hostile ideas in his sermons."*

The Lieutenant Colonel nonetheless labeled him a "Nazi Hungarian" and questioned him regarding his whereabouts. To this, the priest replied: *"After Transcarpathia was annexed to the Soviet Union, my relationship with* ***Martoncsik*** *was completely severed. Subsequently, I attempted to reconnect with him through our mutual acquaintances in Hungary, but my efforts were unsuccessful."*

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The eighth interrogation commenced in the early afternoon of May 14, 1949 (Case File No. 38). Lieutenant Colonel Kharitanov inquired about two books published in Budapest, which had been seized from the priest's residence during the search. The first was **Béla Bangha's**[137] work, Világnézeti válaszok (Answers on Worldview), and the second was **Donát Szilvási's**, Én magyar vagyok!*(I Am a Hungarian!)*. The investigating authorities, having reviewed the contents of the aforementioned books, concluded that 'both works contain anti-Soviet material,' filled with passages contrary to Soviet power.

In his response, the vicar confirmed that he had received the publications from his late friend, **János Mackó** of Beregszász, in 1948, and

idate Ferenc Pásztor. Pásztor's response—in which he denied the charges and distanced himself from his former acquaintance—was a cautious and defensive reaction intended to ensure his own survival.

[137] **Béla Bangha**, SJ (Nyitra, November 16, 1880 – Budapest, April 30, 1940), was a missionary, editor, and writer. His work, *Világnézeti válaszok* (*Answers on Worldviews*), was published in Budapest in 1940.

conceded that "these books have anti-Soviet content." He acknowledged his "guilt" for keeping such publications in his home.

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov** presented the vicar with a copy of the 19th issue of Transcarpathia newspaper [138]from 1941, which describes Pásztor as an active supporter of the Hungarian troops. The defendant admitted that the newspaper report referred to him as *"a person who significantly contributed to strengthening the power of the Hungarian forces."*

Finally, the Lieutenant Colonel presented an archival document dated 1939, reference number 2/400, and demanded that the vicar explain its contents. According to the defendant's testimony, *'" This is a resolution from the Deputy Prime Minister of Hungary, in which, on April 18, 1939, I was appointed as a member of the so-called Verification Commission, tasked with purging schools of teachers with communist views."*

***

On May 12, 1949, at approximately 2:00 p.m., the ninth and final interrogation of **Ferenc Pásztor** took place in Kyiv (Case File No. 39). In addition to Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov** and the interpreter, the Deputy Prosecutor of Ukraine also attended the proceeding. All present signed the minutes recording the testimony.

The main question is what he admits to being "guilty" of?

As a result of the harsh pressure exerted by the authorities, Pásztor's statement reads: "I acknowledge my guilt in that, having lived in Tran-

[138] The weekly social **newspaper Kárpátalja** (Subcarpathia) was first published in Munkács in 1889, edited by István Csomár. Beginning in March 1934, an independent weekly version of *Kárpátalja* was published, edited by József Nádas and Anna Nádas of Beregszász, along with László Kiss of Uzhhorod. The editorial office was located in Beregszász. For further details, see: Ágnes Kiss, *Magyar újságok Kárpátalján az első Csehszlovák Köztársaságban. Sajtótörténet* (Hungarian Newspapers in Transcarpathia during the First Czechoslovak Republic. History of the Press), Intermix Kiadó, Budapest–Uzhhorod, 2020, pp. 111–117, 143. Available at: https://mek.oszk.hu/21800/21807/21807.pdf (Accessed: July 20, 2024).

scarpathian Ukraine during the Czechoslovak era, I took an active part in the activities of the Hungarian National Party, and subsequently, from 1939 onward, in the Party of Hungarian Life, the governing party[139]

[139] The **Party of Hungarian Life** (*Magyar Élet Pártja* – MÉP) was the dominant governing party in Hungary from 1939 to 1945. It was not a new organization but rather a reorganization and renaming of the previous governing party, the National Unity Party (NEP). Historical Context and Significance: **Continuity:** The party evolved from the „Unity Party" founded in 1922, which served as the primary tool for consolidation during the István Bethlen era. The series of name changes (Unity Party $\rightarrow$ National Unity Party $\rightarrow$ Party of Hungarian Life) mirrored the party's ideological shift from conservative-liberal roots toward a more radical, nationalist, and increasingly right-wing orientation. **The 1939 Elections:** The party achieved a landslide victory in the 1939 parliamentary elections, securing 183 seats and an absolute majority in the National Assembly. This marked the peak of its political power. **Ideology:** The party promoted the ideology of „national unity," which centered on the Christian-national course, anti-communism, and revisionist foreign policy (the reclamation of territories lost under the Treaty of Trianon). From the late 1930s, the party was increasingly influenced by antisemitic and pro-German sentiments, although internal factions—led by figures like Pál Teleki—attempted to maintain Hungary's sovereignty. **Leadership:** The party was led by the Prime Ministers of the era, most notably **Pál Teleki**, **László Bárdossy**, and **Miklós Kállay**. In 1940, a radical pro-Nazi faction led by Béla Imrédy broke away from the party to form the „Party of Hungarian Revival." **The End of the Party:** Following the German occupation of Hungary on March 19, 1944, the party's autonomy was effectively destroyed. Key figures were arrested or deported by the Nazis. The party was finally abolished on February 26, 1945, by the Provisional National Government as part of a decree banning all fascist-aligned organizations. **In summary: The Party of Hungarian Lif**e (MÉP) is most frequently characterized by historical scholarship as a conservative-authoritarian party; it was not a Nazi party. The Soviet prosecution, as seen in the case of Ferenc Pásztor, did not use the terms ‚fascist' and ‚Nazi' as precise political categories. For them, the MÉP, the Arrow Cross Party, and all preceding governing parties were equally ‚fascist,' regardless of whether a politician held conservative-Christian or radical far-right views. In their view, membership in the MÉP was in itself sufficient grounds to be branded a servant of the ‚fascist regime.' Historically, the MÉP was not merely a political organization, but the administrative and power-political backbone of the Horthy era. During the conviction of Ferenc Pásztor, the fact that he was a member of a commission with such government backing (such

that also championed the interests of the Highlanders. The objective of our party was to contribute actively to the re-annexation of the Transcarpathian lands to the Kingdom of Hungary. At that time, as a Roman Catholic priest, I educated the youth to cherish their Hungarian national identity.

Following the occupation of Transcarpathia by Hungarian troops, I personally participated in strengthening the local Hungarian administration. I took a direct part in organizing the ceremonial event held in honour of the arrival of the Hungarian troops. During the event, I presented a flag that I had kept hidden for a long time. I also consider myself guilty of participating in the work of a commission established by the Hungarian state, the purpose of which was to consolidate Hungarian authority in Transcarpathia

For my active participation, the Kingdom of Hungary awarded me the National Defence Cross.

Furthermore, when Transcarpathia was united with the Soviet Union, I voiced my protest among the clergy, particularly against the forced merger of the Uniate Church with the Orthodox Church[140]*. I also admit my guilt in that I remained engaged in the religious education of children within our Church.*

Furthermore, I admit that I maintained an illegal connection with Bishop ***János Scheffler*** *living in Romania, whom I constantly informed about the situation of our Church under Soviet rule. I also acknowledge my guilt in informing the bishop about the circumstances of the innocent conviction and persecution of our fellow priests, initiated by the Soviet authorities. Finally, I also admit my guilt in possessing books of an Anti-Soviet nature; specifically, the publications Answers on Worldviews (Világnézeti válaszok) by* ***Béla Bangha*** *and I Am Hungarian!*

as the aforementioned Verification Commission) served as ‚evidence' for the Soviet prosecution of his collaboration with the regime.

140 **The Eastern Catholic Churches** (or the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church), also known as Unitus, Uniate or Uniate churches, are independent (in Latin suiiuris, meaning „in their own right") particular churches in complete unity with the Pope of Rome as the successor of Saint Peter.

(Én magyar vagyok!) by ***Dónát Szilvási****, which were seized during my arrest.*

In response to further questions, he stated: *"I do not wish to add anything to my statement."*

Below, I publish the faithful translations of the nine transcripts of **Ferenc Pásztor's** interrogation in the Kiev prison.

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The interrogation transcripts Nos. 31–39, which took place at the KGB prison in Kiev, are presented below in my literal translation of the original texts.

31.

00068-73
April 7, 1949, Kyiv – Interrogation Transcript of Defendant Ferenc Pásztor

(Handwritten text)[141]

Interrogation Transcript
Defendant: **Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor**

Dated April 7, 1949. Start of interrogation: 11:00 p.m.
Pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, interpreter **Molnár** assumes criminal liability for the accuracy of the interpretation from Hungarian into Russian. **Signature: /Molnár/**

Question: Do you have any honorary title?

[141] KTAL, Pásztor File 149252, The 6-page Pásztor report dated April 7, 1949, handwritten, pp. 49–54.

Answer: Yes. In 1941, the Pope of Rome, on the recommendation of the Bishop of Kassa, appointed me an honorary papal prelate.[142]

Question: For what did you earn this honorary title from the Vatican?

Answer: I received the title of Papal Prelate from the Vatican in recognition of my dedicated ecclesiastical service, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of my ordination. The Holy See bestowed this title upon me because I have performed devoted work in the administration of the Roman Catholic Church and have enhanced its reputation among the population of Transcarpathia.

Question: How did you receive the papal award?

Answer: To my knowledge, the document granting the honorary prelate title was brought from the Vatican by Bishop **Madarász** of

[142] In the context of the Catholic Church, a **„Papal Prelate"** (historically known as a *Domestic Prelate* or *prelatus domesticus* in 1941) is an **honorary title** bestowed by the Pope upon a secular priest in recognition of exceptional service to the Church. Here are the key points regarding this title: **Honorary Nature:** It is purely an honor. It does not confer any specific administrative duties, jurisdiction, or additional power. It is a sign of papal favor and recognition of the priest's pastoral or administrative work. **Forms of Address:** Recipients are entitled to be addressed as **„Monsignor"** (often abbreviated as *Mgr.* or *Msgr.*). **Vestments and Liturgical Privileges:** Traditionally, holders of this title were granted specific privileges regarding ecclesiastical dress, such as wearing a black cassock with purple piping and a purple sash, indicating their status during liturgical ceremonies. **Historical Context:** In 1941, the title was technically known as *Domestic Prelate*. Following reforms by Pope Paul VI in 1968, the title was renamed **„Prelate of Honour of His Holiness. Hierarchy:** In the hierarchy of „Monsignor" titles, it is a significant distinction—ranking above the title of *Chaplain to His Holiness* (formerly *Papal Chamberlain*). When writing about Ferenc Pásztor's appointment in 1941, it is important to note that, according to the terminology of the time, the title was ‚Domestic Prelate' (*prelatus domesticus*). As he was appointed in 1941, this was considered a very prestigious papal honor under the regulations then in effect, signifying a direct connection to the Papal Court. In period documents, you will frequently encounter the term "Domestic Prelate," whereas modern historical accounts often use the title "Prelate of Honour of His Holiness".The modern official term (in use since 1968) is: Praelatus Honoris Sanctitatis Suae.

Kassa (Kosice) and forwarded via Hungary to the bishopric of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Satu Mare, from where **Károly Takács** brought the document to me in Beregszász.

Question: When were you in the Vatican, Rome?

Answer: I have only been to Rome once, during the Czechoslovak era, in 1921, when I led a group of about 200 pilgrims to Rome (the Eternal City). During the pilgrimage, I managed to provide accommodation for the group throughout the city.

During this time, we spent three or four days in Rome, gaining many wonderful experiences while sightseeing. On one occasion, I had the privilege of attending a papal audience with **Pope Pius XI**, where I received the papal blessing. We were traveling as a group of Greek Catholics from Transcarpathia.

I have not personally spoken to the Pope or to senior Vatican leaders.

Question: Whom do you know personally from the Vatican?

Answer: I did not maintain contact with anyone among the staff of the Vatican, and I did not get to know anyone previously.

Question: When you were an episcopal vicar,vicarious in Transcarpathia, with whom did you keep contact from among the higher-ranking priests of the Roman Catholic Church?

Answer: When the Hungarian troops occupied Transcarpathian Ukraine and it was annexed to the Kingdom of Hungary, my superior, who was transferred to Szatmárnémeti, became Bishop **Madarász**, and then my immediate superior was Bishop **János Scheffler**.

My assistance and task before the bishops was to inform the church leadership about the social situation of the church, the work of the novices, and also about the Roman Catholic priests, and to write a report annually about church events (for example, how many baptisms there were).

After Transcarpathia was annexed to the Ukrainian SSR, my church relationship with the bishop of Szatmárnémeti was severed due to the new borders.

Question: When did you meet with Bishop **János Scheffler** for the last time?

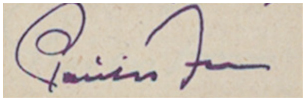
Answer: I last met with Bishop **János Scheffler** in Beregszász in July 1945. When they checked whether the church met the requirements after the war. At that time, Bishop **János Scheffler** spent two days with me. In my home, he met with Father **János Sörös** from Munkács and Father **Bujaló** from Ungvár. Following this, Father János Scheffler returned to Szatmárnémeti.

The interrogation ended: at 4:00 a.m.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

Ferenc Pásztor.

Own signature.

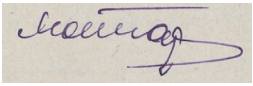


The interrogation was led by:

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature.



Second Lieutenant **Molnár,**
Interpreter, Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



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32.
00074-80
April 8, 1949, Kyiv – Interrogation Transcript of Defendant Ferenc Pásztor
(I.)

(Handwritten text)[143]

Interrogation Transcript
Defendant: Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor

Date: April 8, 1949. Start of interrogation: 2:00 a.m.

Pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, interpreter **Molnár** bears criminal responsibility for the accuracy of the interpretation from Hungarian into Russian. Own signature.

Question: At the interrogation on April 7, you mentioned that you met with **Scheffler** on October 9, 1945. Please tell me what you talked about!

Answer: In 1945, when Scheffler was at my place in Beregszász, first of all, we discussed the most important questions that concerned the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia. Furthermore, we exchanged words about the territorial changes and the international situation.

We mainly discussed the situation in the Church. We took note that during the state of war, due to the mobilization of altar servers, only priests were permitted to read the Holy Scriptures and celebrate Mass. The Bishopric had adopted such a decree at that time, which required neighbouring priests to work together whenever possible.

[143] KTAL, Pásztor File 149252, The 7-page Pásztor report dated April 8, 1949, handwritten, pp. 55–61.

Bishop **Scheffler** further inquired about the nature of the cooperation between the Roman Catholic Church and the Soviet authorities, and about the attitude of the local population in Transcarpathia toward the Soviet power. I was compelled to inform Bishop **Scheffler** that, initially, the Red Army's attitude toward the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia was favourable. From the very beginning, the sacrament of confession was permitted for all religions, including the Roman Catholic Church. We were allowed to conduct services under various conditions and in different languages; specifically, the Roman Catholic Church was permitted to celebrate Mass in Latin.

The local population was distrustful of the Soviet regional leadership in Transcarpathia. I told Scheffler that they are disheartened because of the army holding Bolshevik views, because of the lasting military new Marxist rules, and because of the new Soviet system. I expressed my strict opinion formed about utopian communism in connection with the fact that Transcarpathia was annexed to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. In my opinion, in the artificially created Berehove and Vynohradiv districts, where the majority of the population is composed of local Hungarians, those areas should have been annexed to Hungary.

Question: During the investigation, it turned out that you also lived in Nagyszőlős. Did you do organized work to annex the area to Hungary?

Answer: Yes. Since the majority of the population there was of Hungarian nationality when the area came under Hungarian rule, I personally agitated for these areas to be returned to Hungarian jurisdiction rather than to the Soviet Union.

Question: Furthermore, you agreed with Bishop Father **Scheffler** that, in view of the situation that had developed, you would maintain contact through telegraphy with the help of new technology.

Answer: It is true, I do not deny that we agreed with Bishop **Scheffler** that we would maintain contact via telegraphy in the future.

During our communication with Bishop **Scheffler**, we coordinated that due to the changing of state borders, my personal contact with the Bishop between Hungary and Transcarpathia, which was annexed to

the Ukrainian SSR, was suspended for an indefinite period. In view of the current circumstances, we were of the same opinion that, for security reasons, we would refrain from illegal contact. We maintained contact only through correspondence, involving reliable persons who lived in Transcarpathia and who maintained kinship or family relations with their relatives in Hungary. In our view, the Soviet authorities could not prevent us in this. Naturally, for the purpose of mutual information regarding our affairs, we also employed freely moving monks with Bishop **Scheffler**, through whom we maintained contact via oral messages. These friars performed monastic missions between Hungary and Transcarpathia.

Question: What information did you convey to Bishop **Scheffler?**

Answer: At Bishop **Scheffler's** request, I was obliged to regularly inform him about the situation in our diocese and the Greek Catholic Church. Given the circumstances and limited opportunities under the shadow of Soviet power in Transcarpathia, the Greek Catholic clergy were compelled to hold religious holidays with us in the Roman Catholic churches.

Question: Was Bishop Scheffler interested in other information regarding Transcarpathian Ukraine? Why don't you tell me the truth?

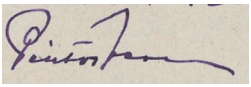
Answer: Answer: Let's start by saying that in the district where I did not lead the church, Bishop **Scheffler** was not interested in other information.

However, when I informed Bishop **Scheffler** about the situation of the Roman Catholic Church, I also touched upon our Protestant brothers in Transcarpathia.

Interrogation concluded at 4:45 p.m.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**

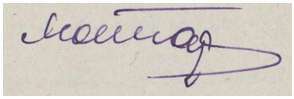


The interrogation was led by:

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature.



Second Lieutenant **Molnár,**
Interpreter, Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



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33.
00081-87
April 8, 1949, Kyiv – Interrogation record of the accused Ferenc Pásztor
(II.)

(Handwritten text)[144]

Interrogation Transcript
Defendant: Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor

Date: April 8, 1949. Start of interrogation: 11:00 p.m.

Pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the

[144] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, *Minutes of Interrogation of Ferenc Pásztor*, April 8, 1949, handwritten, pp. 62–68.

Ukrainian SSR, interpreter **Molnár** bears criminal responsibility for the accuracy of the interpretation from Hungarian into Russian. Own signature.

Question: Please tell me how the church relationship with Bishop **Scheffler** was maintained!

Answer: After the closure of the Romanian-Soviet border, contact with Bishop **Scheffler** became complicated, as he lived in Satu Mare, which belonged to Romania. Therefore, further contact was not made through legal channels.

I received the first letter from the bishop in November 1946. Pastor Vincent **Baranyi** brought this letter from Romania when he came to visit his family. In this letter, Bishop **Scheffler** asked me to continue managing the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia and to inform him about the situation of the Church.

In parallel, the sisters of the Greek Catholic convent in Beregszász also delivered a letter from Bishop **Scheffler** to me. In 1948, Bishop Scheffler's letters were brought to me by our fellow priest **Dezső Árvay**, parish priest of Tiszaújlak, and by **János Sörös**, a pastor who has been living in Beregszász for nearly eight decades.

When responding to Bishop Scheffler, I typically sent four or five letters.

I delivered these letters through the mediation of the nuns, and also sent them through Sister **Gurgulits**, the superior of the Roman Catholic convent in Beregszász, to the Bishopric of Maramureș, to Sister **Leonardo**, the leader of the women's convent in Satu Mare.

In 1948, I sent the last two letters to Bishop **Scheffler,** taking advantage of the possibility for personal correspondence.

Question: What did Bishop **Scheffler** inform you about in the exchange of letters during the illegal relationship?

Answer: To the uninitiated, these letters appeared to have empty content. As Vicar of the Roman Catholic Church, I informed Bishop **Scheffler** about the current situation in Transcarpathia and the operations of the diocese under my jurisdiction. I must mention that, at first, our Church was able to function normally under the new Soviet

regime. I also informed him that, despite the developing situation, the local population remained committed to the Roman Catholic faith. Furthermore, I did not conceal that the Soviet authorities repeatedly exerted pressure on Roman Catholic priests. Additionally, I reported that the authorities had arrested **Péter Homolya**, parish priest of Felsődomonya , and **István Lőrincz**, a Roman Catholic priest from Őrdarma, on charges of anti-Soviet activities.

I did not communicate any further information to Bishop **Scheffler**, nor did I send any more letters abroad.

Question: Did you use any other means for the purpose of maintaining contact with Bishop **Scheffler,** apart from those mentioned above?

Answer: Apart from the methods mentioned above, there was no other form of contact with Bishop **Scheffler**.

Question: I'll check. Please tell me what other folk methods were used to deliver letters abroad!

Answer: I repeat again that there was no other form of contact other than what I have already named before. In particular, there was no folk method for the exchange of letters; I did not use anything of the sort. Furthermore, I did not receive any shipment from abroad.

Question: Please tell us about your relationship with the Vatican!

Answer:I did not maintain any contact with the Vatican, nor did I provide them with any information.

Question: Then please state how you informed the Vatican regarding the operations of the local Roman Catholic Church.

Answer: I do not know. As the Episcopal Vicar of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia, I did not send any reports or briefing letters to the Vatican.

Question: But did Bishop Scheffler maintain contact with Rome?

Answer: I had no knowledge of Bishop Scheffler's connection with Rome.

Question: Please tell me about the relationship you maintained with the Greek Catholic leadership in Uzhhorod.

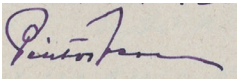
Answer: I did not have any professional relationship with the Greek Catholic Church. However, I must mention that I met Bishop **Theo-**

dore Romzsa on several occasions, and I also attended his funeral in Uzhhorod. Furthermore, I participated in several of the Greek Catholic Church's liturgical services in the region.

The interrogation ended at 4:40 a.m.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**

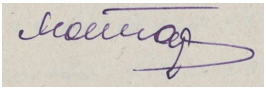


The interrogation was led by:

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



Second Lieutenant **Molnár,**
Interpreter, Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



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34.
00088-93
April 11, 1949, Kyiv – Interrogation Transcript of Defendant Ferenc Pásztor

(Handwritten text)[145]

Interrogation Transcript
Defendant: **Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor**

Date: April 11, 1949. Start of interrogation: 1:00 p.m.
Pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, interpreter **Molnár** assumes criminal liability for the accuracy of the interpretation from Hungarian into Russian Signature: **/Molnár/**

Question: The investigating authority received information on your persecuting people with communist views among the local population. Do you remember how it happened?

Answer: I do not recall ever persecuting people holding communist views among the local intelligentsia; I do not remember anything of the sort.

Question: Do you know **Albert Czabán** and **Pál Ilku**?

Answer: Yes, I do. I know them. **Albert Czabán** was a resident of Macsola, in the Beregszász district. During the Czechoslovak era, he held a prominent position as a teacher in village schools. Later, the German-Hungarian regimes removed him from his post and forced him to relocate to the Uzhhorod district. His current whereabouts are unknown to me.

Pál Ilku is a resident of Beregszász. I understand that he worked as a teacher, and after Transcarpathia was annexed to the Ukrainian SSR, he left for Romania.[146]

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[145] KTAL, Pásztor File 149252, 5-page report by Pásztor, dated April 11, 1949, handwritten, pp. 69–74.

[146] **Pál Ilku** did not go to Romania. In January 1945, at the invitation of the Hungarian Communist Party, he moved with his family to Debrecen. (At that time,

Question: Why do you not admit that you persecuted these teachers, **Czabán** and **Ilku**, because of their communist views?

Answer: Now I remember that in 1937, based on my statement, Czabán was later removed from his workplace by higher authority because he taught communist ideology and held anti-religious views. Regarding Pál Ilku, I have no information worth mentioning to tell.

Question: Tell me how you persecuted **Czabán**!

Answer: Czabán worked in a teaching position in the upper grades in Macsola from 1936, where I taught religious education to the children. When we worked together during our duties, I noticed that **Czabán** was educating his students in communist ideology. The students became prone to anti-religious ideology, turned away from God, and spread communist ideology among themselves in the village.

When the children listened to Czabán, they believed him. In my religion classes, the children expressed disapproving opinions and claimed that they did not believe in God.

The ideal of Roman Catholic children is faith in God; I could not tolerate **Czabán's** continuous misleading and actions at school. Therefore, in 1936, several other Roman Catholic priests and I wrote an article in the religious magazine *Egyházi Értesítő*. In this article, we drew attention to Czabán's atheistic behavior and accused him of corrupting minors. In this article, we pointed out **Czabán's** atheistic views, which had a harmful effect on the entire society.

Czabán took my article as a personal insult and turned to the court for legal remedy with a charge of defamation. The court of Beregszász held its hearing in 1937 and verified my evidence. In the indictment, **Czabán** was found guilty of propagating atheistic views as a teacher at the school. He was banned from his professional practice as a teacher by a resolution.

In accordance with the court ruling, **Czabán** was removed from his teaching position and relocated to the Uzhhorod district.

Question: Do you know **László Czopf** or **Lajos Somun**?

Debrecen was the seat of the Hungarian Provisional National Government, which had been brought to power by the Soviets.) Later, as a party functionary, he worked in various fields.

Answer: Yes, I know him. **László Czopf** is a teacher in the city of Beregszász who also worked as an educator. My relationship with **Czopf** can be described as good.

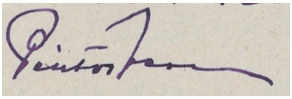
Question: Question: During the court proceedings, Czopf testified that you persecuted Czabán when he taught communist views at the school in 1939. Why are you withholding this information?

Answer: I rejected **László Czopf's** testimony. Regarding **Czabán's** case file, as far as the truth is concerned, based on the testimony that I supposedly wanted to drive him away because he was propagating atheism and God-denying principles and doctrines at school: a clear distortion occurred. The aforementioned events took place in 1936–37 and not in 1939, as **Czopf** claimed in his testimony. At the court hearing, **Czopf** mentioned that there was no basis or justification for my (alleged) persecution.

The interrogation ended at 4:40 p.m.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**

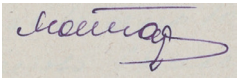


The interrogation was led by:

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



Second Lieutenant **Molnár,**
Interpreter, Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



***

35.
00094-99
April 12, 1949, Kyiv – Interrogation Transcript of Defendant Ferenc Pásztor

(Handwritten text)[147]

Interrogation Transcript
Defendant: Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor

Date: April 12, 1949. Start of interrogation: 12:00 p.m.

"Pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, interpreter Molnár assumes criminal liability for the accuracy of the interpretation from Hungarian into Russian.
Signature: /Molnár/

Question: Do you know the priest **Zoltán Bakó** [148]?

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[147] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, The 5-page Pásztor report dated April 12, 1949, handwritten, pp. 75–80.

[148] **Father Zoltán Bakó** (Zólyom, May 1, 1911 – Munkács, 1966) was ordained a priest in 1938. He served in Kisszelmenc until he was sentenced to 25 years of imprisonment in 1950. He died in Munkács at the age of 55 from an illness contracted during his time in the labor camp." In the context of the 1949 interrogations conducted regarding Ferenc Pásztor and other Transcarpathian priests, the following points must be considered: „Fabricated Charges" as a Soviet Method:Soviet internal security agencies (NKVD/MGB) frequently utilized allegations of „disgraceful" or „immoral" conduct against priests to achieve two primary objectives: Moral Discrediting: To undermine the priest's moral authority in the eyes of the faithful, thereby isolating him from his community. Political Neutralization: In show trials, an „immoral act" was often easier to „prove"—or easier to coerce a confession for—than charges of „disloyalty" or „maintaining contact with the Vatican." Such accusations effectively diverted attention from the broader goal of silencing political and religious resistance. The Case of Zoltán Bakó:According to historians and church records, the 25-year sentence handed down to Zoltán Bakó—effectively a slow death sentence at

Answer: Zoltán Bakó is a priest of the Roman Catholic Church and the parish priest of Kisszelmenc in the Uzhhorod district, who was under my ecclesiastical supervision.

Question: What do you know about Zoltán Bakó's illegal crimes?

Answer: I am not aware of any political crimes committed by the priest Zoltán Bakó. However, I must note that in 1948 it was discovered that Bakó was living with a local woman. As a result, at the initiative of the local residents, I imposed an ecclesiastical penalty upon him.

Question: Please tell me everything you know about this violation of the law and about Bakó!

Answer: In August 1948, as a wedding vicar, a man from Aknaszlatina, Rahó district, visited me in Beregszász. His name was Liván (this is not certain); he was of Hungarian nationality and worked in the local salt mine. The miner filed a complaint with me, according to which Zoltán Bakó, the parish priest of the Roman Catholic parish of Kisszelmenc, was having an affair with his wife.

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the time—was disproportionately severe for an alleged „moral offense." Had a genuine criminal offense occurred, it would have been handled by the courts as a standard civil matter according to Soviet legal standards. The fact that this accusation was introduced as part of a political interrogation before Lieutenant Colonel Kharitanov indicates that the charge was merely a tool designed to break the priest. Zoltán Bakó's life trajectory—his steadfastness in prison and his eventual death due to an illness contracted in the camp—is inconsistent with the profile of an ethically compromised individual; rather, it reflects the fate of a persecuted clergyman. The Function of the Interrogations:The interrogation records I have researched were often structured in such a way that the lieutenant colonel intentionally introduced „embarrassing" cases to the defendants (e.g., confronting Ferenc Pásztor with the case of Zoltán Bakó) to turn them against one another or to cast doubt on the priests' responsibility for maintaining the „purity of their community." Summary: Based on historical documents and the operating mechanisms of the era, the accusation against Zoltán Bakó was part of a broader political strategy. The objective was not the administration of justice, but the destabilization of the church hierarchy and the intimidation of the clergy. Consequently, the charge was, in all likelihood, unfounded and politically motivated.

During our conversation, I expressed my sympathy to the complainant. Subsequently, I travelled to Uzhhorod and met with **Dr. Bernát Bujaló**, the archdeacon and vicar of Uzhhorod, and sought his advice regarding the matter. We decided to initiate an investigation into **Zoltán Bakó's** conduct. We authorized a local pastor, Father **Antal Heveli**, to question the aggrieved party and requested a detailed report regarding Father Bakó's behavior.

Question: And what was found during the investigation you initiated?

Answer: You are using our own rules. Father **Antal Heveli** questioned the victim, and she stated that she had been with Father **Bakó**. In 1948, the woman received an invitation in which the reverend father asked for her assistance in recovering his health and for nursing care.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, the woman arrived at Father **Zoltán Bakó's** in August 1948. However, instead of assisting in the restoration of his health, according to the woman's testimony, **Bakó** raped her twice. For this reason, she was forced to return to her place of residence and informed her family of what had occurred. Father **Antal Heveli**[149] naturally questioned the priest **Zoltán Bakó** as well, who was outraged and denied having raped the woman in question. However, to hush up the incident, which was unpleasant for us, **Bakó** agreed to pay compensation to the aggrieved woman's husband, **Liván**. Since **Bakó** bought his way out of the crime he had committed, it was clear to **Bujaló** that he had raped the woman. To avoid rumours concerning the case, to hush up the events, and to prevent malicious gossip among the local population, **Bujaló** offered 2,000 rubles in compensation to the woman's husband, and the amount was handed over to**Liván**.[150]

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[149] Father **Antal Heveli** (Kaplony, August 21, 1916 – Szolyva, July 21, 1999) was ordained a priest in 1939. His places of ministry included Aknaszlatina and Szolyva. In 1950, he was sentenced to 25 years of imprisonment. He passed away in Szolyva at the age of 83.

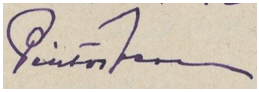
[150] „**Historical Summary:** The complaint and subsequent investigation were based solely on the witness testimony of the complainant. Whether the event took place as described remains unverified. No other evidence regarding the investigation exists, which necessitates an objective examination of the case by the researcher. No civil proceedings took place, and no forensic investigation into

Answer: I did not notify the prosecutor's office regarding the fact of the crime committed by **Bakó** in relation to the rape of the woman, because if this fact had been revealed and come to light, it would have formed a poor opinion of the honour and priestly dedication of the Roman Catholic priests in Transcarpathia.

The interrogation concluded at 4:00 p.m.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**

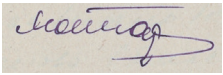


The interrogation was led by:

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



Second Lieutenant **Molnár,**
Interpreter, Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



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the alleged sexual offense was ever conducted. Furthermore, when the complainant, Mr. Liván, initially filed his report with the vicar, he spoke only of an affair, not of rape. Given the known provocative tactics of the Soviet regime at the time, it is plausible that the complainant intentionally misled the Church with her testimony, potentially acting on the basis of incitement and with premeditated intent. Based on the available evidence, Father Zoltán Bakó was convicted of anti-Soviet activity and sentenced to 25 years in the Gulag. He died at the age of 55 in Munkács (Mukachevo) from an illness contracted in the camp."

36.
00100-109
April 13, 1949, Kyiv – Interrogation Transcript of Defendant Ferenc Pásztor

(Handwritten text)[151]

Interrogation Transcript
Defendant: Ferenc Ivanovych Pasztor

Date: April 13, 1949. Interrogation commenced: 12:30 p.m.

"Pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, interpreter Molnár assumes criminal liability for the accuracy of the interpretation from Hungarian into Russian.
Signature: /Molnár/"

Question: Please clarify your testimony regarding what role you played and how you assisted the activities of the occupying Hungarian forces!

Answer: I am compelled to admit that, as a Hungarian, my views were synonymous with the interests of Hungary. In order to strengthen the authority of the Royal Hungarian Honvéd Army occupying Transcarpathia, I did indeed conduct propaganda among the population.

Even under the Czechoslovak regime, as parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász, I educated my parishioners in national consciousness. I awakened in them an interest in national identity and unity. I reinforced the local population in the belief that we were living under Czechoslovak rule only temporarily and for a short duration. Furthermore, I reaffirmed my parishioners in the conviction that our region would soon be reunited with historical Hungary. I provided similar instruction among children as well, educating them to

[151] KTAL, Pásztor File 149252, The 10-page Pásztor Report dated April 13, 1949 (handwritten, pp. 81–90).

strengthen their national consciousness and to support the reunification of Transcarpathia.

Concurrently, in 1935, I succeeded in establishing an educational institution for Hungarian youth. In this school, I instructed the children and young people in the love of God and in ecclesiastical values.

I actively contributed to the consolidation of the power of the occupying Hungarian forces when they seized Carpatho-Ukraine.

My cooperation began with my participation in the ceremonial greeting organized in honour of the Hungarian Army in Beregszász from the very first day. On this significant day, I solemnly handed over to the army commander a Hungarian flag that I had kept. This flag, which dates back to the First World War, I had hidden in the church since 1918. I had kept this flag since 1918, after a Hungarian regiment was routed in a battle. In my own speech at the ceremonial event, after the handover of the flag, I assured the commander of the Army that we would provide every assistance to strengthen the authority of the occupying Hungarian forces in our district.

Question: We have interrogated the witnesses **László Czopf** and **Ernő Seffer** in this case, who confirmed that you welcomed the occupying Hungarian units within the framework of a ceremonial Holy Mass.

Answer: I am acquainted with the aforementioned witnesses, **László Czopf** and **Ernő Seffer**. I confirm their testimonies regarding the matters you have brought to my attention. Indeed, I welcomed the Hungarian Honvéd soldiers at the ceremonial event in November 1938, and it was on this occasion that I presented the Hungarian flag. However, I feel compelled to correct witness **Czopf's** testimony: the decoration currently in my possession was received by me in the year 1926 from a priest in Uzhhorod, by the name of **Bálint**[152], who currently resides in Romania.

Question: Please continue your testimony.

Answer: In 1942, by order of the Hungarian administration, an event was organized in the city of Beregszász where new Honvéd sol-

[152] This refers to **Bálint Magyar**, the parish priest of Uzhhorod.

diers were sworn in during a ceremonial oath-taking. At this event, as a representative of the Roman Catholic Church, I spoke and encouraged the local inhabitants to support the struggle of the Royal Hungarian Honvéd Army against the Soviet Red Army with every possible means.

Within the framework of Holy Masses, we prayed for the strengthening and support of the authority of the occupying Hungarian forces, as well as for the health of Governor Miklós Horthy and for the Fatherland.

To the best of my recollection, I participated in the organization of ceremonial events in Beregszász in 1940. The so-called 'Golden Train' brought the relic of our first **king, Saint Stephen**, the Holy Right Hand, to our city by rail. At this event, among other things, it was publicly stated that the anti-religious doctrines of communism are in opposition to the Church and to religion.

We organized this commemoration with my personal participation in order to strengthen the administrative authority of the occupying Hungarian forces.

In 1939, upon a proposal that I also supported, the internal security organs of the occupying Hungarian forces established a so-called *Verification Committee* in Beregszász, the majority of which consisted of local Hungarians, and of which I was a member, among others."

The mandate of this committee was to purge the schools of the Beregszász district of communists—individuals who, by their very nature, viewed the Hungarian authorities as enemies. Consequently, the so-called *Verification Committee* operated for approximately three to four months, during which we examined the cases of roughly 150 individuals. During our inspections, we identified a teacher at the local school who was known for his severity and lack of public esteem; unfortunately, I cannot recall his surname. He had previously served in the World War and had engaged in revolutionary activities in Hungary. Following these events, in order to escape investigation and conviction, he fled to Transcarpathia and assumed a teaching position. Due to his revolutionary past against Hungary, his teaching credentials were invalidated, and he was dismissed from his professional teaching

duties. He was subsequently sent to a labour camp for a period of time, where, based on witness testimony, he lost his life. In 1943, at a meeting of the Beregszász district committee, I was elected as a member of the regional committee by decree of the Hungarian government. In this capacity, I was responsible for the verification of information and the implementation of such audits. I assisted the local authorities in their operations and contributed to the consolidation of the power of the occupying Hungarian forces.

Question: Your cooperation and helpfulness did not end there. Tell the truth!

Answer: I have already told you everything about how I cooperated with the Hungarian occupation forces and authorities. I cannot add or expand anything to the testimony given.

Question: Do you know **Sándor Varga** and **Vilmos Posztelra**?

Answer: I am acquainted with **Vilmos Posztelra**, a resident of Beregszász, as a member of the local Roman Catholic community. To the best of my recollection, our cooperation was quite satisfactory. I do not recall **Sándor Varga**; I am not acquainted with him.

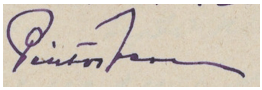
Question: According to the testimonies, Posztelra and Varga told of your collaboration with the occupying Hungarian forces. Do you confirm the testimony of these witnesses?

Answer: Based on the aforementioned, the witness testimonies of **Posztelra** and **Varga** are accurate; I did collaborate with the Hungarian occupying forces. However, I find that part of **Varga's** testimony unacceptable, in which he claims I spoke about citizen Horváth's police report regarding the burial of his daughter. No such hearing took place, and I had no connection whatsoever with the police.

The interrogation concluded at 16:30.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**

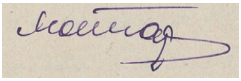


The interrogation was led by:

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



Second Lieutenant **Molnár,**
Interpreter, Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



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37.
00110-114
April 25, 1949, Kyiv – Interrogation Transcript of Defendant Ferenc Pásztor

(Handwritten text)[153]

Interrogation Transcript
Defendant: Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor

Date: April 25, 1949. Interrogation commenced at 11:00 p.m.

Pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, interpreter Molnár assumes criminal liability for the accuracy of the interpretation from Hungarian into Russian.

[153] KTAL, Pásztor File 149252, The 5-page Pásztor report dated April 25, 1949, handwritten, pp. 91–95

Signature: /Molnár/

Question: Who among the employees of the Hungarian public administration do you know personally?

Answer: I knew **Géza Szekeres** well, as well as **József Martoncsik**, who used the pseudonym **László Mécs;** I was familiar with him as a fellow priest through his literary and research activities, and I have maintained contact with him since 1926.

József Martoncsik was a Roman Catholic priest in Nagykapos, when I served in Dobóruszka. Then, as a result of the new state change, the border separated us. At that time, I was working in the neighbouring settlement. Despite this, we had the opportunity to talk publicly. **Martoncsik** sent descriptions of church ceremonies; at that time, publishing books and writing poems were not allowed. Since I am Hungarian, we managed to preserve and deal with religious values on our own. I performed the ceremonies in Hungarian, and I could speak to the believers in my native language. Then we were greeted by a period when the spread of national ideas and religious freedom were restricted. Despite this, we continued to strengthen Hungarian national self-awareness in order to get closer to each other.

In the following years, Martoncsik was transferred to Királyhelmec, but despite the greater distance, he often visited Beregszász at my invitation. During his stay, he participated in the ceremonies and also preached to the believers.

When the Hungarian troops occupied Subcarpathian Ukraine, **Martoncsik** came to Beregszász numerous times and stayed with me. As he was also of Hungarian nationality, we welcomed him in public as a welcome guest in the house of God; on these occasions, he had the opportunity to preach.

Question: In what activities did **Martoncsik** engage against the Soviet power?

Answer: As far as I know, Martoncsik did not engage in any anti-Soviet activities; furthermore, he did not express any hostile thoughts even in his sermons. I would like to add that the priest had conflicts with the **Hitler regime**. The situation was that the pastor lived on the territory of Czechoslovakia at the time, and during a pub-

lic event, he made disapproving remarks and expressed his opinion **about Hitler**, calling him a "*Mad, insane mutant*." [154] When the Kingdom of Hungary, under the governance of **Miklós Horthy**, formed an alliance with Hitler's Germany and fought against the Soviet Union, the Germans wanted to arrest him and hold him accountable for his previous statements. However, he was under the protection of Hungary and Governor **Miklós Horthy**, based on **Martoncsik's** previous merits and his achievements in preserving Hungarian national values; he was fortunate, and the Germans did not deport him.

Question: And where are the pro-Nazi Hungarians currently staying?

Answer: I have no knowledge of that. However, I heard that when the Red Army launched its offensive in the Balkans in 1944, **Martoncsik** automatically remained in the East and is currently living abroad.[155]

Question: How did you maintain contact with Martoncsik after Subcarpathia was annexed by the Soviet Union?

Answer: After Subcarpathia was annexed by the Soviet Union, my opportunity to maintain contact with **Martoncsik** was completely severed. I subsequently tried to re-establish contact with the priest through our mutual acquaintances in Hungary, but my attempts were unsuccessful.

Interrogation ended at 2:00 a.m.

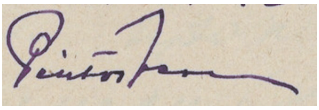
I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

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[154] **László Mécs** served as the editor-in-chief of the periodical *Vigilia* from 1941 to 1942. In January 1942, his poem "Prayer for the Great Lunatic" was published in the journal. According to numerous subsequent interpretations, including the *Hungarian Biographical Encyclopedia*, it was an anti-Hitler poem, and criminal proceedings were initiated against Mécs following its publication.

[155] After 1945, **László Méc**s—also known as József Martoncsik—lived in seclusion with friends and relatives in Csorna and Pannonhalma.

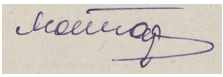
Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**



The interrogation was led by:
Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



Second Lieutenant **Molnár,**
Interpreter, Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



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38.
00115-118
May 11, 1949, Kyiv– Interrogation Transcript of Defendant Ferenc Pásztor

(Handwritten text)[156]

Interrogation Transcript
Defendant: Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor

[156] KTAL, Pásztor File 149252, 4-page Pásztor report dated May 12, 1949, handwritten, pp. 96–99.

Date: May 11, 1949. Interrogation commenced at 2:00 p.m.

Pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, interpreter Molnár assumes criminal liability for the accuracy of the interpretation from Hungarian into Russian.
Signature: /Molnár/"

"**Question:** During the house search, among other items, we confiscated two books written in Hungarian and published in Budapest. The title of one is *Világnézeti válaszok* ('Worldview Answers') by **Béla Bangha**[157], and the other is *Én magyar vagyok!* ('I Am Hungarian!') by **Donát Szilvási**. To whom did these books actually belong?

Answer: Following my arrest, a house search was conducted, and the aforementioned books were in my possession. I received these publications in 1948 from my late friend, **János Mackó** of Beregszász.

Question: What do these books contain?

Answer: Unfortunately, I am not familiar with the contents of the books.

Question: It is not clear to me; I do not understand how he could possess publications whose contents he has no idea about.

Answer: When I received these books, I did not pay any particular attention to them. Subsequently, due to other, more important occupations, I was unable to read them.

Question: The investigating authority has examined the contents of the aforementioned books; both works are anti-Soviet in nature and are replete with passages that oppose Soviet power. Can you confirm this?

Answer: During the investigation, I have indeed familiarized myself with the contents of these two books, and I can confirm that these books possess anti-Soviet content.

[157] **Béla Bangha**, S.J. (Nyitra, November 16, 1880 – Budapest, April 30, 1940): missionary, editor, and writer. His book *Világnézeti válaszok* (Answers to Worldview Questions) was published in Budapest in 1940.

Question: Do you admit your guilt for keeping these books in your possession?

Answer: Yes, I admit my guilt for having possessed publications containing anti-Soviet materials.

Question: The investigating authority is in possession of a copy of the 19th issue of the newspaper Kárpátlaja from 1941, in which they write about Pásztor as an active helper of the Hungarian troops. Is this article about you? (The article is shown to the accused during interrogation).

Answer: I have examined the article from *Kárpátalja* presented by the investigating authority, and I confirm that this article refers to **Ferenc Pásztor**, the Papal Prelate. Furthermore, the administration of the former Bereg County sent a congratulatory telegram through the newspaper to Prime Minister **László Bárdossy**,[158]in which I was indeed mentioned as a person who contributed significantly to strengthening the power of the Hungarian troops.

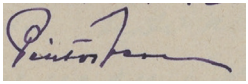
Question: We present to you a typewritten document numbered 2. 400/1939 in Hungarian. Please tell us the significance of this document.

Answer: The document you presented, No 2. 400 / 1939, is a resolution from the Deputy Prime Minister of Hungary, in which I was appointed as a member of the so-called Verification Committee on April 18, 1939, tasked with purging schools of teachers with communist views.

The interrogation ended at 4:00 p.m.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**

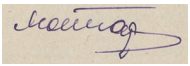


[158] **László Bárdossy** (Szombathely, December 10, 1890 – Budapest, January 10, 1946) was a Hungarian diplomat, politician, and Prime Minister. Term of office: April 3, 1941 – March 7, 1942.

The interrogation was led by:
Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



Second Lieutenant **Molnár,**
Interpreter, Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



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39.
00119-103
May 12, 1949, Kyiv – Interrogation Transcript of Defendant Ferenc Pásztor

(Handwritten text)[159]

Interrogation Transcript
Defendant: Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor
Date: May 12, 1949. Interrogation started: 2:00 p.m.

Pursuant to Article 89 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, interpreter Molnár assumes criminal liability for the accuracy of the interpretation from Hungarian into Russian.
Signature: /Molnár/

[159] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, „The 3-page Pásztor report dated May 12, 1949, handwritten," pp. 100–103.

Question: In what do you admit your guilt?

Answer: I plead guilty to the fact that, having lived in Transcarpathian Ukraine during the Czechoslovak era, I actively participated in the activities of the *Hungarian National Party*, and then, from 1939, of the Party of *Hungarian Life*,[160] the government party, which also stood

[160] The **Party of Hungarian Life** (*Magyar Élet Pártja* – MÉP) was the dominant governing party in Hungary from 1939 to 1945. It was not a new organization but rather a reorganization and renaming of the previous governing party, the National Unity Party (NEP). Historical Context and Significance: **Continuity:** The party evolved from the „Unity Party" founded in 1922, which served as the primary tool for consolidation during the István Bethlen era. The series of name changes (Unity Party $\rightarrow$ National Unity Party $\rightarrow$ Party of Hungarian Life) mirrored the party's ideological shift from conservative-liberal roots toward a more radical, nationalist, and increasingly right-wing orientation. **The 1939 Elections:** The party achieved a landslide victory in the 1939 parliamentary elections, securing 183 seats and an absolute majority in the National Assembly. This marked the peak of its political power. **Ideology:** The party promoted the ideology of „national unity," which centered on the Christian-national course, anti-communism, and revisionist foreign policy (the reclamation of territories lost under the Treaty of Trianon). From the late 1930s, the party was increasingly influenced by antisemitic and pro-German sentiments, although internal factions—led by figures like Pál Teleki—attempted to maintain Hungary's sovereignty. **Leadership:** The party was led by the Prime Ministers of the era, most notably **Pál Teleki**, **László Bárdossy**, and **Miklós Kállay**. In 1940, a radical pro-Nazi faction led by Béla Imrédy broke away from the party to form the „Party of Hungarian Revival." **The End of the Party:** Following the German occupation of Hungary on March 19, 1944, the party's autonomy was effectively destroyed. Key figures were arrested or deported by the Nazis. The party was finally abolished on February 26, 1945, by the Provisional National Government as part of a decree banning all fascist-aligned organizations. **In summary: The Party of Hungarian Lif**e (MÉP) is most frequently characterized by historical scholarship as a conservative-authoritarian party; it was not a Nazi party. The Soviet prosecution, as seen in the case of Ferenc Pásztor, did not use the terms ‚fascist' and ‚Nazi' as precise political categories. For them, the MÉP, the Arrow Cross Party, and all preceding governing parties were equally ‚fascist,' regardless of whether a politician held conservative-Christian or radical far-right views. In their view, membership in the MÉP was in itself sufficient grounds to be branded a servant of the ‚fascist regime.' Historically, the MÉP

for the interests of the Highlanders. The aim of our party was to promote the re-annexation of the Transcarpathian lands to the Kingdom of Hungary. At that time, as a Roman Catholic priest, I taught young people to love their country and to have Hungarian national consciousness.

After the Hungarian troops had taken Transcarpathia, I personally participated in strengthening the local Hungarian power. I participated directly in organizing a festive event in honour of the entry of the Hungarian army. At that event, I handed over a flag that I had kept hidden for a long time. I also consider myself guilty of participating in the work of a committee established by the Hungarian state, the purpose of which was to strengthen Hungarian power in Transcarpathia.

For my active participation, the Kingdom of Hungary awarded me the *National Defence Cross*.

Furthermore, when Transcarpathia was annexed to the Soviet Union, I expressed my protest among my fellow priests, and I particularly opposed the merger of the Uniate Church[161] with the Pravoslav (Orthodox)faith. I also admit my guilt in that I was engaged in the religious instruction of children in our church."

Furthermore, I admit to maintaining illegal contact with Bishop **János Scheffler**, who lives in Romania, whom I constantly informed about the situation of our church under the rule of Soviet power. I also admit my guilt in informing the Bishop Father about the circumstances of the innocent conviction and persecution of our fellow priests, initiated by the Soviet authorities. Based on the aforementioned, I admit my guilt. Furthermore, I also admit my guilt in possessing books with anti-Soviet content. The publications titled **Bangha**:

---

was not merely a political organization, but the administrative and power-political backbone of the Horthy era. During the conviction of Ferenc Pásztor, the fact that he was a member of a commission with such government backing (such as the aforementioned Verification Commission) served as ‚evidence' for the Soviet prosecution of his collaboration with the regime.

[161] **The Eastern Catholic Churches** (or the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church), also known as Unitus, Uniate or Uniate churches, are independent (in Latin suiiuris, meaning „in their own right") particular churches in complete unity with the Pope of Rome as the successor of Saint Peter.

Worldview Answers and **Szilvási**: *I Am Hungarian!* were seized during my arrest.

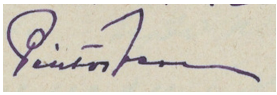
Question: With what would you like to supplement your testimony?

Answer: I do not want to add anything to my testimony.

The interrogation ended at 3:00 p.m.

I read the interrogation transcript based on the Hungarian translation, and the text recorded in the transcript is an authentic representation of my answers.

Own signature: **Ferenc Pásztor**

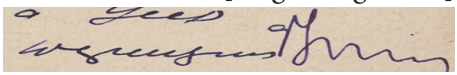


The interrogation was led by:

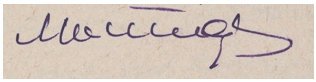
Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



Deputy Prosecutor of the Ukrainian SSR. [Illegible signature]



Second Lieutenant **Molnár,**
Interpreter, Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.



3.6. INDICTMENT

The indictments created in the case of the vicar, who was placed in investigative detention in Uzhhorod and then in Kyiv, convincingly prove that the KGB investigators – for the sake of consolidating Soviet power in Transcarpathia and in its blinded defence – were generated by subjective motives for their act. In the case of the vicar, their main goal was to tear him away from and remove him from his community. With the show trial charges brought against him, they wanted to set an example using the relevant paragraph of the Ukrainian Criminal Code. Therefore, all their efforts qualify as fear-inducing political retaliation, specifically directed against Catholics.

According to the testimony of the investigative documents, they considered it necessary that the vicar, who was deeply respected by the people, be judged at the highest level by a military tribunal on charges of anti-Sovietism.

In order to establish a strict punishment, a multi-stage – county, republican, national – indictment motion was written by KGB officers.

***

Document No. 40, dated March 9, 1949, in Uzhhorod, was authored by Major ***Yeremichev***, Senior Investigative Officer of the 4th Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Office of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR. He was the first to issue a decree on the preliminary indictment in the case of ***Ferenc Pásztor***, one paragraph of which reads as follows: "he must be held criminally liable under the second sub-point of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR.

His superior: Lieutenant Colonel **Aksyonov**, head of the Uzhhorod investigative department, confirmed the Decree with his signature. The accused, **Ferenc Pásztor**, languishing in the Uzhhorod prison – surely under the weight of coercive circumstances – having acknowledged the indictment Decree which multi-sidedly highlighted his anti-Soviet activity, also signed it.

***

According to Uzhhorod document No. 41, dated March 15, 1949, the aforementioned Major **Yeremichev**, in agreement with Lieutenant Colonel **Aksyonov**, issued an order based on the vicar's testimony regarding the investigation of pastors "***Lajos Károly, József Galambos, Bálint Szólics, Vencel Baranyai, János Sörös, Dezső Árvay,***" because they "engaged in anti-Soviet activity" in connection with their condemnation of the local events of the "Communist Party" and "Soviet power." Furthermore, they provide the 'full investigative material of file no. 2230 for the conduct of a separate investigation.

***

After two weeks of exhausting, daily, nightly interrogations in the Uzhhorod prison, the interrogating officer made the following report: *"Ferenc Pásztor has not yet made a sincere confession regarding his anti-Soviet activity and his foreign connections; therefore, it is still necessary to interrogate him. We designate the prison of the Kyiv State Security Organs as the next phase of the interrogations."* [162]

Based on the cited note, Decree No. 42, typed on March 16–17, 1949, states that, based on the instruction No. 32310 dated February 25, 1949, of Brigadier General **Yezipenko**, Deputy Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, Major **Yeremichev**—with the confirming signature of Colonel **Chernicky**, head of the Transcarpathian Regional Office of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR—transferred file no. 2230, which forms an integral part of the Pásztor file, to the Kyiv colleagues for further investigation.

***

Decree No. 43, typed on March 17, 1949 (referenced as No. 44), took into account the instruction No. 32310 dated February 25, 1949, of Deputy Minister Brigadier General **Yezipenko**, based on which

[162] Source: http://regi.mindszenty.katolikus.hu/vh57/57_1.html (Accessed: July 20, 2024.)

Major **Yeremichev** initiated—with the approval of his superior, Colonel **Aksyonov,** and the confirming signature of Colonel **Chernicky**, head of the Transcarpathian Regional Office—the 'arrestee transfer of **Ferenc Pásztor**, and his further detention under guard in the Kyiv MGB Ukrainian SSR internal prison.

***

According to document No. 44, dated March 28, 1949, the file regarding **Ferenc Pásztor** related to investigation No. 149252 was transferred to Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov** in Kyiv, the deputy head of the 1st investigative division of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, who, in the company of Major **Yeremichev**, had previously participated in the interrogation of the accused in the Uzhhorod prison.

According to the decree in question by Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov**, "until the conclusion of the investigation, the accused shall remain in investigative detention in the MGB prison of the Ukrainian SSR (...)." At the same time, he declared that he would transfer the investigative material of file No. 149252 to his own jurisdiction in order to conduct the further investigation subsequently.

***

According to document No. 45, dated April 20–22, 1949, Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov** continued the investigation with full authority at the Kyiv headquarters of the KGB. I note that I have already reported on this above (see subsection 3.6: 'In the prison of the Kyiv state security organs'). With the assistance of interpreter Second Lieutenant **Molnár**, he interrogated **Ferenc Pásztor** nine times, and reports were made of these.

During the administration, the lieutenant colonel thought he was running out of time. Therefore, he needed more time for the full investigation of the circumstances of the crimes committed by the accused, however, the deadline for closing the investigation would expire on

May 1, 1949. Adhering to the regulations of the procedural order, with the confirming cooperation of his superior, Deputy Minister of State Security **Yezipenko**, and with the support of Colonel **Cepkov**, head of the 1st investigative division, he turned to the Prosecutor General of the Ukrainian SSR with an appeal request to authorize the extension of the investigative detention of the arrested accused by one month—until June 1, 1949.

***

According to document No. 46, dated May 11, 1949, Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov**, with the support of Colonel **Cepkov**, requests the permission of his superiors to freely access the confiscated material evidence—which, so to speak, supports the anti-Sovietism directed against **Pásztor**. Among those listed by him are:

1.) During the arrest, books with anti-Soviet content—*Világnézeti válaszok* (Answers to Worldview Questions) by **Béla Bangha** and *Én magyar vagyok!* (I Am Hungarian!) by **Donát Szilvási**—were seized from the defendant, **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**.

2.) Photographs in which Pásztor is speaking in front of a microphone and greeting the Hungarian occupying forces.

3.) Document No. 2400/1939, in which the Hungarian authorities appoint **Pásztor** as a member of the so-called *Verification Committee*.

4.) Newspapers: issue no. 19 of *Kárpátalja*, published on May 19, 1941, and issue no. 48, published on December 7, 1941, which wrote about **Ferenc Pásztor** and his active cooperation provided in favor of the occupying Hungarian troops.

5.) **Pásztor's** active cooperation and assistance to the Hungarian occupying forces were rewarded with the *National Defence Cross*."

According to the lieutenant colonel's justification: 'The above-mentioned books, documents, and decoration are to be attached as material evidence to case No. 149252, with which Pásztor's crime can be exposed. (The pieces of evidence are attached in a separate package.)"

***

In document No. 47, dated May 11, 1949, Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov** draws the attention of his superiors to the fact that, "in certain documents, at the time of **Pásztor's** arrest, his date of birth was incorrectly indicated as 1881. In fact, he was born in 1880. (...) Corrections should be made in the above-mentioned documents, for the correct date of birth of **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** is 1880.'"

***

Document No. 48, dated May 12, 1949, is also a "Report on the Conclusion of the Investigation.' In the text handwritten on the KGB form, it can be read that Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov** classifies the 'preliminary investigation' in the case of the accused as closed. According to him, "the processed data are sufficient, pursuant to Article 206 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, to be handed over to the higher command; we have informed the accused of the aforementioned, and have acquainted him with the investigative material. (...)"

Defendant **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** stated the following about the investigative material:

"I have fully familiarized myself with the investigative material and the details of my case; however, I do not wish to change my statement, and I cannot provide any further information. Signature of the accused: [Signed] (**Ferenc Pásztor**)"

The other signatories of the record are: Investigator **Kharitanov, Utina,** Deputy Prosecutor of Ukraine, and **Molnár**, interpreter.

***

Document No. 49, dated May 4, 1949, is a 'Certificate of the medical examination of the accused. "This is also a text handwritten on a KGB form."

It is signed and certified by Krukova, the Chief Physician of Prison No. 1 of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR: "During the examination, it was determined that he is healthy. He is fit for physical labour.

He has passed the medical examinations and treatment at the VT (Internal Prison) Department of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR and is ready for transfer."

***

Document No. 50, dated May 11, 1949, is an Indictment prepared for the special session of the KGB Tribunal seated in Moscow, which was compiled by Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov** with the support of his superior, Colonel **Cepkov**. Its contents were confirmed by the signature of Lieutenant General **Savchenko**, Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR. The three-page typewritten Indictment, referring to investigative file No. 149252, itemizes the crimes committed by the accused, **Ferenc Pásztor**, based on Article 54-4 and the second paragraph of Article 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR.

The preamble of the document explicitly states that the vicar engaged in anti-Soviet activities within his environment, particularly regarding the consolidation of the power of the "Hungarian troops occupying" Transcarpathia between 1938 and 1944; therefore, the Transcarpathian investigative authority of the KGB arrested him on March 1, 1949, and initiated criminal proceedings against him. Subsequently, in the final stage of the investigation, senior officers of the investigative department of the KGB's Kyiv state security service also joined in the interrogations. The accused was transferred to the prison in the capital, interrogated on numerous occasions, and they are the authors of the final version of the Indictment.

Below, we quote from the list of charges in the Indictment:

"1.) Between 1933 and 1941, he was a member and later a district deputy of the "neo-fascist" *Hungarian National Party*. Subsequently, as a result of the party merging with the far-right *Party of Hungarian Life*, he continued his activities within that framework, with his primary goal being to detach Transcarpathia from Czechoslovakia and annex it to Hungary. See the relevant investigative material in the file: pp. 21–26, 38, 100.

2.) **Pásztor** actively participated in the consolidation of the 'occupying fascist power' in the Berehove (Beregszász) district; among other things, he participated in the work of the Verification Committee established by the Hungarian government, where communists among the local population were persecuted and harassed. He took part in organizing public mass demonstrations, where he urged the local population not to support the occupying Red Army and called upon the people to fight against the Soviet Union. (See relevant pages: 28–31, 39–41, 69–74, 81–90, 101.)

3.) For his active cooperation and assistance, the Hungarian state awarded **Ferenc Pásztor** the *National Defence Cross* in 1941. (See pp. 28, 101.)

4.) When the liberating army expelled the Hungarian occupation forces from the territory of Transcarpathia, **Pásztor** continued his anti-Soviet activities. He primarily engaged in anti-Soviet agitation among close friends and acquaintances.

Pásztor maintained an illegal connection with Bishop **Scheffler**, who was living in Romania at the time, and provided him with continuous information regarding the situation of the Roman Catholic Church under Soviet rule. (See pp. 31–34, 55–74, 102.)

5.) During the arrest, law enforcement agencies seized books containing anti-Soviet material. (See pp. 96–99, 103.)

6.) ...Pásztor admitted his guilt (see pp. 37–42); the fact of the defendant's guilt in the case was further corroborated by the testimonies of **Czopf, Pásztor** (a typo in the surname, correctly: Pasztler – Ed.), and other witnesses (see pp. 104–137), as well as the material evidence attached as an annex."

The petitioners of the Indictment explicitly stated that **Ferenc Pásztor** "is guilty in the case in question based on the above-mentioned facts." According to their conclusion, "the commission of the crime is governed by Articles 54-4 and the second paragraph of Article 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR." They judged that the accused's file, No. 149252, which contains cumulative crimes, "is to be forwarded to the session of the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR." They proposed

that the accused be sentenced to "25 years" with "total confiscation of property." "He must serve his sentence in a forced-labour corrective camp."

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov** also attached a Certificate to the aforementioned Indictment regarding the accused, who "is being held in the internal prison facility of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR. The evidence has been attached to the case file as an annex."

On June 21, 1949, **Kharitanov** wrote the following lines on the back of the third page of the Indictment: "The case file was submitted to a meeting of the Special Council of the USSR Ministry of State Security."

***

Document No. 51, dated May 13–16, 1949, a typewritten Resolution submitted by Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov**, with the "confirmation" of his superior, Colonel **Cepkov**, and the approval of the Ukrainian KGB Minister, Brigadier General **Savchenko**, contains the determination of the place of execution of the sentence. After "the preliminary investigation and all phases of the investigation were concluded," it is ordered, among other things, that the accused "serve his sentence in a special labour camp of the MVD of the USSR."

***

Resolution No. 52, dated May 23, 1949, was authored by **Utina**, Assistant Legal Counsellor to the Prosecutor of the Ukrainian SSR, and approved by **S. Sugorov**, Deputy Prosecutor of the Ukrainian SSR, Counsellor of Justice 3rd Class. Referring to the crimes committed by **Ferenc Pásztor**, it was declared that sufficient evidence was available to refer the case to the competent court, and the defendant's continued pre-trial detention was confirmed.

On this occasion, the investigative file was forwarded "to the session of the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR; proposed sentence: 25 years, to be served in a forced-la-

bour camp." They requested that their superiors accept the submitted proposal.

***

The miscellaneous documents Nos 40–52 related to the indictment follow in my literal translation, based on the original texts.

40.
00055
March 9, 1949, Uzhgorod – Decision on the (preliminary) indictment

(Typewritten text)[163]

"APPROVED" Lieutenant Colonel **Aksyonov** Head of the Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, signature: [signed] March 9, 1949	DECISION / on indictment / March 9, 1949, Uzhhorod

I, Major **Yeremichev**, Head of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have reviewed the investigative file No. 2230, in which **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** is held criminally liable as a resident of Transcarpathian Ukraine on the following grounds: he was an active accomplice to the military command of the Hungarian troops occupying Transcarpathia, and conducted active educational

[163] KTAL, Pásztor File 149252, document dated March 9, 1949, 1 page, [original, typewritten text], 36.

and agitational work to strengthen the fascist power of the occupiers in the territory of Transcarpathian Ukraine.

After Transcarpathia was annexed to the Ukrainian SSR, until the very last moment, he engaged in anti-Soviet activity among the local population, which was directed against the Soviet regime. Furthermore, he kept publications of anti-Soviet content in his home.

Pursuant to Articles 126 and 127 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, it is hereby

RESOLVED

Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor is to be held criminally liable pursuant to Articles 54-4 and the second paragraph of Article 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR. A copy of this decision shall be sent to the accused as a registered mailing, who shall acknowledge receipt of the document with his signature.

A duplicate of the decision shall be sent to the regional prosecutor's office, and another copy to the Investigation Department "A" of the Transcarpathian Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

Major Yeremichev,
Commander of the 4th Investigation Department
of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Signed in own hand.

Accused: **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**
Own signature.

***

41.
000159
March 15, 1949, Uzhgorod – Decision on initiating separate proceedings in the investigative case

(Typewritten text)[164]

„APPROVED" Lieutenant Colonel Aksyonov, Head of the Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR. Signature: [signed] March 15, 1949	DECISION / On initiating separate proceedings in the investigative case / March 15, 1949, Uzhhorod.

I, Major **Yeremichev**, Senior Investigative Officer of the 4th Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have examined the investigative file No. 2230 of the accused **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**, pursuant to Article 54-4 and the second paragraph of Article 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, regarding—

BASED ON ESTABLISHED FACTS

Based on Pásztor's testimony, the following persons fall under investigation: **Károly Lajos, Galambos József, Szólics Bálint, Baranyai Vencel, Sörös János, Árvay Dezső,** as they pursued anti-Soviet activity in connection with the condemnation of communist events organized by the Soviet power.

We determine that in connection with the above-mentioned individuals, the investigative material does not possess enough evidence, therefore, pursuant to Article 114 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR—

[164] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, Document dated March 15, 1949, 1 p., original, typescript, p. 138.

I DETERMINE

that based on the above-mentioned names, for the separate conduct of the investigation, the complete investigative file of case number 2230 must be provided.

Major Yeremichev,
Commander of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Own signature.

***

42.
000160.
March 16-17, 1949, Uzhgorod – Decision on the Transfer of Investigative Case File No. 2230

(Typewritten text)[165]

„APPROVED" Head of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, Colonel Chernicky, (signed) March 17, 1949	DECISION /On the transfer of investigative case file No. 2230/ March 16, 1949, Uzhhorod

I, Major **Yeremichev**, Senior Investigator of the 4th Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have reviewed the investigative material of case file No. 2230 regarding the accused: **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**, under the second paragraph of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR.

[165] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated March 16–17, 1949, 1 page, original, typewritten text, p. 139.

I DETERMINE

Based on the directive of Comrade Brigadier General Yezipenko, Deputy Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, dated February 25, 1949, No. 32310 –

ORDER

On the transfer of the investigative file No. 2230 of the accused Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor to the Investigation Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR for further investigation.

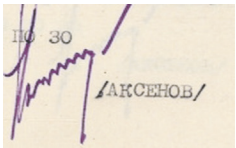
A copy of the decision shall be sent for information to the Regional Prosecutor's Office and the Investigation Department "A" of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

Major Yeremichev,
Commander of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Signed in own hand.



Concur:

Lieutenant Colonel **Aksenov**,
Senior Investigator of the
Investigative Department of the Transcarpathian
Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security
of the Ukrainian SSR,



***

43.
000161.
March 17, 1949, Uzhhorod – Decision on the transfer of an arrested person

(Typewritten text) [166]

„APPROVED" Colonel Chernicky, Head of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, (signed) March 17, 1949	DECISION /On the transfer of the detainee/ March 17, 1949, Uzhhorod

I, Major **Yeremichev**, Senior Investigator of the 4th Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have reviewed the investigative material of case file No. 2230 regarding the accused: **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**, under the second paragraph of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Ukrainian SSR.

I DETERMINE

Based on the directive of Comrade Brigadier General **Yezipenko**, Deputy Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, dated February 25, 1949, No. 32310 –

DECISION

the transfer of the detainee **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** and his further detention in custody at the internal prison of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR in Kyiv.

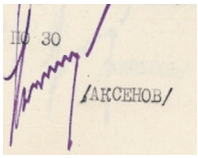
A copy of this decision shall be sent for information to the Regional Prosecutor's Office and to the 'A' Investigative Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

[166] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated March 17, 1949, 1 page, original, typewritten text, p. 140.

Major Yeremichev,
Commander of the 4th Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Own signature.



Concur:
.
Lieutenant Colonel **Aksenov**,
Senior Investigator of the Investigative Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR,



***

44.
00161
March 28, 1949, Kiev (BE-5). – Decree
/on taking over the processing of the case file under its own authority/

(Typewritten text)[167]

I, Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov**, Deputy Head of the 1st Investigative Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian

[167] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated March 28, 1949, original, 1 page, typewritten, p. 48.

SSR, have examined the investigative case file No. 149252 regarding **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**. The accused is implicated in the commission of a crime under the second paragraph of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR.

WE DETERMINE

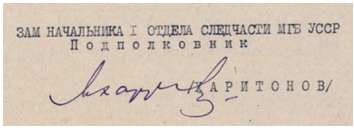
Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor was arrested on March 1, 1949, by the investigative department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR; until the conclusion of the investigation, the accused shall remain in investigative custody in the prison of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR.

Taking into consideration Article 108 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, for the purpose of the full uncovering of the crimes of the accused, further investigative measures must be carried out.

DECISION

I hereby accept the investigative materials of case file No. 149252 regarding the accused **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** into my own jurisdiction and shall conduct the further investigation henceforth.

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



***

45.
162–163
April 21–22, 1949, Kiev – Decree on the extension of the investigative period and the remand of the accused in custody

(Typewritten text) [168]

„APPROVED" Ezipenko, Deputy Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, signature: [s.k. / m.p.] April 22, 1949, Kyiv.	ORDER /on the extension of the investigative period and the remand of the accused in custody/ April 21, 1949, Kyiv

I, Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov**, Deputy Head of the 1st Investigative Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have examined the investigative case file No. 149252 regarding the accused **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**, born in 1880 in Uzhhorod, a citizen of the USSR, of Hungarian nationality, with higher theological education, a clergyman, and parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Berehove. Due to the facts of the committed crimes, he is guilty under the second paragraph of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR in the following charges,

I DETERMINE

Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor was arrested on March 1, 1949, by the investigative authorities of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR for anti-Soviet activities; the 1st Investigative Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR is conducting a sequential investigation until the conclusion of the case.

The investigative authority has established that the accused was, in the recent past, an active member of the fascist *Hungarian National Party*. Within this framework, he carried out activities aimed at seced-

[168] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated April 21–22, 1949, original, 1 page, typewritten, pp. 141–142.

ing the territory of Transcarpathia from Czechoslovakia and annexing it to Hungary.

From the first day of the occupation of Transcarpathian Ukraine, **Pásztor** actively participated in consolidating the power of the Hungarian fascist troops; he joined the work of the local Verification Commission in Berehove, established by the Hungarian authorities against the communists, and incited the local population to fight against the occupying Red Army.

For his active cooperation during the Hungarian occupation, the Hungarian state awarded **Pásztor** with the *National Defence Cross* in 1941.

After the occupying Hungarian troops were driven out of Transcarpathia, **Ferenc Pásztor** continued to engage in anti-Soviet activities among the local population.

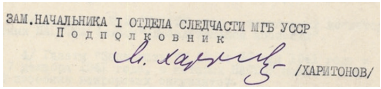
Considering the content of the investigative materials, more time is required for the full uncovering of the circumstances of the crimes committed by **Ferenc Pásztor**; however, the deadline for the conclusion of the investigation expires on May 1, 1949. Pursuant to Articles 113 and 157 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, I hereby order

DECISION

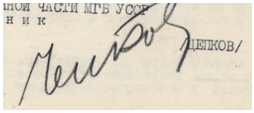
A petition shall be submitted to the Prosecutor General of the Ukrainian SSR to extend the investigative custody of the accused, ***Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor***, by one month, until June 1, 1949.

This is the first time such a petition is being submitted.

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



Concur:
Colonel **Tsepkov**,
Head of the 1st Investigative Department
of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR,
Signature: [m.p.]



***

46.
00164-165
May 11, 1949, Kiev (BE-3). – Decree granting access to the material evidence pertaining to the case

(Typewritten text)[169]

BE-3, "APPROVED" Colonel **Tsepkov**, Head of the Investigative Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, signature: [m.p.] May 11, 1949	ORDER /Granting access to material evidence pertaining to the case/ Kyiv, May 11, 1949

I, Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov**, Deputy Head of the Investigative Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have examined the investigative case file No. 149252 regarding the accused **FerencIvanovich Pásztor**, who is charged with committing crimes under the second paragraph of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR.

I DETERMINE:

[169] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated May 11, 1949, original, 2-page typewritten text, pp. 143–143a.

1.) During the time of the arrest, the following items were seized from the accused, **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** : the book "Worldview Answers" (Világnézeti válaszok) by **Béla Bangha**, and the book "I am Hungarian!" (Én magyar vagyok!) by **Donát Szilvási**, both containing anti-Soviet content.

2.) Photographs showing **Pásztor** speaking at a microphone and welcoming the Hungarian occupying troops.

3.) Document dated 2400/1939, in which the command of the occupying Hungarian troops appoints **Pásztor** as a member of the so-called Verification Commission.

4.) Newspapers: the *Kárpáti Híradó (Carpathian Gazette*), issue No. 19 dated May 19, 1941, and issue No. 48 dated December 7, 1941, containing articles about **Ferenc Pásztor** and his active cooperation for the benefit of the occupying Hungarian troops.

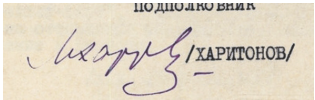
5.) The *National Defence Cross (Nemzetvédelmi Kereszt)* award, which was granted in recognition of **Pásztor's** active cooperation and assistance to the Hungarian occupying troops.

Taking the above into account, the named documents, books, and the decoration reveal the anti-Soviet activities committed by **Pásztor**, which he carried out for the benefit of the Hungarian occupying troops in Transcarpathia; therefore, the [decision/order] rendered...

DECISION

Pursuant to the above, the aforementioned books, documents, and the decoration shall be attached to case file No. 149252 as material evidence, which serves to expose Pásztor's criminal activities. (The evidence is attached in a separate package.)

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



***

47.
00166.
May 11, 1949, Kiev – Decree
Regarding the incorrectly stated date of birth of the accused

(Typewritten text)[170]

I, Lieutenant Colonel **Haritanov**, Deputy Head of the Investigation Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have reviewed the investigation file No. 149252 of the accused **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**, who is charged with committing a crime under Articles 54-4 and 54-10, paragraph 2, of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR.

I DETERMINE

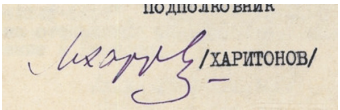
In certain documents, when **Pásztor** was arrested, his date of birth was incorrectly indicated — 1881, in fact he was born in 1880.

Based on the above, I have rendered the [following decision]—

DECISION

In the aforementioned documents, the corrections must be implemented, and the correct date of birth of Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztoris the year 1880.

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



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[170] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated May 11, 1949, original, 1-page typewritten text, p. 144.

48.
00167
May 12, 1949, Kiev – Record of the completion of the investigation

(Handwritten text on the form)[171]

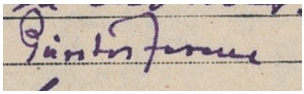
I, Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov**, Deputy Head of the Investigative Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have examined the investigative case file of the accused **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor,** who has committed a crime under the second paragraph of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR.

The preliminary investigation is hereby considered closed; pursuant to Article 206 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, the processed data is sufficient to be forwarded to the higher authorities. The accused has been informed of the aforementioned, the investigative file has been disclosed to him, and I have inquired whether the accused wishes to add anything further to the established facts.

The accused, **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**, testified the following regarding the investigative file:

I have fully acquainted myself with the investigative file and the details of my case; however, I do not wish to alter my previously given testimony, and I have no further information to provide.

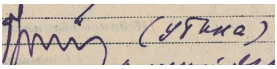
Signature of the accused: s.k. (**Ferenc Pásztor**)



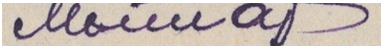
Investigator **Kharitanov:**
Signature: (signed)

[171] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated May 12, 1949, original, 1-page text handwritten on a standard form, p. 145.

Utina,
Deputy Prosecutor of the Ukrainian SSR,
Signature: (signed)



Molnár,
Russian-Hungarian Interpreter,
Signature: (signed)



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49.
00168
May 4, 1949, Kiev– Certificate of medical forensic examination of the accused

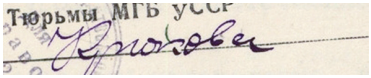
(Handwritten text on the form)[172]

Medical forensic examination of the accused. Ferenc Pásztor (Ivanovich), born in 1880; it was determined during the examination that he is in good health.

He is fit for physical labour.

He has passed medical examinations and treatment at the MGB VT Department of the Ukrainian SSR and is ready for transfer.

Krukova,
Physician No. 1 of the MGB Prison of the Ukrainian SSR,
Signature: (signed)



***

[172] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated May 4, 1949, original, 1-page text handwritten on a standard form, 146.

50.

169–172
May 11, 1949, Kiev – Indictment for the session of the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR

(Typewritten text) [173]

„APPROVED" Lieutenant General Savchenko, Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, Signature: (signed) May 11, 1949	Reviewed and transferred to the jurisdiction of the investigative authorities of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR; I concur with the proposed form of execution of the sentence.

STATEMENT OF CHARGES

According to the investigation file No. 149252, the accused **Ferenc Ivanovics Pásztor** is to be chargedwith a crime under Article 54-4 and the second paragraph of Article 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR.

Based on the investigative material transferred to the Transcarpathian investigative authority of the MGB, he actively collaborated for the benefit of the occupying Hungarian forces, and **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** engaged in anti-Soviet activities. Based on this, he was arrested on March 1, 1949, and criminal proceedings were initiated against him.

The investigative authority determined that between 1933 and 1941, **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** was a member and later a district deputy of the neo-fascist *Hungarian National Party*. Subsequently, as a result, the party merged with the far-right Party of *Hungarian Life*, within the framework of which he operated, with the primary goal of detaching Transcarpathia from Czechoslovakia and annexing it to Hungary.

[173] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated May 11, 1949, original, 3-page typewritten text, pp. 147–149, 149a.

/see pp. 21–26, 38, 100/

From the very first day when the Hungarian troops entered the territory of Transcarpathian Ukraine, **Pásztor** actively participated in strengthening the occupying fascist power in the Berehove district; among other things, he participated in the work of the *Verification Committee* established by the Hungarian government, where communists were humiliated and persecuted among the local population. He participated in the organization of public mass demonstrations, where he called upon the local population not to support the occupying Red Army, and called upon the population to fight against the Soviet Union.

/see pp. 28–31, 39–41, 69–74, 81–90, 101/

In 1941, for his active cooperation and assistance, the Hungarian state awarded **Ferenc Pásztor** the National Defence Cross.

/see pp. 28, 101/

When the liberating army drove the Hungarian occupying forces out of the territory of Transcarpathia, **Pásztor** continued his anti-Soviet activities. He generally engaged in anti-Soviet agitation among his close friends and acquaintances.

Pásztor maintained illegal contact with **Bishop Scheffler**, who lived in Romania at that time, and whom he continuously informed about the situation of the Roman Catholic Church during the time of the Soviet Union.

/see pp. 31–34, 55–74, 102/

During the arrest, law enforcement agencies seized books containing anti-Soviet content. These were confiscated during the house search.

/see pp. 96–99, 103/

Based on the aforementioned crimes, **Pásztor** confessed his guilt (see pp. 37–42); the fact of the defendant's guilt was further supported in the case by the testimonies of **Czopf**, **Pásztor** (a typo in the surname, correctly: **Pasztler** – Ed.), and other witnesses (see pp. 104–137), as well as the physical evidence, which we have attached as an annex.

Based on the aforementioned facts, in the case in question, the guilty party: Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor, born in 1880 in Uzhhorod, a Soviet citizen, possessing a higher theological education, serving as an episcopal vicar and parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in

Berehove, Transcarpathia, is charged with the commission of the following crimes:

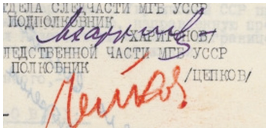
When the territory of Transcarpathian Ukraine was occupied by the invading Hungarian troops, he actively assisted in the strengthening of the military authority, cooperated with them, and carried out active agitation against the Soviet Union in their interest.

When Transcarpathia was annexed to the Ukrainian SSR, he continued his active agitation work against the Soviet Union within his own circles. He maintained illegal contacts with foreign countries and possessed a number of publications with anti-Soviet content. /Reference: The commission of the crime is governed by Article 54-4 and Article 54-10, paragraph 2, of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR./

In accordance with Article 204 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, investigation file No. 149252 contains the description of the cumulative criminal offenses of Ferenc Pásztor (Ivanovich); the file is to be forwarded to the session of the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR. We recommend that the defendant be sentenced to 25 years of imprisonment, with full confiscation of assets. He must serve his sentence in a corrective labor camp.

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/

Verified:
Colonel **Tsepkov**,
Head of the 1st Investigative Department
of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR,
Signature: [m.p.]

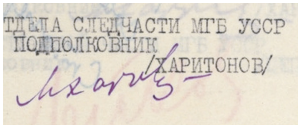


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Certificate

1. The defendant, Ferenc Pásztor (Ivanovich), is currently being held in the internal detention facility of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR.
2. The evidence has been attached to the case file as an annex.

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/



(Handwritten note on the back of the third page)
The case file has been submitted to the session of the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR.
Signature: s.k. (signed) /**Haritanov**/
June 21, 1949

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51.
00173
May 13-16, 1949, Kiev– Decision on the Determination of the Place of Execution of Sentence

(Typewritten text)[174]

[174] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, dated May 16, 1949, original, typewritten, one-page text, 150.

„APPROVED" Brigadier General Savchenko, Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, May 16, 1949	Top Secret DECISION /on the determination of the place of execution of sentence/ Kyiv, May 13, 1949 5-ad

I, Lieutenant Colonel **Haritanov**, Deputy Head of the Investigation Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, have reviewed the investigation file No. 149252, which was initiated against the accused **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**, born in 1880 in Uzhgorod, a Soviet citizen, of Hungarian nationality, with a higher theological education, episcopal vicar, vicar and parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church of Beregszász in Transcarpathia, who was charged under Articles 54-4 and 54-10, Paragraph 2 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR.

I ESTABLISH

Pásztor resided permanently in the territory of Transcarpathian Ukraine when it was occupied by Hungarian troops; he actively supported the leaders of the occupying Hungarian units, with whom he collaborated in order to strengthen the occupying Hungarian fascist power.

After Transcarpathia was annexed to the Ukrainian SSR, he continued his activities against the Soviet Union within his social circle. He maintained illegal contacts with foreign countries and possessed publications containing anti-Soviet content.

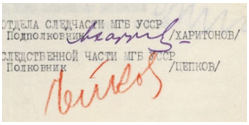
Based on the above, I have decided

ORDER

Now that the preliminary investigation and all phases of the investigation have been concluded, **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** shall serve his sentence in a special labour camp of the MVD of the SSSR.

Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitonov**,
Deputy Head of the Investigation Department,
Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.
Own signature. / **Haritonov**/

Approved:
Colonel **Tsepkov**,
Head of the 1st Investigative Department
of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR,
Signature: [m.p.]



***

52.
00174
May 23, 1949, Kiev– Decision to bring Ferenc Pásztor to trial, with a recommendation for a 25-year sentence

(Typewritten text)[175]

„APPROVED:" S. Sugorov, Deputy Prosecutor of the Ukrainian SSR, Counselor of Justice 3rd Class. Signature: s.k. (signed) Kyiv, May 23, 1949.	Top Secret DECISION Kyiv, May 21, 1949.

DECISION

I, Utina, Deputy Prosecutor of the Ukrainian SSR, Expert in Special Cases, State Legal Counsellor of the 3rd rank, have reviewed the investigative file received from the Department of the Ministry of State

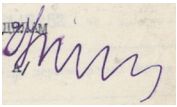
[175] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, dated May 23, 1949, original, typewritten, one-page document, p. 151.

Security of the Ukrainian SSR in connection with the crime of the accused, Pastor Ferenc Ivanovych. Taking into account Part 2 of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, I consider the investigative investigation closed, since there is sufficient evidence to transfer the accused, Pastor Ferenc Ivanovych, to the competent court under Part 2 of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR. The indictment was drawn up on the basis of the investigation materials, on the basis of which Part 3 of Article 223 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR is applicable.

I HEREBY DETERMINE:

I confirm the pre-trial detention of the accused, Ferenc Ivanovych Pásztor, pursuant to Article 54-4 and Article 54-10 (paragraph 2) of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR. The investigative file shall be forwarded to the session of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the SSSR, with a recommended sentence of 25 years of confinement in a forced labour camp. We request the approval of this recommendation.

Utina,
Deputy Prosecutor General of the Ukrainian SSR,
State Counsellor of Justice 3rd Class,
Counsellor to the Minister of Justice, [signed: s.k.]



3.7. PASSING OF JUDGMENT

Beginning in October 1944, as the organs of military counter-intelligence (SMERSH), the local territorial bodies of the state security service, military tribunals, prosecutor's offices, courts, and special courts appeared in Transcarpathia, the entire repressive system gradually began to function.

An essential part of the forced Sovietization was the screening of so-called 'bourgeois elements' (public and church figures, etc.), particularly from among the Hungarian, German, and other non-Slavic populations. The Soviet repressive organs monitored thousands of people, many of whom were brought before various tribunals on false charges of anti-Soviet activity. Government officials strove to send as many Transcarpathian patriots as possible to prisons and Gulag camps in order to isolate their chosen victims from their communities.

The question arises: under which legal articles were the prominent representatives of the persecuted historic churches—pastors who had been declared Soviet citizens—convicted in Transcarpathia, among others?

If we examine the structure, content, and severity of the articles of the Penal Code of the RSFSR or the concurrent Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR of that time, we can be convinced that in the case of the victims brought to the dock: *"Practically no one had any means of avoiding retribution, and its severity can perhaps only be compared to medieval cruelties."*[176]

Stalin's draconian law was enforced by the armed units of the Communist Party, including detachments of the KGB, as well as by ruthless prosecutors and judges against their victims until 1954.

In Transcarpathia, for example, Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR were applied to every third or

[176] Alekszej Korszun, "Bevezető sorok a kárpátaljai magyarok emlékkönyvéhez" [Introductory lines to the memorial book of the Hungarians of Transcarpathia], in *„Sötét napok jöttek." Koncepciós perek magyar elítéltjeinek emlékkönyve 1944–1945* ["Dark days came." Memorial book of Hungarian victims of show trials, 1944–1945], ed. György Dupka (Budapest–Uzhhorod: Intermix Kiadó, 1993), 11.

fourth convict. **Ferenc Pásztor** was also sentenced under these notorious articles.

Article 54-4 [177]— **"assistance to the international bourgeoisie."** More specifically: assistance to their organizations. Consequently, this article applied to all those whose foreign acquaintances could be presumed to have connections to such an organization, or to international religious organizations."

In the case of **Ferenc Pásztor**, it was sufficient that, as a vicar, he maintained illicit contact with **János Scheffler,** the Bishop of Szatmár, and through him with the Vatican, to whom he sent situation reports in the form of letters regarding the various affairs of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia, the imprisoned priests, and the experiences of the Soviet-style, godless society forcibly imposed on Transcarpathia.

Article 54-10[178] — **"counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation"** — stipulates: "Propaganda or agitation containing a call for the overthrow or weakening of the Soviet power, or for the commission of individual counter-revolutionary crimes (...), as well as the dissemination, duplication, or possession of literature to the same end (...). The same acts in the event of mass disturbances, or by exploiting the religious or national prejudices of the masses..." [179]

According to **Alexei Korsun**: "*Judicial practice most often applied Article 54-10. Every seventh convict was held criminally liable under this article.*

In essence, Article 54-10 was a tool— one might say, a gagging device — to prevent anyone from expressing a dissenting opinion. It was an attempt to silence people once and for all, allowing space only for positive emotions—the voicing of rapture and devotion toward the small and great leaders.[180]

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177 This is equivalent to Article 58-4 of the RSFSR Criminal Code.

178 This corresponds to Article 58-10 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.

179 This is consistent with Article 58-4 of the Criminal Code (CC) of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR).

180 This is consistent with Article 58-4 of the Criminal Code (CC) of the Russian

Ferenc Pásztor belonged to the group of people who thought differently; he courageously voiced his opinions, for instance, through conversation, public speaking, sermons, etc. This is why he became persecuted: because he held independent views on political, social, and ecclesiastical events, and on the long-suffering local Hungarian community. This is why he was classified among the 'enemies of the people.

This was alleged about him by the informers and provocateurs within the ranks. We can ascertain this from the false claims regarding **Ferenc Pásztor** contained in the interrogation protocols of the eight witnesses cited above. His heroism manifested in the fact that he openly admitted to the fabricated crimes cast upon him by the authorities, which—according to the KGB investigating officers—heavily overshadowed his pastoral and public activities. For him, nothing remained but silence and acquiescence, because his God-blessed profession of faith was more exalted than that of the vigilant guardians of the atheistic Soviet system; he resolutely accepted the fulfilment of his fate. The vicar, who did not renounce his Church, the Vatican, or his Hungarian identity, walked confidently along the path of the martyrs, in the awareness of the justice of a bright future.

Referring to Document No. 50 below, the coordinated teamwork of the KGB officers achieved its result. Namely, based on the falsified concept-based investigation material closed by the state security interrogating officers in Berehove, Uzhhorod, and Kyiv, and finalized in Kyiv, the Prosecutor's Office of the Ukrainian SSR submitted the 'Resolution' to the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR for sentencing on May 23, 1949. Based on Article 54-4 and the second paragraph of Article 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, the prosecution's proposal was: that **Ferenc Pásztor** be sentenced to 25 years in a corrective labour camp. They requested the acceptance of the severity of the sentence imposed by them.

Between November 26, 1944, and May 26, 1951, the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR "*sentenced nearly one hun-*

Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR).

dred Transcarpathian residents to death, or sent them to the prisons, camps, and labour settlements of the Soviet Union.[181] *We can only learn exactly who was sentenced by name through more thorough archival research."*

What is certain is that **Ferenc Pásztor's** brother in the priesthood, **János Sörös,** was also sentenced to 10 years by the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR on August 10, 1950. He was imprisoned in Taishet, in camp No. 37 near Lake Baikal. He returned home in 1956, disabled and ill.

Among the persecuted pastors of the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia was **Barna Horkai** (Kiszsárkony, 1988), the Reformed minister of Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős), who was one of the authors of the Petition written to Stalin. On May 15, 1948, the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR sentenced him to 7 years of imprisonment on charges of anti-Soviet activity. He was able to return home from captivity in 1955. He was rehabilitated in 1989.[182]

The Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR arrested many public figures (farmers, civil organization leaders, officials, representatives, etc.) from the Hungarian and Swabian-German intelligentsia of our region. The following shared the fate of **Ferenc Pásztor**: **Béla Katona** (1923), a driver from Korláthelmec; **Zoltán Györffy** (1904), a bank employee in Uzhhorod; **József Bakajsza** (1905), mayor of Gálocs; **Árpád Kovács** (1911) from Tiszaújlak and Macsola, a farmer; **Mihály Lőrincz** (1922) from Bustyaháza; **Rozália Albók** (1920) from Csonkapapi, a homemaker; **Menyhért Tatár** (1911) from Tiszabökény, a collective farm member; **Ferenc Miskolci** (1910) from Kamjanica; **Rudolf Paulik** (1928) from Mukachevo; **Teréz Rziman** (1897) from Budapest/Mukachevo, an actress; **Mihály Kohán** (1922) from Mezőkaszony; **Erzsébet Horváth** (1910) from Berehove-Dercen, a homemaker; József Szűcs (1913) from Gecse; **Zoltán Locker** (1898) from Prešov/Mukachevo, a photographer; **Pál Nagy** (1892) from Muzsaly; **Lajos Bics** (1925) from Mezőkaszony, a worker; **László Bordás** (1900) from Dovhe, and others, whose brief biographies, as well as

[181] Korszun Alekszej, 1993, 134.
[182] RIZO,2003.I.k.281.

the factual data regarding their sentencing and rehabilitation, are contained in the first volume of the approximately 700-page document collection titled *Reabilitovani istoriieiu. Zakarpatska oblast*.[183]

According to documents Nos. 51 and 52 regarding the sentencing, **Ferenc Pásztor** was sentenced in absentia—by the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, which convened in Moscow on July 6, 1949, based on Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR—on charges of anti-Soviet activity, based on false witness testimonies, to 25 years of deprivation of liberty to be spent in a corrective labour camp, with full confiscation of property.

According to the concurring opinion of several researchers, this was *"likely a commutation of his death sentence. He was deported to Siberia."*[184]

The place of **Ferenc Pásztor's** imprisonment was designated as the No. 7 Bratsk MVD ITL (Corrective Labor Camp) of the Gulag's strict-regime system; within this, he was sent to the Ozernij camp located between Taishet and Bratsk.

As is well known, Bratsk belongs to Russia's vast Irkutsk Oblast; it is a large, sprawling industrial city in Eastern Siberia with more than 200,000 inhabitants, which became famous for the massive hydroelectric power plant built there. It was developed into one of Siberia's largest industrial centres. The relevant literature also confirms that the industrialization of the region from the 1930s onwards was thanks to thousands of Gulag prisoners, exiles, displaced kulaks, and Volga Germans deprived of their homes, all concentrated there by the NKVD; the city and other labour settlements in the area were built based on the cheap labour of the captives, the Soviet slaves bound to their place of residence.

From the testimonies of the survivors, it is known that the majority of those who ended up here were worked to death building railway

[183] *Reabilitovani istoriieiu: Zakarpatska oblast* [Rehabilitated by History: Transcarpathian Oblast], vol. 1, ed. O. D. Dovhanych, O. V. Khlanta, and O. M. Korsun (Uzhhorod: Zakarpattya, 2003), hereafter cited as RIZO, 2003.I.k.

[184] Károly Hetényi Varga, *Papi sorsok a horogkereszt és a vörös csillag árnyékában* [Priestly Fates in the Shadow of the Swastika and the Red Star] (Budapest: Láthatár, 1996), 404.

sections, factories, roads, housing estates, and other facilities, or in logging and mining; many died of exhaustion. In the labour camps, convicts from Ozerlag—notorious for its severity, otherwise known as Special Camp No. 7 or the Osob-lag camp network—as well as those from Angarlag, and between 1948–1954, German, Japanese, Hungarian, and other foreign prisoners of war, also worked. One of its centres was in Zayarsk (the site of the settlement, located in the vicinity of present-day Bratsk, was submerged when the reservoir was filled).

Documents Nos. 51, 52, and 53, marked 'top secret,' confirm that the 70-year-old Gulag prisoner **Ferenc Pásztor** was indeed sent to the MVD's No. 7 Ozyorny strict-regime camp, where he was put to work on construction projects and logging. For a time, in the No. 32 Ozerlag camp in the Lake Baikal region, his fellow prisoner and a member of the felling brigade was **Ferenc Harangozó** (Szentpéterfa, Jan. 24, 1908 – Szombathely, Dec. 21, 1991), a vice-rector from Szombathely, high school principal, and diocesan priest,[184] whom a Soviet military court had sentenced to 25 years of forced labour for assisting "fascist fugitives." In 1955, he was brought to Hungary with several hundred other prisoners. He also wrote his memoirs titled *From the Rectory of Csendlak to the Siberian Snowfields*.

From Father Harangozó's account, we know that he celebrated Mass with a small chalice received from Uzhhorod. In secret, he also heard confessions and administered Communion to his fellow priests. He recalls this as follows: 'On the way to work, whoever wanted to confess would stand beside me. Communion happened in the same way. While walking, I would place a small piece of bread into the communicant's hand; he would become deeply absorbed in himself—it was very moving. (...) The years spent in captivity reinforced in me that one can trust in people. There are good people in every race; there is gold, but there is also slag everywhere. "He also confirms that death did not spare even the older priests."[185] For example, **Andor Jarosi**, a Transylvanian Lutheran pastor, theology professor, and writer, died of exhaustion."

[185] Ferenc Harangozó, *A csendlaki parókiától a szibériai hómezőkig: Kilenc év börtönökben és munkatáborokban* [From the Rectory of Csendlak to the Siberian Snowfields: Nine Years in Prisons and Labor Camps], comp. László Gyürki (Szombathely: Mar-

Among his fellow priests sentenced to 25 years[186] , **Zoltán Bakó**, the parish priest of Kisszelmenc, served his sentence in the Angarsk camp in the Irkutsk Oblast; **Kálmán Bártfay**, the parish priest of Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős), was held in the Chuksa corrective labour camp; **János Sörös (Pivovár)**, the dean of Mukachevo, was imprisoned in the Ozerlag camp near the settlement of Chunka; and **György Tőkés (Trepszker, Trefszker?)** served his sentence in the Zajarsk camp in the Irkutsk Oblast. **János Harcsár**, a Roman Catholic priest from Košice, was also a prisoner of Ozerlag.

It should be noted that between 1949 and 1956, several convicted patriots and pastors from Transcarpathia were imprisoned in the Osoblag camp network in the Irkutsk Oblast (camps near Taishet and the Angara River). According to church historian **Gusztáv Fodor**[187], those who served their sentences there, among others, included the following ministers of the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia who were sentenced to 25 years in a show trial: **Gyula Fekete**, a Reformed missionary from Csetfalva; **István Györke**, a Reformed pastor from Beregújfalu; **Béla Huszti**, a pastor from Kígyós; and Zoltán Kovács, a Reformed pastor from Tiszaújlak. **Jenő Szutor**, the 60-year-old Reformed pastor of Beregszász, died of exhaustion in one of the Ozerlag camps.

A group of Greek Catholic priests, who also refused to renounce their faith and were sentenced to 25 years in prison, languished in the

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tinus Kiadó, 2012), https://www.martinuskiado.hu/misc/products/1351-a_csendlaki_parokiatol_a_sziberiai_homezokig.pdf (accessed July 12, 2024).

186 **Paweł Wyszkowski** OMI, *Katolikusüldözés Ukrajnában és Kárpátalján: Katolikusok Ukrajnában a kommunista rezsim alatt (1917–1944–1991)* [Catholic Persecution in Ukraine and Transcarpathia: Catholics in Ukraine under the Communist Regime (1917–1944–1991)] (Esztergom: Temesvári Pelbárt Ferences Gimnázium és Kollégium, 2013), 235–253.

187 **Gusztáv Fodor**, *Akik nagy nyomorúságból jöttek… A sztálini diktatúra koncepciós perei kárpátaljai reformátusok ellen a KGB ungvári levéltárának dokumentumai alapján…* [Those Who Came Out of Great Tribulation… Show Trials of the Stalinist Dictatorship Against Transcarpathian Reformed Christians Based on the KGB Archives in Uzhhorod] (Budapest: Református Közéleti és Kulturális Központ Alapítvány, 2017), 16–23.

Osoblag camp network[188]: **Gyula Bacsinszky**, dean of Rahó; **Miklós Baltovics** of Turjapaszika; **György Csurgovics** of Sislóc; **Polikárp Bazil/Vaszil/Lozán**, OSBM, of Beregdéda; **Jenő Melles** of Nagyberezna; **Nestor Romzsa** of Kovászó; and **István Ortutay**, a Greek Catholic priest of Kapuszög. They were much younger than the 69-year-old **Ferenc Pásztor** and were physically better able to withstand the prison labour and the strain of meeting daily quotas. All of them were released under amnesty in 1956; they returned home suffering from illnesses contracted in the camp, disabled, but fortunately alive. They were all rehabilitated between 1989 and 1992.

***

Regarding the sentencing of **Ferenc Pásztor** by the supreme organ of the KGB, I have found only three documents in the file.

According to document No. 53, dated July 6, 1949, a strict decision was reached at the session of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR in the case of **Ferenc Pásztor**, filed under No. 74/149252. He was found guilty based on the second paragraph of Articles 54-4 and 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, as stated in the indictment, for having been a "member of a fascist party" and having provenly "engaged in anti-Soviet activities."

According to protocol extract No. 37, signed by the secretary of the session, **Tarkinskaya**, and bearing an official seal, the tribunal of the supreme forum of the KGB sentenced **Ferenc Pásztor** to 25 years of deprivation of liberty to be served in a corrective labour camp, along with confiscation of his property.

The document concludes with the following lines: "The execution of the sentence shall commence on March 1, 1949. Place of imprisonment: Osoblag No. 7, Bratsk, 278700."

***

[188] **István Bendász** and Dániel Bendász, *Életünk: A kárpátaljai görögkatolikus papok történeti névtára* [Our Life: Historical Register of Transcarpathian Greek Catholic Priests] (Székelyudvarhely: Ablánc Kiadó, 1994).

From document No. 54, dated July 9, 1949, marked as "Top Secret" category "A" we learn of the transfer of the convicted prisoner **Ferenc Pásztor**, then being held in the KGB prison in Kyiv, to the Ozerlag camp.

Coordinators of the operation:Lieutenant Colonel **Zaslavsky**, representative of the commander of Group "A" of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR; Lieutenant Colonel **Burinin**, commander of the 14th group; and **Raskazov**, operative.

In this instance, Colonel **Podobedov**, commander of Group "A" of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, is reminded that, based on protocol extract No. 37 of the session of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, the convicted prisoner Ferenc Pásztor is to be sent from the Kyiv prison to "MVD Ozerlag camp No. 37769" to serve his sentence. They are to "notify field post office VCh" in writing regarding further measures."

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In "Top Secret" Informative Note No. 55, dated August 5, 1949, Colonel **Soskin**, Head of Department "A" of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, and Lieutenant Colonel **Burinin**, commander of the 14th group, wrote to the "Commander of the MVD Ozerlag Camp"[189] in Bratsk, Irkutsk Oblast, and to the Head of Department 'A' of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, that pursuant to protocol extract No. 31 of the session of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, **Ferenc Pásztor,** who is serving his sentence in the Ozerlag camp, has been sentenced to total confiscation of property.

The addressees are requested to inform the undersigned of the date on the convict's record sheet, based on the note dated July 15, 1950. A copy of the record sheet is enclosed.

The following are mixed documents Nos. 53-55 relating to the verdict, in my literal translation based on the original texts.

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[189] As of September 21, 1951, Mashin was the head of Ozerlag, which included Camp Division 7, where Ferenc Pásztor was imprisoned.

53.
00175
July 6, 1949, Kiev – Extract from the protocol of the session of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR.

(Typewritten text on a form) [190]

EXTRACT FROM THE PROTOCOL No. 37.
szt-4
Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR,
July 6, 1949

HEARD	DECIDED
Case file No. 149252, 74. Case No., MGB of the Ukrainian SSR / on the following charge – **Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor,** born in 1880 in Uzhhorod, Hungarian by nationality, Soviet citizen, non-party member. Guilty under Articles 54-4 and 54-10, second paragraph, of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR. **Tarkinskaya** 1949.	**Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor,** having been a member of a fascist party and engaged in anti-Soviet activities, is sentenced to 25 years in a corrective labour camp. The term of the sentence begins on March 1, 1949. Place of imprisonment: Ozerlag, Camp Division No. 7, Bratsk, 278700.

/Circular seal/
Chief Secretary of the Special Board

***

[190] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated July 6, 1949, original, typewritten, one-page text, p. 152.

54.
00176-177-178
July 9, 1949, Kyiv – Case file on the transfer of the convict to a Gulag camp
(Typewritten text on a form)[191]

TOP SECRET
Category A
to Colonel **Podobedov**,
Commander of Group "A" of the Ministry of State Security
of the Ukrainian SSR, Kyiv, July 9.

Forwarding of the indictment and issuance of immediate certification based on Protocol No. 37, the session of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security (MGB) of the USSR held on July 6, 1949; your case number is 149252. Regarding **Ferenc Ivanovich Pasztor**, the execution of his sentence, based on his personal attire, shall be directed to the MVD Ozerny Camp of the GULAG MVD USSR, No. 9/SO-37769.

I request that "VCs" Field Post Office be notified regarding the transfer of the accused in accordance with regulations and the date of issuance of the certification.

Attachment: Registration file, in 2 copies.

Lieutenant Colonel **Zaslavsky,**
Representative of the Commander of Group
"A" of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR.
Signature: m. p.

Lieutenant Colonel **Burinyin**,
Commander of Group 14, Signature: m. p.

Raszkazov, Executor, Signature: m. p.

***

[191] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, document dated August 5, 1949, original, typewritten, half-page text, pp. 154, 154a.

55.
00176
July 15 – August 5, 1950, Moscow – Extract from the protocol of the decision regarding the confiscation of property from the session of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR.
(Typewritten text) [192]

Top Secret To the Commander of the MVD OZERNY Camp Bratsk, Irkutsk Oblast	Head of Department "A" of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Kyiv Group „A" August 5 18/11- 139947

The previously announced registration file from Protocol No. 31 of the session of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR on July 15, 1950, regarding **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**, who is to be sentenced to full confiscation of property based on the records, with the execution of the sentence in the Ozerny camp.

I request that you notify me of the date of the registration file.

Attachments: 1 copy of the registration file.

Colonel **Soskin,**
Head of the Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Department "A", Signature: m. p.

Lieutenant Colonel **Burinyin,**
Commander of Group 14, Signature: m. p.

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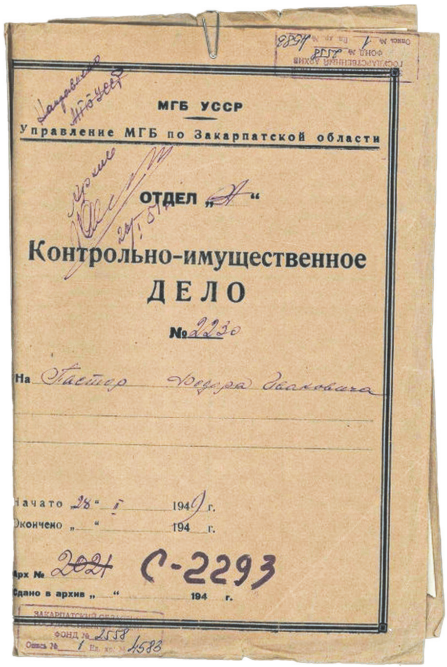
On the back of page 154, the following note can be read: The documents of the file have been bound, the pages are numbered: 154 (one hundred and fifty-four) pages. **Malidin**, Operative Authorized Agent of Group 3, Signature: m. p. (manu propria) March 19, 1952

[192] KTAL, Pásztor-file 149252, document dated August 5, 1949, original, typewritten, half-page text, 153.

3.8. CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY

The Pasztor file contains a separate appendix accounting for the confiscation of property. The so-called Property Registration Dossier No. 2230 has 35 bound, numbered pages and includes nearly 30 documents. Decisions, statements, invoices, etc., related to the confiscation and sale of property, created between March 1, 1949, and September 21, 1951, were listed in this registry.

The owner of the file and the compiler of the dossier is Investigation Department "A" of the Transcarpathian Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR. The collection of documents was initiated on February 28, 1947; this date also appears on the cover of the dossier. The date written on the cover suggests that the last entry in the file was made on January 24, 1951. Archive number: 2293.


МГБ УССР
Управление МГБ по Закарпатской области
ОТДЕЛ "А"
Контрольно-имущественное
ДЕЛО
№ 2230
На Пастор Федора Захаровича
Начато 28" 5 1947 г.
Окончено " " 194 г.
Арх № 2021 С-2293
Сдано в архив " " 194 г.

Cover of Property Registration Dossier No. 2230

The date of origin of the first document in the dossier is March 1, 1949. It was at this time that KGB officers carried out a house search at **Ferenc Pasztor's** residence located at 4 Voroshilov Square in Beregszász. The inventory, which was also signed by witnesses, lists 22 confiscated items of property and 1,478 rubles.

I have already dealt with this subject matter in the subsection titled "3.3. Arrest, House Search, Confiscation of Property," where I published documents 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 22. Copies of these can be found on pages 1–12 of Property Registration Dossier No. 2230.

We have already mentioned above that the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR decided the fate of **Ferenc Pásztor** in his absence on July 6, 1949. His sentence was severe: he was sentenced to 25 years of deprivation of liberty to be served in a corrective labour camp. He was imprisoned in Gulag forced labour camp no. 7, located in the vicinity of Bratsk, Irkutsk Oblast.

From the excerpt of the minutes of document no. 56, we learn that on July 15, 1950, according to the supplementary decision of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, it is explicitly stated: "his movable property must be confiscated without delay."

The greater part of the property confiscated by the authorities was broken down into lots and, by higher order, sold in Beregszász through local commercial units and the consumer cooperative, with the resulting proceeds transferred to the state treasury. Documents no. 57, 58, and 59, presented below, bear witness to this.

According to documents no. 60 and 61, the personal belongings confiscated from the convict Ferenc Pásztor in the Ozerny camp in 1950 were sent to the "treasury" in Moscow. The physical evidence supporting the indictment was deposited at the "A" Department of the KGB in Uzhhorod; there is no information regarding its further fate.

***

The miscellaneous documents no. 56–61 regarding the confiscation of property can be read below in my literal translation based on the original texts.

56.
00039
July 15, 1950, Moscow – Excerpt of the minutes of the supplementary decision of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR regarding the confiscation of the accused's property.

(Typewritten text on a form) [193]

HEARD	DECIDED
Case File No. 463. Indictment of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR, No. 278700: **Ferenc Ivánovics Pászto**r, born in 1880 in Uzhgorod, nationality Hungarian, citizenship Soviet, possesses a higher theological education. On July 6, 1949, the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR sentenced him to 25 years of deprivation of liberty to be served in a corrective labor camp.	Addendum to the decision of the July 6, 1949, session of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR: the movable property of the accused, Ferenc Ivánovics Pásztor, must be confiscated without delay. Round seal Head of the Secretariat of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security (illegible signature)[194]

***

57.
00015
September 19, 1950, Kyiv – Informational memo to Lieutenant Colonel Fomichev, Head of the "A" Investigative Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of

[193] KTAL, Pásztor file, no. 149252, document dated July 15, 1950. Original, typewritten on a standard form, one page, p. 155.

[194] According to further documents: Colonel General **Yesaulov** is the Head of the Secretariat of the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR

State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, regarding the July 15, 1950, decision of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR on the immediate confiscation of the accused's movable property

(Excerpt from the typewritten text)[195]

To Comrade Lieutenant Colonel **Fomichev**,
Head of the "A" Investigation Department
of the Transcarpathian Main Directorate
of the Ministry of State Security
of the Ukrainian SSR Uzhhorod

Round seal, Ministry of State Security
of the Ukrainian SSR,
August 19, 1950
No. 10/1 30079
Kyiv
Order No. 7/1/5260, ref. 31/UP-50g.

We hereby notify you that, based on the decision of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR No. 6/UP-1949, **Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor**, born in 1880, was sentenced to 25 years of deprivation of liberty to be served in a corrective labour camp. In accordance with the previous decision, pursuant to the new decision of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security No. 15/UP-50, the movable property of **Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor** must be confiscated without delay.

As is known, the items seized for safekeeping were placed in your department's custody, and the inventory list of these items was also handed over to the defendant's brother, Lajos Iványovics Pásztor. We request that you facilitate the sale of the registered items through the

[195] KTAL, Appendix to the Pásztor file, no. 2230. Property Registry, document dated September 19, 1950. Original, typewritten, one-page text, p. 10.

financial department of the Beregszász municipal administration and a merchant.

Please send us the documents regarding the execution of the decision of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, and the confiscation of the accused's movable and immovable property, so that we may attach them to our oversight and control records.

Lieutenant Colonel **Bukh,**
Head of the Main Directorate
of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR

Lieutenant Colonel **Melnikov,**
Head of the 1st Department
of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR

***

58.
00016
September 19, 1950, Uzhhorod – Instruction to Lieutenant Colonel Kuryata, Head of the Berehove Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, regarding the submission of a report on the sale of the accused seized items.

(Excerpt from the typewritten text) [196]

Top Secret

"A"
To Comrade Lieutenant Colonel **Kuryata**,
Head of the Berehove Main Directorate
of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, Berehove

[196] KTAL, Appendix to the Pásztor file, No. 2230. Property Registry file, document dated October 12, 1950, copy, handwritten, one-page text, 4.

In accordance with previous instructions, you coordinated the sale of a portion of the assets confiscated during the arrest of **Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor**, with the assistance of the city council, the retail establishments, and the municipal financial department. To our knowledge, a portion of the assets was handed over for safekeeping, as per the inventory list, to the defendant's brother, **Lajos Iványovics Pásztor** (Berehove, 4 Voroshilova Street).

The handover protocols regarding the sale of the seized items were recorded in 2 copies. Send the material of these to us without delay, so that we may forward them to the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, to be attached to the oversight and control proceedings.

Supplement: the inventory sheet prepared for the movable property.

Lieutenant Colonel **Fomichev,**
Head of the "A" Investigation Department of the Transcarpathian Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR

Major **Semakov,** Head of the Investigative Department "A" of the Transcarpathian Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Uzhgorod

***

59.
00021., 22., 23.,24.,25.,26.,41, 42.
December 23, 1950, Berehove – Information circular to Lieutenant Colonel Fomichev, Head of the "A" Investigation Department in Uzhhorod, regarding the sale of the accused's confiscated assets and the valuation of the property items.

(Excerpt from the typescript)[197]

[197] KTAL, Pásztor file attachment, no. 2230. Property registration file, December 23, 1950, copy, handwritten, pp. 16, 17–18, 33, 34.

Top Secret
Letter "A", outgoing No. 3860
To Comrade Lieutenant Colonel **Fomichev,**
Head of the Investigation Department
"A" of the Transcarpathian Main Department
of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR
Uzhgorod

We hereby forward the protocols related to the sale of the confiscated assets, which were in the possession of the accused, Ferenc Iványovics Pásztor, on the day of his arrest.

Attachment: on 6 pages
Colonel **Kuryata,**
Head of the Berehove Directorate
of the MGB

December 23, 1950
No. 5425
Berehove
Executor **Papkin**

Excerpts from the attachments

No. 1

The committee for the coordination of the sale of the accused's property has been operational since December 1, 1950, with the following composition:

Iván Iványovics Szotver, Senior Investigator of the Berehove Municipal Government;

M. V. Natkulinec, Representative of the Berehove City Council;

M. P. Jegorov, Representative of the Berehove Main Directorate of the MGB.

Next witness: **Anna Lajosivna Pásztor**, residing at 6 Borodovoj St., Berehove.

No. 2
Statement of the valuation of the 19 confiscated items
(*Excerpt from the property registration protocol*)

№	Description of the item	Piece	Initial estimated value	Final price
1.	Iron bed	one	200	40
2.	Enamelled bucket	one	36	8
3.	Enamelled bathtub	one	32	7,50
4.	Washbasin, iron	one	50	100
5.	Table lamp	one	28	14
6.	Wall clock	one	275	55
7.	Comfortable armchairs	four	420	84
8.	Comfortable sofa	one	220	44
9.	Walnut piano	one	4800	1200
10.	Oak wardrobe	two	1200	300
11.	Sideboard	one	600	150
12.	Small tables, oak	two	120	24
13.	Assorted paintings	ten	500	150
14.	Room rug	five	800	200
15.	Writing desk	one	400	80
16.	Small tables	two	140	28
17.	Dinner plates	two	6	12
18.	Tablecloth	two	Valueless	Valueless
19.	Potato crate	one	26	13

Total final price: 2,219.59 rubles

No. 3
Certificate of the sale of wine confiscated from the defendant
According to information from the Berehove Division of the MGB, the Berehove consumer cooperative (Director: **Petraskó**, Chief Accountant: **Poljanka**) accepted 6,000 litres of wine in 33 barrels, confiscated from the defendant **Ferenc Pásztor**, for the purpose of sale as early as March 18, 1949, with a sales value of 52,262 rubles and 50 kopecks.

***

60.
00035.
August 21, 1951, Kyiv – Instruction to the head of the Ozerniy prison camp regarding the handover of the confiscated personal assets of Ferenc Pásztor, the prisoner held there

(Excerpt from the typescript) [198]

To the Head of the Ozerniy Prison Camp
of the MVD of the USSR Bratsk, Irkutsk Oblast
August 21, 1951
10/2/ 2 29683

For the third time, we strongly request the execution of our order regarding the total confiscation of property with respect to the convict **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor**, born in 1880, as dated January 30, 1951, under number 10/I/3711, and May 28, 1951, under number 10/2/16817.

Colonel **Podobedov,**
Chief of Investigation Division
"A" of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR

Lieutenant Colonel **Melnikov**,
Chief of the 2nd Division

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[198] KTAL, Pásztor file, no. 2230. Property registration file, dated September 21, 1951, copy, typewritten, 0.5 pages, p. 28.

61.
00036.
September 21, 1951, Bratsk – Briefing to Colonel Podobedov, Chief of Investigation Division "A" of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, regarding the handover of the property confiscated from Ferenc Pásztor, who is being held in the Ozerniy prison camp

(Excerpt from the typescript)[199]

Top Secret
To Comrade Colonel **Podobedov,**
Chief of Investigation Division
"A" of the Ministry of State
Security of the Ukrainian SSR

We hereby inform you that, in compliance with your order no. 10/I-3711 dated January 30, the material assets of the convict **Ferenc Ivanovich Pásztor** have been dispatched via registered mail to the following address: Moscow, Sadovayatriumfalnaya 4/10, State Treasury Office No. 3 for the transfer and receipt of personal property and effects.

Dabizha,
Chief Accountant of the Ozerniy Special Camp No. 7

Mashin,
Chief of the Accounting Department
of the Ozerniy Special Camp No. 7

[199] KTAL, Pásztor-file attachment, no. 2230. Property registration file of September 21, 1951, copy, typewritten, one-page text, p. 29.

3.9. HIS CAPTURE AND MARTYRDOM IN THE SIBERIAN CAMP

It is a fact that the 69-year-old priest presumably could not withstand for long the harsh and cold Siberian climate, the starvation leading to total exhaustion, the heavy physical labour, and the repressions he endured in the death camp.

The last entry in his file is dated as follows: "**Fedor Ivanovich Pásztor** deported to the Ozerniy MVD Camp on July 23, 1949." He was, in fact, taken to Siberia, to a corrective labour camp near Lake Baikal, or, according to other data, to a GULAG death camp.

According to **Károly Heténi Varga**'s book *Priestly Destinies in the Shadow of the Swastika and the Red Star*, we know that *"the episcopal vicar of Transcarpathia suffered martyrdom around 1949–50 in Siberia in forced labour camp no. 20. For a time, his fellow prisoner was Ferenc Harangozó, a priest of the Diocese of Szombathely."* [200]

In his work *Régi beregszásziak* [Old Beregszász Residents], **György Csanádi** also confirms the date of Ferenc Pásztor's death based on the aforementioned claim: "He died in a Stalinist labour camp in 1950."[201]

Gabriella Anna Melega, OP, is also unable to provide more precise information about the death of Ferenc Pásztor; according to her as well: "He was deported to a corrective labour camp near Lake Baikal in Siberia, where he passed away two years later." [202]

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[200] Károly Heténi Varga, *Papi sorsok a horogkereszt és a vörös csillag árnyékában* (1996), 404.

[201] György Csanádi, *Régi beregszásziak* (1997), https://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02131/html/01.htm (accessed July 12, 2024).

[202] Gabriella Anna Melega, OP, „Új források az üldözött kárpátaljai római katolikus papokról" [New Sources on the Persecuted Roman Catholic Priests of Transcarpathia], http://regi.mindszenty.katolikus.hu/vh57/57_1.html; see also: „A római katolikus egyház ellehetetlenítésének kísérlete és papjainak elítélése Kárpátalján 1944–1956" [The Attempt to Disable the Roman Catholic Church and the Conviction of Its Priests in Transcarpathia 1944–1956], https://arca.melte.hu/index.php/hu-mszkl-i-06-05-20.

In her 2011 study describing and analysing the priestly service of **Ferenc Pásztor** in Beregszász, **Anita Szendrey** only states: "**Ferenc Pásztor** presumably became a victim of the Soviet system, a "martyr of terror," in 1951."In another paper written later, citing the research of **Béla Bohán**, SJ, she asserts: *"The exact location of his grave cannot be known, but according to records, the 20th camp near the town of Tayshet is marked as his final resting place, October 15, 1951."*[203]

According to the text collection compiled by **Szabolcs Bunda** based on the research of **Béla Bohán**, SJ – referencing data from the *Schematismus* – the death of **Ferenc Pásztor** occurred "on October 15, 1951, in Siberia in the 20th camp, 54 km from Tayshet. According to the 1960 *Schematismus*, his cross inscription was "M16O"; according to the writing of **István Pásztor**, it was a grave marker No. 17."[204]

Regarding the final resting place of **Ferenc Pásztor**, **Antal Majnek**, Roman Catholic Bishop of Munkács, first turned in a letter to labour camp researcher **György Dupka**. With the mediation of historian Colonel **Oleksiy Korsun** from Uzhhorod, Bishop **Majnek's** letter was forwarded with a cover letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, from which the following response was received, dated August 13, 2012:

"He died on October 16, 1951, in the medical unit of the MVD Ozerny camp (No. 32) in the Irkutsk Region. He was buried on October 17, 1951, in the cemetery of the same camp in grave number 15, marked with the identifier M-15-1, S-66. At the same time, I inform

[203] *See: Anita Szendrey, „Adalékok a Beregszászi Római Katolikus Egyház történetéhez (1944–1949)" [Contributions to the History of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász (1944–1949)], Acta Beregsasiensis 2011/1, 132,https://adoc.pub/a-beregszaszi-romai-katolikus-egyhaz-helyzete-a-szovjet-rend.html (accessed July 12, 2024).*

[204] Anita Szendrey, „Adalékok a Beregszászi Római Katolikus Egyház történetéhez (1938–1963)" [Contributions to the History of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász (1938–1963)], 33, https://docplayer.hu/660122-Adalekok-a-beregszaszi-romai-katolikus-egyhaz-tortenetehez-1938-1963.html (accessed July 12, 2024).

you that we cannot provide any further information regarding the burial site of the aforementioned person. Sincerely, **I. F. Okuneva.**"[205]

I concur with the assessment of **Béla Bohán**, SJ, that *"among the post-war priestly victims of the Diocese of Szatmár, he is the second. (Archpriest-Pastor* ***Sándor Haklik*** *[...] died while en route). He was followed as the third by his friend and true spiritual kinsman,* ***Dr. János Scheffler,*** *the diocesan bishop*."[206]

[205] György Dupka, *Egyházüldözés Kárpátalján 1944–1991* [Persecution of the Church in Transcarpathia 1944–1991] (Szolyva Memorial Park Committee – Intermix Publisher, Uzhhorod–Budapest, 2017), 11, https://mek.oszk.hu/18100/18119/18119.pdf.

[206] Based on the research of Béla Bohán, SJ, see: Szabolcs Bunda, „Emlékezés Pásztor Ferenc beregszászi plébánosra" [Remembrance of Ferenc Pásztor, Parish Priest of Beregszász], *Új Hajtás* 12, no. 9 (2007), https://ujhajtas.net.ua/emlekezes-pasztor-ferenc-beregszaszi-plebanosra/.

3.10. HIS REHABILITATION

During the era of Gorbachev's perestroika, the long-awaited official rehabilitation of political prisoners occurred in Ukraine as well. On January 16, 1989, a decree of the President of Ukraine was made public. Article 1 of the law entitled "On Additional Measures to Restore Justice for Victims of Persecutions that Occurred in the 1930s and Early 1950s" applied to **Ferenc Pásztor** as well.

The first volume of the approximately 700-page document collection Reabilitovanyi istoriieiu: Zakarpatska oblast [Rehabilitated by History: Transcarpathian Region], published in Uzhhorod in 2003, contains the factual material regarding the conviction and rehabilitation of **Ferenc Pásztor**. According to this, *"**Pásztor Fegyir Ivanovics** was born in 1980 in Uzhhorod, Transcarpathia; he is Hungarian, holds a higher education degree, and is non-party. A resident of Beregszász, he is a Roman Catholic priest. On July 6, 1949, the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR sentenced him to 25 years of deprivation of liberty. He was rehabilitated in 1989."* [207]

The rehabilitation resolution issued to the relatives of **Ferenc Pásztor** on August 2, 1989, states that the charges brought against him were unfounded, and his guilt was not substantiated.

In the appendix attached to the end of the closed case file no. 149252 discussed and analyzed here, we can trace the administrative process of **Ferenc Pásztor's** rehabilitation through documents no. 62, 63, and 64. The initiation of this process is associated with the name of Lieutenant Colonel **Pohorilyak**, head of the investigative division within the Transcarpathian Main Department of the State Security Committee of the Ukrainian SSR. The case file reveals that the regional authorities of the State Security Committee of the Ukrainian SSR and the competent officials of the Beregszász District did not possess spe-

[207] *Reabilitovani istoriieiu: Zakarpatska oblast* [Rehabilitated by History: Transcarpathian Region], eds. O. D. Dovhanych, O. V. Khlanta, and O. M. Korsun, Vol. 1 (Uzhhorod: Zakarpattia, 2003), 548.

cific information regarding **Ferenc Pásztor,** who was awaiting rehabilitation. They did not even know whether he had been released or had passed away. If he had indeed died in the labor camp, they had no data concerning the time, place, or circumstances of his death. Therefore, they deemed it important to locate the residence of his family members as well.

Lieutenant Colonel **Ignatov**, the head of the Beregszász District branch of the Transcarpathian Main Department of the State Security Committee of the Ukrainian SSR, who responded to the inquiry of Lieutenant Colonel **Pohorilyak**, was only able to ascertain that the fact of **Ferenc Pásztor's** death has not been recorded in the register of the Beregszász Civil Registry Office from 1950 to the present day. In the course of the operational investigation, it was possible to locate the surviving direct family members of **Ferenc Pásztor**.

In light of all this, **Rátocska**, the assistant prosecutor, and Lieutenant Colonel Pohorilyak prepared the final report. Based on this, on August 2, 1989, **Bondarenko**, the regional prosecutor and State Counselor of Justice 3rd Class, approved the rehabilitation of **Ferenc Pásztor**.

***

The mixed documents nos. 62–64 concerning the rehabilitation, based on the original texts, are provided below in my literal translation.

62.
00184
March 22, 1989, Uzhhorod – Letter from Lieutenant Colonel A. D. Pohorilyak, Head of the Investigative Division of the Transcarpathian Main Department of the State Security Committee of the Ukrainian SSR, requesting information regarding Ferenc Pásztor and his family

(Text typewritten on a pre-printed form)[208]

OC – 2021

To Lieutenant Colonel **A. T. Ignatov**,
Head of the Beregszász District Branch
of the Transcarpathian Main Department
of the State Security Committee of the Ukrainian SSR

Urgent

Based on the decision of the rehabilitation commission, **Pásztor Ferenc Ivanovych,** born in 1880 in Uzhhorod, of Hungarian nationality, parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász, episcopal deputy, vicar, residing at 4 Voroshilova Street, Beregszász, was sentenced in 1949 by the decision of the Special Board of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR to 25 years of forced labour in a correctional labour camp. (There is no information in the file regarding when he was to be released or the circumstances of his death.)

In the event of the aforementioned person's death, the death certificate must be sent immediately to the Beregszász Civil Registry Office, and their close relatives must be identified through an investigation so that they can be notified of the outcome of the case.

The criminal case file contains information about the following family members: Father: **Pásztor Ivan Ivanovych**, died in 1921.

[208] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, March 22, 1989, original, typewritten on a form, 1 page, 158.

Mother: **Pásztor Julianna Fedorovna**, died in 1917.

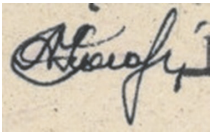
Wife: unmarried, he had no wife.

Children: he had no children.

Brother, sister: brother – **Pásztor Lajos Ivanovych**, born in 1888; sister – **Pásztor, Erzsébet Ivanovna**, born in 1891.

Both were born in the city of Uzhhorod and are residents of Beregszász. /There is no information regarding their address. /

We expect a response by March 29, 1989.



Lieutenant Colonel A. D. **Pohorilyak**,
Head of the Investigative Division of
the Transcarpathian Main Department
of the State Security Committee
of the Ukrainian SSR, March 22, 1989.

***

63.
00183

April 4, 1989, Beregszász – Informational report by Lieutenant Colonel A. T. Ignatov, Head of the Beregszász District Branch of the Transcarpathian Main Department of the State Security Committee of the Ukrainian SSR, on the results of the operational investigation.

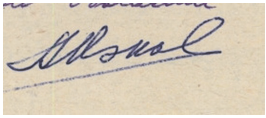
(Handwritten text)[209]

To Comrade Lieutenant Colonel **Pohorilyak**,
Head of the Investigative Division

[209] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, April 4, 1989, original, handwritten, 1 page, 158.

of the Transcarpathian Main Department
of the State Security Committee
of the Ukrainian SSR, Uzhhorod

The fact of the death of Ferenc Ivanovych Pásztor, born in 1880 in Uzhhorod, has not been recorded in the register of the Beregszász Civil Registry Office from 1950 to the present day. During the operational investigation, the Beregszász District Department of State Security identified and located his family members.



Lieutenant Colonel **A. T. Ignatov**,
Head of the Beregszász District Branch of the Transcarpathian Main Department of the State Security Committee of the Ukrainian SSR,
April 4, 1989.

***

64.
00181-182
August 2, 1989, Uzhhorod – Resolution on the rehabilitation of Ferenc Pásztor

(Typewritten text on a form) [210]

APPROVED
Prosecutor of
the Transcarpathian Region State
Counselor of Justice, 3rd Class

[210] KTAL, Pásztor file 149252, August 2, 1989, original, typewritten on a form, 2 pages, 156.

(or "State Justice Counselor, 3rd Class")
O. Yu. Bondarenko
August 2, 1989

Final Report

Based on the materials of the criminal proceedings concerning **Pásztor F. I.** (archival number 2021)

Full name: Pásztor Ferenc Ivanovych

Year of birth: 1880

Place of birth: Uzhhorod

Information on party membership, party membership card number: non-party member

Occupation prior to arrest: Transcarpathian Oblast, Beregszász, episcopal vicar, vicar, parish priest of the local Roman Catholic church.

Place of residence prior to arrest: Transcarpathian Oblast, city of Beregszász, Voroshilov Street, No. 4. There is no information regarding the circumstances of his death.

Information regarding his relatives: no information available.

When was he convicted, by which authority, and based on which articles of the Criminal Code; what was he found guilty of; did the decision in the case change, and if so, how; justification for the rehabilitation:

He was arrested on March 1, 1949. He committed the following crime: during the Hungarian occupation, he actively assisted them in consolidating their power, and together with them, he collaborated in strengthening the fascist Hungarian regime and in the fight against the Soviet Union. When Transcarpathia was liberated, the accused engaged in anti-Soviet agitation, maintained illegal contact with foreign countries, and kept in his possession publications with anti-Soviet content.

Sentenced on July 6, 1949, by the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR to 25 years of imprisonment in a corrective labour camp, with confiscation of property, based on Article 54-4 and Article 54-10, second part, of the Criminal Code of the Ukrain-

ian SSR, for having been a member of a fascist party in the past and for conducting anti-Soviet agitation.

It can be established from the archival criminal case materials that, in his activities as the parish priest of the Roman Catholic church in Beregszász, **Pásztor** was fulfilling his ecclesiastical duties.

In practice, in light of his ecclesiastical activities during the Hungarian occupation and subsequently in the year 1944—after the liberation of Transcarpathia—he did not engage in any anti-Soviet activities.

The charge is unfounded, as he was not a citizen of the Soviet Union during that period and did not reside in the territory of Ukraine; therefore, his activities carried out in occupied Transcarpathia do not fall under the jurisdiction of Soviet criminal law.

Based on the aforementioned, Article I of the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR dated January 16, 1989, "On Additional Measures to Restore Justice Regarding Victims of Repressions That Occurred in the 1930s and Early 1950s," also applies to **Pásztor Ferenc Ivanovych**.


Помощник прокурора _____ Ю.И.Раточка
Начальник подразделения УКГБ _____ А.Д.Погориляк

Ratocska, J. I.
Assistant
to the Prosecutor

Pohorilyák, A. D.
Head of Department of the Transcarpathian Main Directorate of the State Security Committee (KGB) of the Ukrainian SSR
August 2, 1989

CHAPTER 4. THE MEMORY OF FERENC PÁSZTOR IN BEREHOVE

4.1. PÁSZTOR MEMORIAL PLAQUE AND BUST

Today, in Beregszász (Berehove), a city with a strong Hungarian character in Transcarpathia, the memory of **Ferenc Pásztor** is fittingly preserved. Since the regime change, numerous memorial sites have been established. One of the most significant is the site of his priestly ministry, the Roman Catholic Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Beregszász, on the wall of which a white marble plaque was unveiled in the summer of 1990, upon the initiative of the faithful who deeply respect him.

At the time, he served as parish administrator, papal prelate, archdeacon, and vicar of the church, which is a protected monument with roots in the Árpád era, the number of believers exceeded 6,000. If we include the missions in Beregardó, Bulcsú, Macsola, Nagybégány, as well as Nagy- and Kismuzsaly, more than 10,000 people in total attended the Masses he celebrated, and thousands could listen to his wonderful, thought-provoking sermons, the continuity of which was broken by the cruel and ruthless henchmen of the communist dictatorship, who tore him away from the community, had him sentenced to imprisonment in the Gulag and deported him to a Siberian camp, where his life was ultimately extinguished to hasten the extinguishing of his life.

In the name of the committed, Christ-believing young Christian intellectuals who follow his teachings, Pásztor researcher **Anita Szendrey** paid tribute to the martyr vicar's priestly work with the following thoughts regarding his indelible merits in church and public life:

*"...**Ferenc Pásztor** was in many respects a defining figure of the Beregszász Roman Catholic Church, as he not only remained a kind of pillar of support for the city's Roman Catholic community during the most difficult period of church life and religiosity, but by writing pioneer-*

ing notes and manuscripts, he also provided an extremely great service for posterity, from which we can learn much valuable information."[211]

The uplifting memory of the martyr vicar has lived on through generations in the hearts of the faithful, from where the local agitators and ideologues of the atheist regime could never erase it.

On March 9, 2012, the Roman Catholic parish of Beregszász organized a conference titled "Remembrance of the Turbulent Years" in memory of **Ferenc Pásztor**, Papal Prelate, Episcopal Vicar, and parish priest of Beregszász, who suffered a martyr's death in the Gulag.

Prior to the event, a memorial mass was held in the local Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, with Antal Majnek, Bishop of the



Ferenc Pásztor memorial conference in Berehove

[211] Anita Szendrey: The Situation of the Roman Catholic Church in Beregszász at the Beginning of the Establishment of the Soviet System (1944–1949). *Acta Beregsasiensis* 2011/1, p. 132.

Roman Catholic Diocese of Munkács, serving as the principal celebrant.

In his sermon, he also spoke about the confessor and martyr Ferenc Pásztor, who "died for Jesus, accepted torture for the God of Love," he believed that no serious obstacle would stand in the way of his beatification.

The participants of the conference then moved to the parish lecture hall, where those interested could view a temporary exhibition of photos, documents, and mementos commemorating the life of **Ferenc Pásztor**.

Opening the conference, **Antal Michels**, parish priest of Berehove, stated the following: "We believe that in the person of **Ferenc Pásztor**, our city and our parish already have a patron saint," emphasized the parish priest, who gave thanks to the Good Lord for the service of the priest who became a victim of Stalinism, and for his service to the parish and his contribution to the growth of faith among the local community.



Initiative launched for the beatification of the martyr Ferenc Pásztor at the memorial conference in Berehove

Among others, **Károly Scherczer**, Consul of Berehove, and **Béla Ugron**, representative of the Order of Malta in Hungary, paid tribute to Ferenc Pásztor's steadfastness and his work for the community, and welcomed the initiative for his beatification.

In his opening remarks for the conference, Bishop ***Antal Majnek*** drew attention to the fact that, among other things, "for fifty years, they hardly spoke in public about the priests who had been through the camps. When setting out to research the lives of the Roman Catholic priests deported from Transcarpathia, with special regard to those who lost their lives, the undertaking initially seemed almost hopeless due to a lack of information. However, this conference also nourishes the hope that we will succeed in proving: the martyrs undertook faithfulness and death for their faith, for God, for Jesus," the bishop stated.

Subsequently, assistant professor **Erzsébet D. Molnár**, a teacher at the Rákóczi College, gave a lecture outlining the turning points of Transcarpathia from the end of World War I to the establishment of the Soviet system; then, the subsequent speakers spoke in more detail about individual stages of **Ferenc Pásztor's** life.

Anita Szendrey, a PhD student at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Debrecen, one of the enthusiastic organizers of the conference, illustrated with numerous examples the devoted service of **Ferenc Pásztor**, and his sacrificial work, carried out ceaselessly even in the most difficult times for the spiritual edification of his believers.

Dr. Ferenc Rabár, a teacher at the Apor Vilmos Catholic College, demonstrated how the parish priest was able to build during the years of peace.

Béla Bohán, a priest of the Jesuit St. Joseph Church in Szeged, wrote an information-rich treatise about the final phase of the parish priest's life. According to him, the "Golgotha" of the persecuted vicar "ended on October 15, 1951; he died in Tayshet, Siberia."[212]

[212] **szcs.:** https://karpataljalap.net/2012/03/09/pasztor-ferenc-martir-beregszaszi-plebanosra-emlekeztunk (Accessed: December 7, 2024).
The Order of Friars Minor (commonly called the Franciscans, the Franciscan Order, or the Seraphic Order; postnominal abbreviation: **OFM**) is a mendicant

Another important milestone in the Catholic Church's culture of remembrance in Berehove occurred when the number of memorial sites in the courtyard of the local Roman Catholic parish was expanded with the addition of a bust.

Before the unveiling of the bust commemorating **Ferenc Pásztor** of blessed memory, a memorial mass was held on October 13, 2013, on the occasion of the 62nd anniversary of his death, at the initiative of **Antal Michels**, the then-Roman Catholic parish priest of Berehove. The invited principal celebrant was **Tihamér Papp**, OFM, a former Roman Catholic parish priest of Berehove.



*The principal celebrant of the memorial mass was **Tihamér Papp,** OFM, a former Roman Catholic parish priest of Berehove*

According to contemporary press reports on the event, the Franciscan father commemorated the sacrificial life of **Ferenc Pásztor** and

Catholic religious order, founded in 1209 by Francis of Assisi. The order adheres to the teachings and spiritual disciplines of its founder and his main associates and followers, such as Clare of Assisi, Anthony of Padua, and Elizabeth of Hungary, among many others. The Order of Friars Minor is the largest of the contemporary First Orders within the Franciscan movement.

the fruits of his martyrdom in his homily. "The blood of the martyrs has always been a seed in the life of Christianity, which 'gave birth' to new believers for the Church," said **Tihamér Papp**. He drew attention to the fact that "our lives can only have meaning if we place Christ at the centre of our lives, just as **Ferenc Pásztor** and **Saint Francis** of Assisi did, and thus our God will be our all."

After the Holy Mass, **Antal Michels**, the then-Roman Catholic parish priest of Berehove, invited the congregation to the parish courtyard for the unveiling of the bust.

The unveiling ceremony was attended by **Ferenc Pásztor Jr.**, the grandson of the blessed-memory parish priest's brother, who spoke about his relative's life and memories in his address.

The event was also attended by **Béla Bozsik**, Consul of Berehove, who stated in his speech that during the Soviet dictatorship, attempts to eradicate the values that **Ferenc Pásztor** also represented were in vain, because these values are indestructible. Among other things, he said: *"If the parish priest stood by his faith and his Hungarian identity here in Transcarpathia, he never lost them in the labour camp either."*



Franciscan friar Tihamér Papp blessed and consecrated the Pásztor bust.

Following this, historian **Anita Szendrey**, a PhD student at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Debrecen, who has conducted extensive research on the life of **Ferenc Pásztor** in recent years, presented the former parish priest's biography to those present.

After this, the bust of **Ferenc Pásztor** was unveiled and blessed, and wreaths were laid, which was created by Berehove sculptor **Sándor Szilágyi** and generously donated to the parish. A commemorative plaque was also made above the statue, on which the following lines can be read: "**Ferenc Pásztor** (1880–1951), Papal Prelate, Episcopal Vicar, Archdeacon, Parish Priest. "*I remain your obedient son with filial devotion*"."[213]

A **Ferenc Pásztor** Commemorative Ceremony was also held in Berehove on October 14, 2014. The faithful of the Roman Catholic Parish of Berehove would like to initiate the process of his beatification, for which the preservation of his memory and the prayers answered through him are essential. It is necessary to make his exemplary life and self-sacrifice known to an ever-widening circle; as someone who died for his faith and stood up for the Hungarians of Transcarpathia even in times of trial.

At the memorial ceremony, an exhibition on the life and work of **Ferenc Pásztor**, curated by **Anita Szendrey**, was also opened.

As is well known, **Ferenc Pásztor** also served in the Upper Hungarian town of Dobóruszka; therefore, the parish invited Father **Attila Weiszer** and the faithful from the settlement as guests for this occasion, as the legacy of Ferenc Pásztor connects the two parishes. The two communities hope to build closer cooperation and establish a sister-parish relationship in the future. Father **Attila Weiszer** gave a presentation on the years **Ferenc Pásztor** spent in Dobóruszka. After the memorial mass, the event concluded with a joint prayer and the laying of wreaths.[214]

In the Catholic community of Berehove, it has become a tradition to hold the **Ferenc Pásztor** Memorial Ceremony every October; it is held even in the shadow of war, and prayers are also offered for peace.

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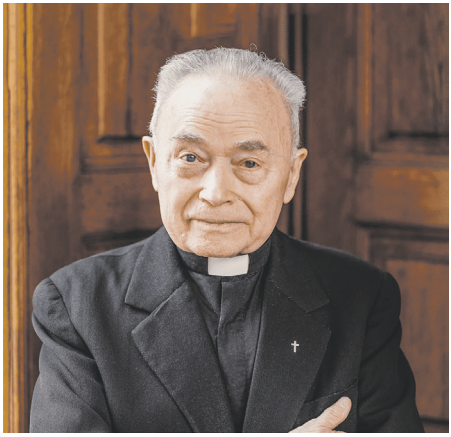
[213] **Source:** https://munkacs-diocese.org/hu/2013/10/14/pasztor-ferenc-szoboravatas-beregszaszban/ (Accessed: December 7, 2024).

[214] **Annamária Jakab:** https://munkacs-diocese.org/hu/2014/10/27/pasztor-ferenc-emlekuennepseg-beregszaszban/ (Accessed: June 17, 2026).

4.2. THE FERENC PÁSZTOR AWARD

During one of the church events in the first decade after the turn of the millennium, in 2013, council member **István Bárdos** announced on behalf of the church council that an award had been named after **Ferenc Pásztor**.

Every October, it is presented to an individual who, through their sacrificial work and service, has contributed to the flourishing of the life of the Roman Catholic parish in Berehove.



Béla Bohán, former parish priest of Berehove

The recognition was awarded for the first time to Jesuit priest **Béla Bohán** [215] — who was also a former parish priest of Berehove— for his service in Berehove, and for his "entire authentic life." Father Bohán entered the Society of Jesus on October 10, 1955, and was later ordained a priest in Budapest. In the motherland, he served as a cantor, catechist, chaplain, and parish priest in many places. After the restoration of the order, he was assigned to the Transcarpathian mission; he

[215] **Béla Bohán**, SJ (1936–2023). He returned to Hungary in 2011, after which he served as the pastor of the Jesuit St. Joseph Parish in Szeged until his death.

was the parish priest in Rakhiv in 1991, then in Uzhhorod from 1992 to 2002, and in Berehove from 2002 to 2011.

In 2014, the Ferenc Pásztor Foundation awarded parish priest **Antal Michels**, who, through his tireless work during his three years in Berehove, began to realize a long-held dream: the establishment of the Ferenc Pásztor Community and Pilgrim House. After his return, **Antal Michels** has been carrying out his priestly service as the parish priest of Józsefváros in Budapest.

On October 22, 2017, a commemoration and award ceremony was held at the Roman Catholic church to mark the 66th anniversary of the death of **Ferenc Pásztor,** papal prelate, episcopal vicar, former parish priest of Berehove, and martyr. Local dean and parish priest **János Molnár** welcomed the congregation, especially Father **Tihamér**, and invited him to celebrate the Holy Mass. In his homily, he recalled his time spent in Berehove, mentioning, among other things, that he had received the greatest gift during his service, as he was able to be the pastor of the community following Soviet oppression, at a time when the parish was reborn, and community life and faith were awakening as new vocations emerged. At the end of the ceremony, **István Bárdos,** a member of the Parish Council, read the laudation, and **István Birta**, President of the Parish Council, presented the Ferenc Pásztor Award to Franciscan friar Fr. **Tihamér Papp**, former parish priest of Berehove.

The Franciscan friar was born in Újpest on December 6, 1943. After completing his theological studies, he was ordained a Franciscan priest in Esztergom on February 25, 1968, at which time he took the religious name Tihamér. In the following years, he carried out Franciscan service in several settlements; he was a teacher, rector, dormitory director, Franciscan superior, chaplain, parish priest, and master of Franciscan candidates, among others. In 1991, his vocation and his superiors called him to a mission in Transcarpathia to replace Franciscan friar **László Zatykó,** OFM, who, alongside **Antal Majnek**, OFM, and **Dávid Radics,** OFM, was one of the founders of the Transcarpathian Franciscan Mission. **Father Tihamér** spent 11 years in Transcarpathia. Among other things, his activities in Berehove were also memorable. After his service in Berehove, he spent some time in the

motherland gathering strength, then returned to Transcarpathia in late December 1995. After Father **Antal Majnek** was ordained bishop in 1996, the provincial superior entrusted him with the leadership of the Transcarpathian Franciscan Mission in Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős), where three priests served instead of the previous fifteen. Father **Tihamér** was later appointed by his bishop as the episcopal vicar for Hungarian-speaking parishes. He returned to Hungary in 2002.



After the Holy Mass, they laid wreaths at the memorial plaque of the former martyr parish priest, and the faithful then had the opportunity to meet with Father Tihamér.[216]



Since then, many outstanding individuals have received the *Ferenc Pásztor Award*, which bears his name.

[216] *Rita Fehér Bunda: „Franciscan friar Tihamér Papp received the Ferenc Pásztor Award in 2017." *Kárpátalja.ma*, July 12, 2024 (accessed), https://karpatalja.ma/karpatalja/kozelet/papp-tihamer-ferences-szerzetes-kapta-iden-a-pasztor-ferenc-dijat/.

In October 2020, religious education teacher **Katalin Kucsinka** (b. 1947) of Berehove became the recipient of the Pásztor Award. By granting the award, the parish recognized her twenty-three years of dedicated service. The popular educator "completed her studies at the Leadership Training Institute of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Administration of Mukachevo between 1994 and 1997, where she earned a certificate as a community leader and religious education teacher. She was among the first in our parish to begin teaching catechism to the youngest children. Drawing on her teaching experience in religious education, she made her catechism classes and First Communion preparation sessions very popular among children. She was an organizer of festive programs and commemorations related to church holidays; she also sings in the Holy Cross Choir." (Excerpt from the laudation).[217]

In October 2021, **István Bárdos** (1961) of Berehove was awarded the Ferenc Pásztor Award, "who in 1997 completed the Leadership Training [Institute] of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Administration of Mukachevo, obtaining a community leader and religious education teacher qualification. Subsequently—for college students and young people—he led community religious education on Friday evenings with his wife, from among whose members several chose the priestly vocation. In several cycles (2002–2009, 2013–2015), he was the lay president of the parish's church council for a total of 10 years. Between 2015 and 2018, he led the spiritual guidance and recruitment of altar servers. And since 2018, he has been a religious education teacher at the boys' and girls' dormitories for Catholic students in Berehove."[218]

In October 2022, the Ferenc Pásztor Award was presented to Consul General in Uzhhorod **József Bacskai**, who "previously—between

[217] Rita Fehér Bunda: „Hitoktató kapta az idei Pásztor Ferenc-díjat" [Religious Education Teacher Received This Year's Ferenc Pásztor Award]. *Kárpátalja.ma*, July 12, 2024 (accessed), https://karpatalja.ma/kultura/hitoktato-kapta-az-idei-pasztor-ferenc-dijat/.

[218] Rita Fehér Bunda: „Bárdos István kapta idén a Pásztor Ferenc-díjat" [István Bárdos Received the Ferenc Pásztor Award This Year]. *KMMI.org.ua*, July 12, 2024 (accessed), https://kmmi.org.ua/cikkek/hirek/bardos-istvan-kapta-iden-a-pasztor-ferenc-dijat/.

2008 and 2010—led the foreign mission in Berehove, and between 2010 and 2015 in Uzhhorod; but even until his return in 2021, while serving as Deputy State Secretary for Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, he did not forget the Hungarians of Transcarpathia," stated **István Bárdos**.[219]



Vicar János Molnár presented the Ferenc Pásztor Award to Consul General József Bacskai[220]

With expressions of gratitude for all his efforts, local parish priest and vicar **János Molnár** presented the prestigious award to **József Bacskai**, and the Consul General was also made an honorary member of the parish.

Most recently, on October 25, 2023, **Antal Majnek**, Bishop Emeritus of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Mukachevo, received the Ferenc Pásztor Award.

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[219] Marton Erzsébet [author's name if applicable]: „Bacskai József főkonzulnak ítélték az idei Pásztor Ferenc-díjat: ‚Csak tettem azt, amit tehettem'" [Consul General József Bacskai Awarded This Year's Ferenc Pásztor Award: „I Only Did What I Could"]. *Kárpátinfo.net*, October 17, 2022 (accessed July 12, 2024), https://karpatinfo.net/2022/10/17/bacskai-jozsef-fokonzulnak-iteltek-az-idei-pasztor-ferenc-dijat-csak-tettem-azt-amit-tehettem-200066605/.

[220] Source: *Kárpátinfo.net*, „Bacskai József főkonzulnak ítélték az idei Pásztor Ferenc-díjat: ‚Csak tettem azt, amit tehettem'" [Consul General József Bacskai Awarded This Year's Ferenc Pásztor Award: „I Only Did What I Could"], October 17, 2022 (accessed July 12, 2024), https://karpatinfo.net/2022/10/17/bacskai-jozsef-fokonzulnak-iteltek-az-idei-pasztor-ferenc-dijat-csak-tettem-azt-amit-tehettem-200066605/.

On this autumn day, the faithful of the Roman Catholic parish in Berehove once again gathered to remember their former parish priest, **Ferenc Pásztor**. After the solemn memorial Mass, the faithful heard the laudation, which was read by **István Bárdos**, Vice President of the Association of Christian Intellectuals of Berehove. Among other things, the laudation stated that the bishop has played a major role over the past 27 years not only in the life of the diocese, but specifically in the life, development, and spiritual renewal of the Berehove parish, preserving its faith and conveying the image of a loving, caring, and merciful God. He always appointed parish priests for Berehove who carried on the spirit of **Ferenc Pásztor**. The main characteristics of his assistance and contributions were modesty, a sense of duty, selflessness, openness, encouragement, empathy, and active love."[221]



Parish administrator János Molnár presents the Ferenc Pásztor Award to Bishop Emeritus Antal Majnek[222]

Antal Majnek (1952) entered the Hungarian Province of the Franciscan Order, named after Saint John of Capistrano, in 1977, where

[221] Rita FEHÉR: "They are not praising me, but God the Father" – Retired bishop Antal Majnek was awarded this year's Pastor Ferenc Award. Roman Catholic Diocese of Munkács, 2023.10.30. https://munkacs-diocese.org/hu/2023/10/30/nem-engem-dicsernek-hanem-az-uristent-majnek-antal-nyugalmazott-puspok-lett-az-idei-pasztor-ferenc-dij-kituntettetje/ (Download, 2024.07.12.)

[222] Source: https://karpatinfo.net/2023/10/29/majnek-antal-nyugalmazott-puspok-kapta-pasztor-ferenc-dijat-nehez-idokben-sem-hagyta-el-karpataljai-hiveit-200076472 (Download.12. 07. 2024.)

he chose the religious name Antal. He took his perpetual vows in 1981 and was ordained as a priest in Budapest on April 17, 1982. He began his missionary work in Transcarpathia in July 1989. On December 9, 1995, **Pope John Paul II** appointed him Apostolic Administrator of the Apostolic Administration of Transcarpathia, which had been established on August 14, 1993. Shortly thereafter, he became the Vicar General.

Pope John Paul II ordained him bishop in Rome on January 6, 1996. On October 7, 1997, he was appointed Apostolic Administrator at the head of the Apostolic Administration of Transcarpathia. On March 27, 2002, **Pope John Paul II** elevated the Apostolic Administration to the rank of a diocese, establishing the Roman Catholic Diocese of Mukachevo, and appointed **Antal Majnek** as its first diocesan bishop. He held this office until January 28, 2022, when he resigned for health reasons." Since then, he has continued his missionary work in the region.

Finally, **István Bárdos** highlighted: "Even in these very difficult times, Antal Majnek has not abandoned us; even as bishop emeritus, he has taken on the pastoral duties of five parishes and continues to participate in charitable and social assistance, as well as in the delivery of donations to those in need."

4.3. FERENC PÁSZTOR COMMUNITY AND PILGRIM HOUSE

On July 11, 2014, a pilgrim house was inaugurated in Berehove. The Roman Catholic community centre in Berehove was named after Ferenc Pásztor. The community centre had been envisioned two years earlier by Antal Michels, the local Roman Catholic parish priest.



Ferenc Pásztor Community and Pilgrim House [223]

The realization of the project was also supported by **Antal Majnek**, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Mukachevo. As a first step, a playground was inaugurated in the church courtyard. Meanwhile, a gazebo was built, where various cultural programs are held.

The most important part of the project is the renovation of the three-story building, which was owned by the Church before the Second World War; later, the state established a vocational school and a general school in the building. Over time, the institutions began using a different building, and the property, which had been used until then, stood vacant.

[223] Source: *Pásztor Ferenc Közösségi és Zarándokház*, http://pasztorferenchaz.com.ua/ (accessed June 17, 2026).

The Church recently reclaimed the property, which was in a dilapidated state. It was built in 1904 to serve as a Hungarian parochial school.

After the territory was annexed to Czechoslovakia, an additional floor was built onto the building in the 1930s at the initiative of Ferenc Pásztor, the parish priest of Berehove, to expand the school. A church school operated on the premises, founded by the Catholic priest Ferenc Pásztor. For this reason, the parish decided to name the pilgrim house after Ferenc Pásztor.



Classrooms for Sunday school, a conference hall, and a chapel were also established in the community centre.

The parish office was also to be relocated to the new building.

The community centre frequently hosts various events and conferences as well.



Most of the facility was intended to continue functioning as a pilgrim house.

APPENDIX

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UÁHUA	Uzhhorod Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine

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MELEGA	MELEGA, Gabriella Anna. "A kárpátaljai római katolikus egyház szenvedéstörténete" [The Passion History of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia]. Accessed June 17, 2026. http://regi.mindszenty.katolikus.hu/vh58/58_1.html.
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EXCERPTS FROM THE MATERIALS OF THE PÁSZTOR FILE



У С С Р

МИНИСТЕРСТВО ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЙ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

Следственная часть

ДЕЛО № 149252.

По обвинению Пастор Федора Ивановича по ст.ст. 54-4 и 54-10 ч.I УК УССР

Начато 1 марта 1949 г. В одном томах

Окончено 12 мая 1949 г. Том № 1

Центральный архив МГБ СССР 278700

278700

ОСНОВАНИЕ: Приказ НКВД, Прокуратуры и НКЮ Союза ССР № 00339 от 10/IV 1939 г.

Архив № 5046 29/5/58

Сдано в архив ... 194 г.

Передача находящихся в производстве следственных дел, а также взятых из архива дел в другие отделы или органы МГБ, хотя бы и временно, производится исключительно через

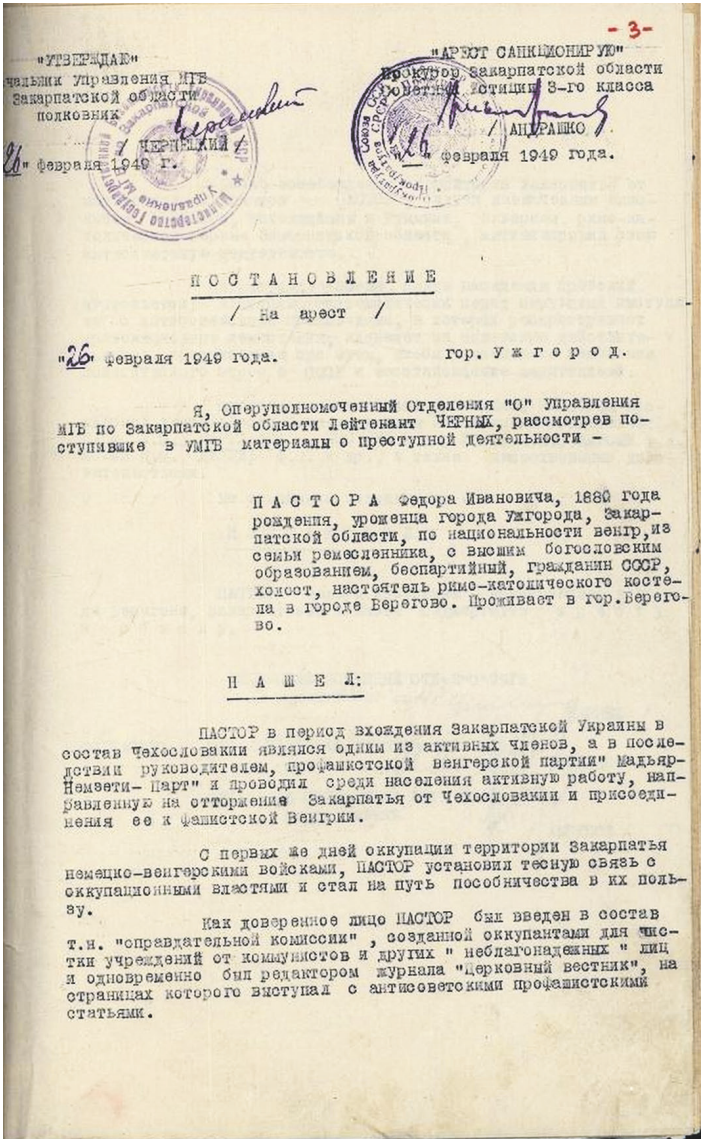
В СЕКРЕТАРИАТ

Перелом следственного дела оформляется постановлением, утвержденным начальником соответствующего управления МГБ или его заместителем.

Дело зарегистрировано в Отделе „А" МГБ СССР № 44622

2021

Inner cover of the Pásztor File



- 3 -

"УТВЕРЖДАЮ"
Начальник Управления МГБ
Закарпатской области
подполковник
/ ЧЕРНЫЙ /
"26" февраля 1949 г.

"АРЕСТ САНКЦИОНИРУЮ"
Прокурор Закарпатской области
Советник юстиции 3-го класса
/ АНДРАШКО /
"26" февраля 1949 года.

П О С Т А Н О В Л Е Н И Е

/ На арест /

"26" февраля 1949 года. гор. У ж г о р о д.

Я, Оперуполномоченный Отделения "О" Управления МГБ по Закарпатской области Лейтенант ЧЕРНЫХ, рассмотрев поступившие в УМГБ материалы о преступной деятельности -

П А С Т О Р А Федора Ивановича, 1880 года рождения, уроженца города Ужгорода, Закарпатской области, по национальности венгр, из семьи ремесленника, с высшим богословским образованием, беспартийный, гражданин СССР, холост, настоятель римо-католического костёла в городе Берегово. Проживает в гор. Берегово.

Н А Ш Е Л:

ПАСТОР в период вхождения Закарпатской Украины в состав Чехословакии являясь одним из активных членов, а в последствии руководителем, профашистской венгерской партии" Мадьяр-Немзети- Парт" и проводил среди населения активную работу, направленную на отторжение Закарпатья от Чехословакии и присоединения ее к фашистской Венгрии.

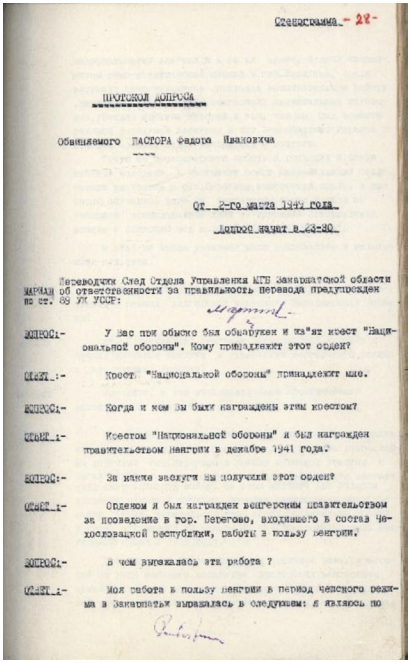
С первых же дней оккупации территории Закарпатья немецко-венгерскими войсками, ПАСТОР установил тесную связь с оккупационными властями и стал на путь пособничества в их пользу.

Как доверенное лицо ПАСТОР был введен в состав т.н. "справедательной комиссии" , созданной оккупантами для чистки учреждений от коммунистов и других " неблагонадежных " лиц и одновременно был редактором журнала "церковный вестник", на страницах которого выступал с антисоветскими профашистскими статьями.

Front page of the arrest warrant



Prison photograph, fingerprint, and signature of Ferenc Pásztor taken after his arrest



Стенограмма - 28-

ПРОТОКОЛ ДОПРОСА

Обвиняемого ПАСТОРА Федора Ивановича

От 2-го марта 1949 года

Допрос начат в 24:30

Переводчик След Отдела Управления МГБ Закарпатской области МАРИАШ об ответственности за правильность перевода предупрежден по ст. 88 УК УССР:

ВОПРОС:- У Вас при обыске был обнаружен и из"ят крест "Национальной обороны". Кому принадлежит этот орден?

ОТВЕТ:- Крест "Национальной обороны" принадлежит мне.

ВОПРОС:- Когда и кем вы были награждены этим крестом?

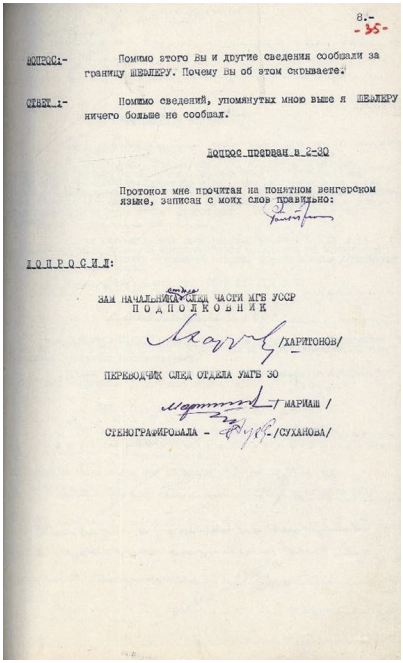
ОТВЕТ:- Крестом "Национальной обороны" я был награжден правительством венгрии в декабре 1941 года.

ВОПРОС:- За какие заслуги вы получили этот орден?

ОТВЕТ:- Орденом я был награжден венгерским правительством за поведение в гор. Берегово, входившего в состав Чехословацкой республики, работы в пользу венгрии.

ВОПРОС:- В чем выражалась эта работа ?

ОТВЕТ:- Моя работа в пользу венгрии в период чешского режима в Закарпатье выражалась в следующем: я являюсь по



8.- -35-

ВОПРОС:- Помимо этого вы и другие сведения сообщали за границу ШЕЛЕРУ. Почему вы об этом скрываете?

ОТВЕТ:- Помимо сведений, упомянутых мною выше я ШЕЛЕРУ ничего больше не сообщал.

Допрос прерван в 2-30

Протокол мне прочитан на понятном венгерском языке, записан с моих слов правильно:

Г О П Р О С И Л:

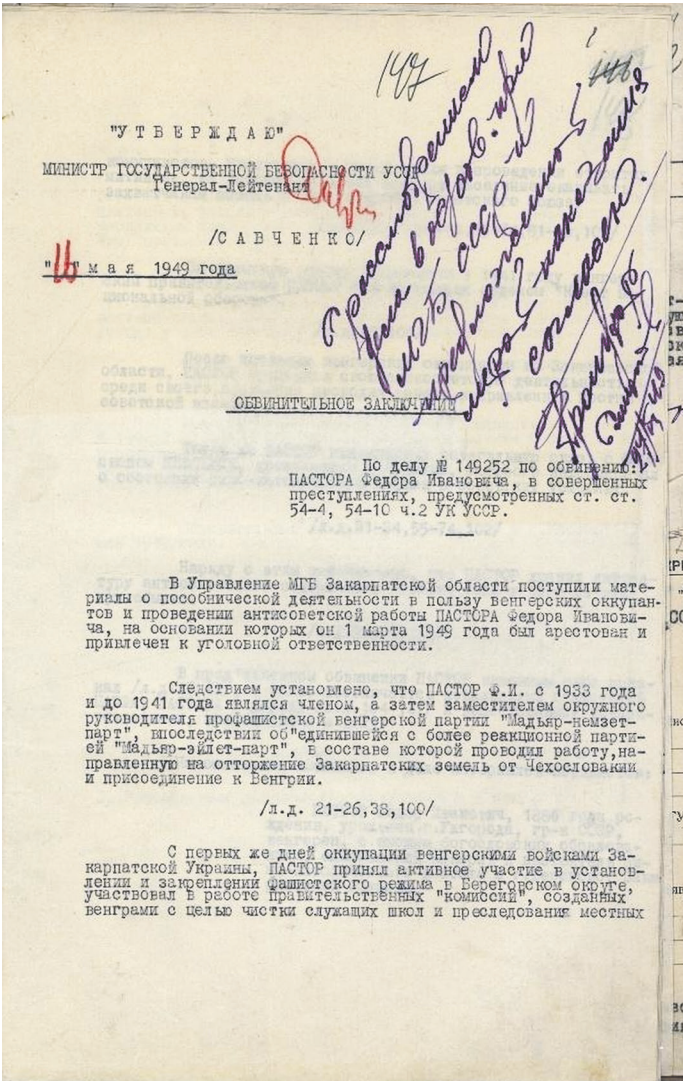
ЗАМ НАЧАЛЬНИКА ОТДЕЛА ЧАСТИ МГБ УССР
П О Д П О Л К О В Н И К
/ХАРИТОНОВ/

ПЕРЕВОДЧИК СЛЕД ОТДЕЛА УМГБ ЗО
/ МАРИАШ /

СТЕНОГРАФИРОВАЛА - /СУХАНОВА/

First page of the interrogation records of Ferenc Pásztor, Uzhhorod, March 2, 1949.

Eighth and final page of the interrogation records of Ferenc Pásztor, Uzhhorod, March 2, 1949.



"У Т В Е Р Ж Д А Ю"

МИНИСТР ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЙ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ УССР
Генерал-Лейтенант

/С А В Ч Е Н К О/

"11" м а я 1949 года

ОБВИНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ

По делу № 149252 по обвинению ПАСТОРА Федора Ивановича, в совершенных преступлениях, предусмотренных ст. ст. 54-4, 54-10 ч.2 УК УССР.

—

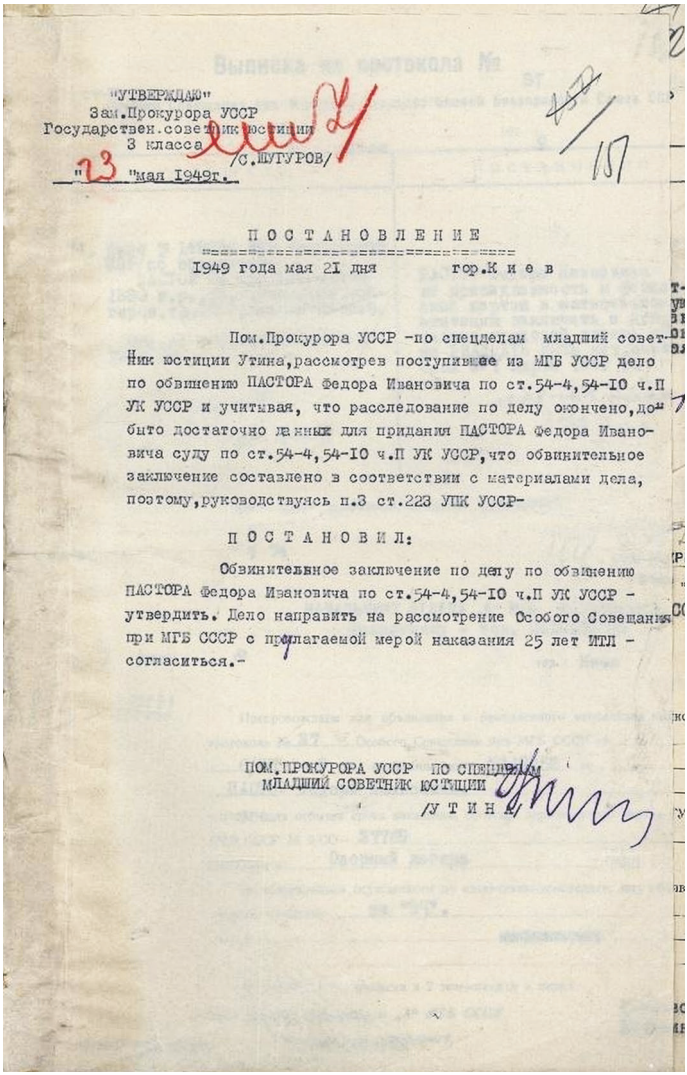
В Управление МГБ Закарпатской области поступили материалы о пособнической деятельности в пользу венгерских оккупантов и проведении антисоветской работы ПАСТОРА Федора Ивановича, на основании которых он 1 марта 1949 года был арестован и привлечен к уголовной ответственности.

Следствием установлено, что ПАСТОР Ф.И. с 1933 года и до 1941 года являлся членом, а затем заместителем окружного руководителя профашистской венгерской партии "Мадьяр-немзет-парт", впоследствии об"единившейся с более реакционной партией "Мадьяр-эйлет-парт", в составе которой проводил работу, направленную на отторжение Закарпатских земель от Чехословакии и присоединение к Венгрии.

/л.д. 21-26,38,100/

С первых же дней оккупации венгерскими войсками Закарпатской Украины, ПАСТОР принял активное участие в установлении и закреплении фашистского режима в Берегсаском округе, участвовал в работе правительственных "комиссий", созданных венграми с целью чистки служащих школ и преследования местных

First page of the Indictment, May 11, 1949.



"УТВЕРЖДАЮ"
Зам.Прокурора УССР
Государствен.советник юстиции
3 класса /С.ШУТУРОВ/
"23" мая 1949г.

П О С Т А Н О В Л Е Н И Е

1949 года мая 21 дня гор.К и е в

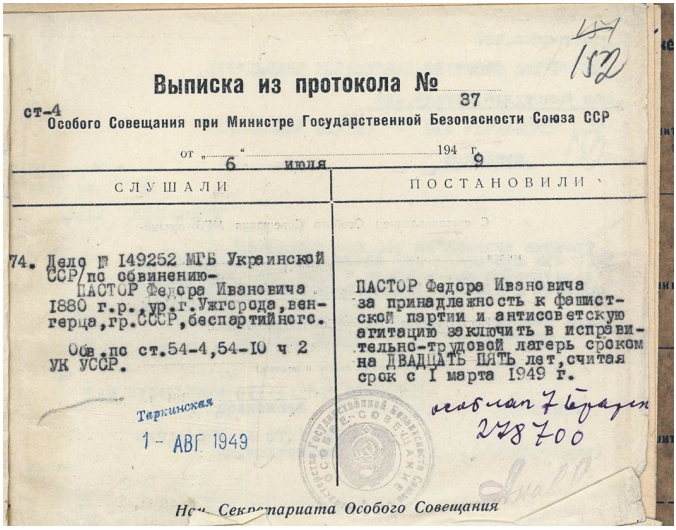
Пом.Прокурора УССР -по спецделам младший советник юстиции Утина, рассмотрев поступившее из МГБ УССР дело по обвинению ПАСТОРА Федора Ивановича по ст.54-4, 54-10 ч.П УК УССР и учитывая, что расследование по делу окончено, добыто достаточно данных для предания ПАСТОРА Федора Ивановича суду по ст.54-4, 54-10 ч.П УК УССР, что обвинительное заключение составлено в соответствии с материалами дела, поэтому, руководствуясь п.3 ст.223 УПК УССР-

П О С Т А Н О В И Л:

Обвинительное заключение по делу по обвинению ПАСТОРА Федора Ивановича по ст.54-4, 54-10 ч.П УК УССР - утвердить. Дело направить на рассмотрение Особого Совещания при МГБ СССР с предлагаемой мерой наказания 25 лет ИТЛ - согласиться.-

ПОМ.ПРОКУРОРА УССР ПО СПЕЦДЕЛАМ
МЛАДШИЙ СОВЕТНИК ЮСТИЦИИ
/У Т И Н А/

Recommendation by the Prosecutor of the Ukrainian SSR for sentencing Ferenc Pásztor to 25 years imprisonment



Выписка из протокола № 37

ст-4

Особого Совещания при Министре Государственной Безопасности Союза ССР

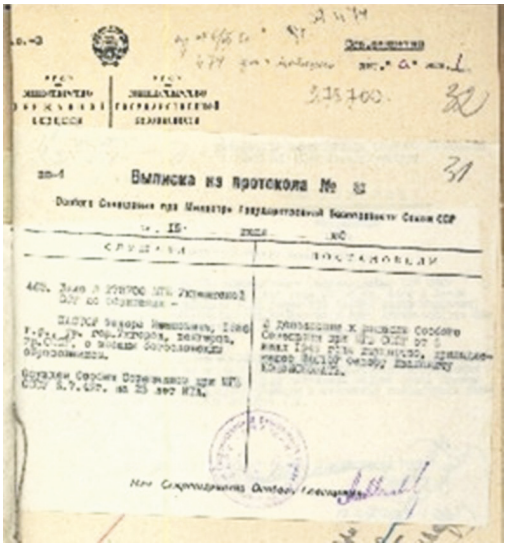
от „ 6 " июля 194 9 г.

СЛУШАЛИ	ПОСТАНОВИЛИ
74. Дело № 149252 МГБ Украинской ССР/по обвинению- ПАСТОР Федора Ивановича 1880 г.р., ур.г.Ужгорода, венгерца, гр.СССР, беспартийного. Об.по ст.54-4,54-10 ч 2 УК УССР.	ПАСТОР Федора Ивановича за принадлежность к фашистской партии и антисоветскую агитацию заключить в исправительно-трудовой лагерь сроком на ДВАДЦАТЬ ПЯТЬ лет, считая срок с 1 марта 1949 г.

Терлинская

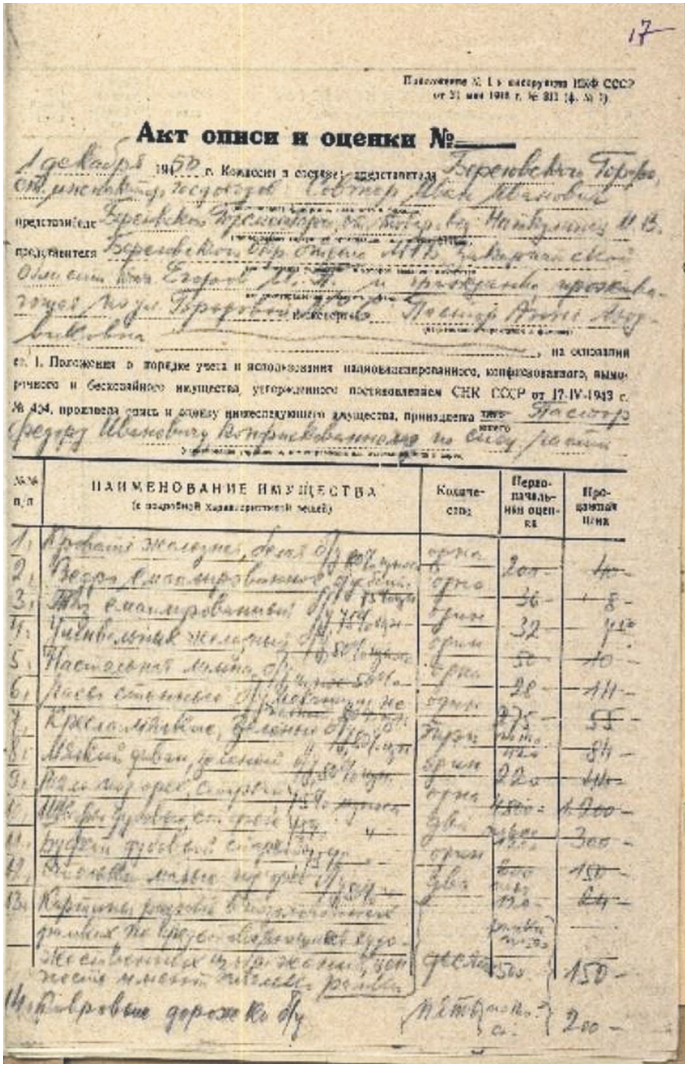
1 - АВГ 1949

Ferenc Pásztor was sentenced to 25 years in prison at the meeting of the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR



Выписка из протокола № 31

At the second meeting of the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, a decision was made to confiscate his assets



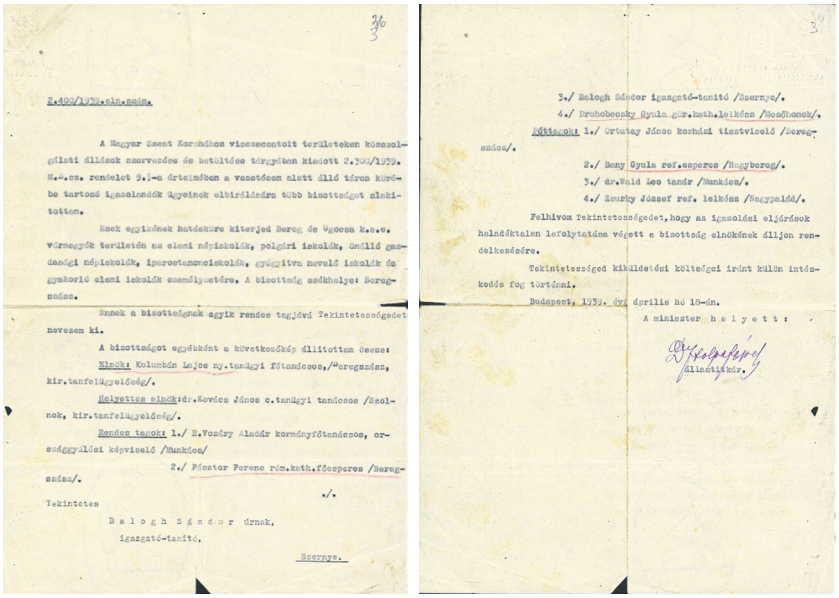
Акт описи и оценки №____

The first page of the inventory and valuation record of Ferenc Pásztor's confiscated assets

ARCHIVAL COPIES OF THE PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ATTACHED TO THE PÁSZTOR-FILE IN A SEPARATE PACKAGE



Ferenc Pásztor speaks into a microphone as he greets the troops entering Beregszász. Photograph by Géza Ignáczy, Beregszász, Bankudvar



2.400/1939.sz.a.kiáa.

A Magyar Szent Korona-hoz visszacsatolt területeken közoktatási ügyek szervezése és betöltése tárgyában kiadott 2.300/1939. M.E.sz. rendelet 9.§-a értelmében a vezetésem alatt álló tárca körébe tartozó igazolandók ügyeinek elbírálására több bizottságot alakítottam.

Ennek egyikének hatáskörébe kiterjed Beregh de Ugocsa M.e.e. vármegyék területén az elemi népiskolák, polgári iskolák, önálló gazdasági népiskolák, iparostanonciskolák, gyógyítva nevelő iskolák és gyakorló elemi iskolák személyzetére. A bizottság székhelyéül Beregszászt.

Ennek a bizottságnak egyik rendes tagjává Tekintetességedet nevezem ki.

A bizottságot egyébként a következőkép állítottam össze:

Elnök: Kolumbán Lajos ny.tanügyi főtanácsos,/Beregszász, kir.tanfelügyelőség/.

Helyettes elnök: dr.Kovács János c.tanügyi tanácsos /Szolnok, kir.tanfelügyelőség/.

Rendes tagok: 1./ B.Vozáry Aladár kormányfőtanácsos, országgyűlési képviselő /Munkács/

2./ Pásztor Ferenc róm.kath.főesperes /Beregszász/.

./.

Tekintetes

B a l o g h S á n d o r úrnak,

igazgató-tanító.

Szernye.

3./ Balogh Sándor igazgató-tanító /Szernye/.

4./ Prohobecsky Gyula gör.kath.lelkész /Nagyhonok/.

Póttagok: 1./ Ortutay János kerületi tisztviselő /Beregszász/.

2./ Bery Gyula ref.esperes /Nagybereg/.

3./ dr.Wald Leo tanár /Munkács/.

4./ Szurky József ref. lelkész /Nagypalád/.

Felhívom Tekintetességedet, hogy az igazolási eljárások halaszthatatlan lefolytatása végett a bizottság elnökének díjjon rendelkezésére.

Tekintetességed kiküldetési költségei iránt külön intézkedés fog történni.

Budapest, 1939. évi április hó 18-án.

A miniszter h e l y e t t :

államtitkár.

By a letter dated April 18, 1939, reference no. 2,400, the Hungarian government's State Secretary for Educational Affairs appointed Ferenc Pásztor, among others, to the ***Verification Committee*** *responsible for vetting the staff of educational institutions*



KÁRPÁTALJA

Megjöttek a honvédek

Bárdossy László miniszterelnököt táviratban üdvözölte Beregvármegye közigazgatási bizottsága

Szigoruan tilos könyv nélkül készségáru cikket eladni

Beregvármegye hadirokkantjainak impozáns gyülése



KÁRPÁTALJA

HORTHY MIKLÓS

Pásztor Ferenc — pápai prelátus

Hogyan olják meg a Noah-szőlő problémáját

Százezer

KOVÁCS KRÉM

Kedvezmények a védetlség alól kiesett birtokoknak

Articles written in the Beregszász newspaper Kárpátalja on May 19, 1941 and December 7, 1941 about Ferenc Pásztor's religious and public activities



ORSZÁGOS NEMZETVÉDELMI BIZOTTSÁG

IGAZOLVÁNY

MAGYARORSZÁG FŐMÉLTÓSÁGU KORMÁNYZÓJA ÁLTAL ALAPITOTT

NEMZETVÉDELMI KERESZT

KITÜNTETÉS VISELÉSÉNEK JOGOSULTSÁGÁRA

Pásztor Ferenc részére

Születési év hely, ország: 1880 Ungvár

Szülőanyjának leánykori neve: Faby Juliana

Lakása: Beregszász, Rákóczi-ter 4

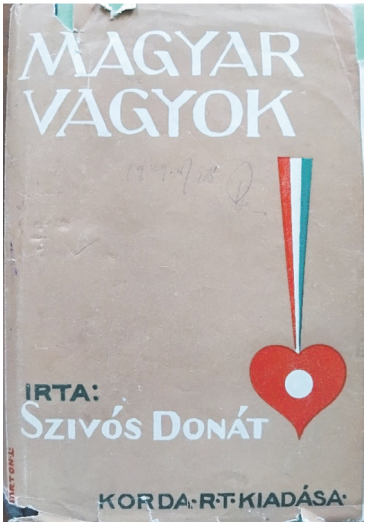
Budapest, 1941 évi szeptember hó 18 nap

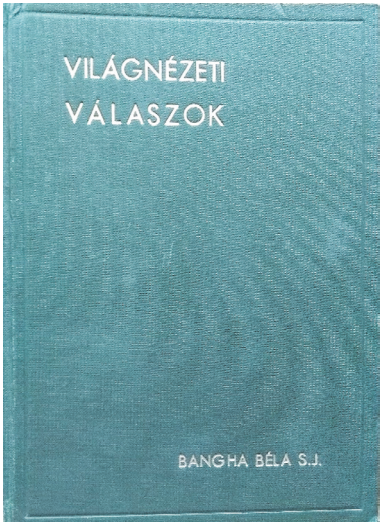
országos igazgató

elnök

elnök helyettes

Certificate issued to Ferenc Pásztor on the right to wear the National Defense Cross





The so-called anti-Soviet publications seized during the house search



Bishop János Scheffler of Szatmár (left) and Father Ferenc Pásztor (right)



Father Ferenc Pásztor, parish priest of Beregszász, with members of the Marian Congregation. The photograph was probably taken in the early 1940s in front of the rectory building in Beregszász



The first students of the newly established Roman Catholic Seminary in Ungvár. Rector Dr. Sándor Fibiger is seated in the centre; to his right is Dr. Bernát Bujaló, the seminary's spiritual director. Ungvár, 1935.
Source: the photo archive of Denissza Fábián



The grave of Father Ferenc Pásztor's parents and his brother István is in Dobóruszka. His father, János Pásztor (1851–1928), and his mother, Julianna Tahy (1857–1917), are interred here. His brother, István Pásztor (1892–1916), also rests in the family plot; he died in 1916 while serving on the Italian front during the First World War. Photograph by Judit Varga, director of the Ferenc Pásztor Museum in Dobóruszka

LIST OF INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN THE PERSECUTION OF FATHER FERENC PÁSZTOR (JANUARY 1948 – DECEMBER 1951)

List of key individuals involved in the persecution of Father Ferenc Pásztor between January 1948 and December 1951, based on the 'Pásztor File.' This includes those who participated as false witnesses, conducted surveillance, performed house searches, oversaw the confiscation and liquidation of his assets, executed his arrest and interrogations, drafted the indictments, ensured his conviction, and facilitated his deportation to Siberian labour camps.

– Lieutenant Colonel **Aksyonov**, Head of the Investigative Division of the Transcarpathian Regional Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **Andrashko**, District Prosecutor, State Counsellor of Justice 3rd Class.

– Major **Bogdanov**, Deputy Head of a Department at the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Lieutenant Colonel **Buh**, Head of the Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Lieutenant Colonel **Burinyin**, Commander of the 14th Group of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR.

– Colonel **Cepkov**, Head of the 1st Investigative Division of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **László Salamon Czopf** (born 1898), resident of Beregszász, farmer.

– Colonel **Chernetsky,** Head of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– First Lieutenant **Chernykh**, Investigator of the "O" Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the State Security Administration of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **Dabizsa**, Chief Accountant of Special Camp No. 7 (Ozerny).

– Comrade Major General **Yezipenko**, Deputy Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **Zoltán Fábián** (born 1892), resident of Beregszász, painter.

– Lieutenant Colonel **Fomichev**, Head of Investigative Division "A" of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **Ferenc György** (born 1885), resident of Beregszász, church sexton.

– Lieutenant Colonel **Kharitanov**, Deputy Head of the Investigative Division of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **M. P. Yegorov**, Representative of the Beregszász Main Department of the MGB.

– Major **Nikolai Yeremichev**, Commander of the 4th Investigative Division of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Major **Knis**, Authorized Officer of the 'O' Operational Group of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Lieutenant **Kovaly**, Authorized Officer of the Beregszász District Department of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Junior Lieutenant **Krichna**, Investigator of the 4th Investigative Division of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **Krukova**, Physician No. 1 of the Prison of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Comrade Lieutenant Colonel **Kuryata**, Head of the Beregszász Main Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **Polikarp Mikhailovich Lozan** (born 1908), resident of Beregszász, worker.

– **Ferenc Marosi** (born 1898), resident of Beregszász, farmer.

– **Martonov**, Investigating Officer of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **János Mihály Margitics**, Interpreter for the Beregszász District Office of the MGB.

– **Masin**, Head of OZERLAG.

– **Masin**, Head of the Accounting Division of the Main Directorate of Special Camp No. 7 (Ozerny).

– **Máriás,** Interpreter of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Lieutenant Colonel **Melnikov**, Head of the 1st Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Junior Lieutenant **Molnár,** Interpreter of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **M. V. Natkulinec**, Representative of the Beregszász City Council.

– Lieutenant **Negotov**, Authorized Officer of the 'O' Operational Group of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **Vilmos Albert Pasztler** (born 1882), resident of Beregszász, carpenter.

– Squad Leader **Pavlovich**, Interpreter of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Captain **Petrenko**, Commander of the "O" Operational Group of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security.

– Colonel **Podobedov**, Commander of Group 'A' of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **Raszkazov**, Operative of Group "A" of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR.

– **Rohora**, Operative of the "O" Operational Group of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **Romanovsky**, Operative of the "O" Operational Group of the Transcarpathian Regional Main Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– **Ernő Mihály Seffer** (born 1887), resident of Beregszász, teacher-principal.

– **Sugorov S.**, Deputy Prosecutor of the Prosecutor's Office of the Ukrainian SSR, Junior Counselor of Justice (3rd Class).

– Lieutenant General **Savchenko**, Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Major **Szemakov**, Head of the Transcarpathian Regional Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR.

– Colonel **Soskin**, Head of the Main Directorate of Department 'A' of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR.

– **Ivan Ivanovich Szotver**, Senior Investigator of the Beregszász City Executive Committee.

– **Sukhanova**, shorthand typist.

– **Tarkinskaya**, staff member of the Secretariat of the Special Council of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR.

– **Utina**, Deputy Prosecutor of the Ukrainian SSR.

-**Sándor Varga** (born 1905), resident of Beregszász, member of the local Committee of the CPSU.

– **Mihály Illés Viznickij**, interpreter on behalf of the Beregszász District Office of the UMGB.

– Lieutenant Colonel **Zaslavsky**, Commander of Group 'A' of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Nándor Dupka is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Hungarian History and European Integration at the Ukrainian-Hungarian Educational and Scientific Institute of Uzhhorod National University. After completing secondary school, he earned a degree in law from the Faculty of Law at Uzhhorod National University. In September 2021, he enrolled in a second-degree programme in the Department of Hungarian History and European Integration of the Ukrainian-Hungarian Educational and Scientific Institute (UMOTI) at Uzhhorod National University. After completing this programme, he obtained a Master's degree in History. In 2023, he continued his academic career by being admitted to the doctoral programme at the Department of Hungarian History and European Integration (UMOTI) at Uzhhorod National University. His research focuses on the topic: "The Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia: Survival under Totalitarianism (1945–1989)." He holds a scholarship from the Tempus Public Foundation.

Selected publications in Hungarian:

1. Dupka, Nándor. *Martyr Sándor Haklik: Confessors of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia (1945–1991).* KMMI-Füzetek XXIX. Intermix Kiadó, Uzhhorod–Budapest, 2023. ISBN 978-615-5757-36-5. https://kmmi.org.ua/konyvtar/kmmi-fuzetek/reszletes/haklik-sandor-vertanu

2. Dupka, Nándor. *Martyr Ferenc Pásztor: Confessors of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia (1945–1991).* KMMI-Füzetek 2024. Intermix Kiadó, Uzhhorod–Budapest, 2023. ISBN 978-615-5757-46-4. https://kmmi.org.ua/konyvtar/konyvek/reszletes/pasztor-ferenc-vertanu

RÉSUMÉ

(in Ukrainian, Hungarian, and English)

Резюме

Дупко Нандор
НАНДОР ДУПКО

Мученик Пастор Ференц
«Він не зрікся своєї віри, краще вибрав смерть.»
Сповідники Закарпатської Римо-Католицької Церкви
(1945-1991)

З 2020 року я займаюсь[224] вивченням архівних документів про долю 19 римо-католицьких священиків, які були репресовані радянською владою з місць їх служіння на Закарпатті.

З 2023 року темою моєї наукової та дисертаційної роботи є: «Римо-Католицька церква на Закарпатті: її виживання в умовах тоталітаризму у 1945-1989 роках», яка присвячена дослідженню страждань в таборах ГУЛАГу на примусових роботах пароха з Вилока Деже Арвої, пароха з Малих Сельменців Золтана Бако, пароха з Виноградова Калмана Бартфаї, архідиякона-пароха з Ужгорода др. Берната Буяло, помічника пастора з Мукачева Йожефа Чаті, пароха Йожефа Галамбоша з Бене, пароха Шандора Гакліка з Ратівців, пароха Антала Гевелі з Свалява, пароха Петера

[224] Nándor Dupka, „Ki volt Haklik Sándor? A kisráti római katolikus esperes letartóztatása, koncepciós pere, vértanúhalála" [Who was Sándor Haklik? The arrest, show trial, and martyrdom of the Roman Catholic dean of Kisrát], in *„Oroszföldön meggyötörve... A GULÁG-GUPVI-kutatók nemzetközi fóruma Kárpátalján, 2022. Nemzetközi emlékkonferencia Beregszász, 2022. november 18.*, ed. György Dupka (Ungvár–Budapest: Szolyvai Emlékparkbizottság–Intermix Kiadó, 2023), 99–113, https://kmmi.org.ua/uploads/attachments/books/books-pdf/2023/konf-2023.pdf.

Гомолі з Оноківців, пароха Агоштона Горвата з Ужгорода, пароха Лайоша Худра з Коропця, пароха Іштвана Леврінца з Сторожниці, вікарія Ференца Пастора з Берегова, пароха Пала Плаценгера з Ужгорода, пароха Яноша Шереша (Півовара) з Мукачева, пароха Йожефа Темфлі з Неветленфалу, пароха Ерне Тіндіра з Барбова, др-а Йожефа Тота с Середнього, пароха Дьєрдя Текеша (Трефскера) з Хуста. Серед них маємо двох священномучеників.

Спочатку я досліджував обставини життя та репресії незаслужено забутого священномученика отця Шандора Гакліка за джерелами Закарпатського державного архіву у світлі відомої на сьогодні літератури. Мені вдалося опрацювати справу отця Гакліка майже на 100-сторінках, складену слідчими НКВД, яка також була видана у вигляді окремої книги, память про мученика також зберігає дошка з Чепивка (Берегвигардо) на стіні церкви Св. Кінги в його рідному селі.

Священик Шандор Гаклік і вікарій котрий за однією з версій, він помер по дорозі Львів-Київ під час транспортування до в'язниці. Інша версія: через те, що він відмовився зняти золотий хрестик на шиї та віддати його охоронцям, його розстріляли в київській тюрмі. Йому було 56 років.

Другий священномученик Ференц Пастор вікарій, папський прелат, парох Берегівського римо католицької церкви.

Йдучи цим шляхом, оцінюючи додаткові архівні джерела та володіючи іншими документальними даними, цього разу я досліджував коло питань, пов'язаних з переслідуванням священика-мученика Ференца Пастора з Берегова (Ужгород, 1880 – табір Озерний, 1951).

У вступі до цієї другої книги зроблено огляд опублікованої досі літератури про його життєвий шлях. Виявилося, що згадані мною дослідники не займалися детальним аналізом справи отця Пастора на більше ніж 185 сторінках, яка знаходиться в Закарпатському обласному державному архіві і яка складена слідчими КГБ, та перекладом документів з російської на угорську мову.

У першому розділі під заголовком «Життєвий шлях» Ференца Пастора представлено нарис про юнака, який наро-

дився в Ужгороді, розпочав у цьому місті навчання в середній школі і тут готувався до священства, і який закінчив духовну семінарію в місті Сатмарнеметі 1911р. Після висвячення молодий капелан, потім парох у 1902-1911 роках служив в церквах угорських і німецьких поселень Сатмарського і Марамарошського повітів, після чого протягом 21 року був шанованим парохом в селі Доборуска, з іменем якого пов'язана повна реконструкція та розширення тодішнього костелу, збудованого відомою родиною Добо, про повторне відкриття якого отець склав і видав пам'ятний буклет. Пам'ять про Ференца Пастора в Доборуска жива й сьогодні, на його честь створено меморіальну кімнату.

У другому розділі йдеться про діяльність архідиякона Ференца Пастора, переведеного в Берегове на початку травня 1932 року, «у служінні Богу і нації» в мирний час, а потім у воєнні 1941-1944 роки. Далі представляю його як вікарія, призначеного Яношем Шеффлером (1887-1952), Сатмарським єпархіальним єпископом, ймовірно, у 1945 році. У часи насильницької радянізації вікарій продемонстрував зразкову позицію своєї церкви і Ватикану.

У третьому, найбільшому розділі, представлено отця Ференца Пастора як вікарія у Берегові в часи насильницької радянізації, де служив протягом 17 років, й описана його трагічна доля за радянських часів та останні етапи його життя, обставини його переслідування та засудження на основі документів КГБ, створених у 1948-1950 роках за справою № 149252. У межах цього, у десяти параграфах детально представлена архівна справа арештованого отця Ференца Пастора, розділена по темах. У якості відправної точки було важливим проаналізувати протоколи 8 лжесвідків, які свідчили проти вікарія. У світлі перекладених мною понад 60 пронумерованих документів КГБ описано подальше сходження вікарія на Голготу. Коротко це наступне: арешт, обшук і конфіскація; численні виснажливі допити в Ужгородській та Київській тюрмах; складання обвинувального акта; вирок, конфіскація майна; його полон і мученицька смерть у сибірському таборі; реабілітація.

За одностайним концептуальним обвинувальним актом слідчих КГБ з Берегова, Ужгорода і Києва заклеймований антирадян-

щиною вікарій був засуджений Особливою Радою Московського Служби Беспеки СРСР до 25 років з конфіскацією всього майна 6 липня 1949 року в Москві, що було рівнозначно смертному вироку. 71-річний отець Ференц Пастор, в'язень ГУЛАГу, помер від виснаження 16 жовтня 1951 року в сумнозвісному Озерному таборі «суворого режиму», створеному в Іркутській області, похований 17 жовтня на кладовищі № 15 цього ж табору в могилі М-15-1 підпозначкою С-66. У документі про реабілітацію 1989 року його визнано невинним.

Завершую книгу четвертим розділом, в якому розповідаю про увічнення пам'яті мученика вікарія з Берегова. Після розпаду СРСР стало можливим встановити першу пам'ятну дошку, а згодом, на рубежі тисячоліть, відбулося урочисте відкриття бюсту отця Пастора, була проведена конференція, присвячена його пам'яті і засновано премію імені Ференца Пастора.

Відтоді премією було вшановано чимало видатних особистостей. Найбільшим починанням римо-католицької парафії Берегова на сьогодні є реалізація Спільноти та Паломницького Дому ім. Ференца Пастора, де у наші дні – під керівництвом парафіяльного диякона та вікарія Яноша Молнара, який іде слідами Ференца Пастора та дотримується традиції – це також забезпечує простір і можливості кипучих церковних і культурних заходів, заснованих на християнських цінностях. Як майбутню ціль – можна сформулювати мету перевезення останків отця Ференца Пастора додому за підтримки уряду і церкви та ініціювати його беатифікацію.

Перед сучасною молоддю має стояти завдання рік за роком згадувати мученика Ференца Пастора, єдиним злочином якого було те, що він, як угорець, дотримувався своєї римо-католицької віри.

Ми на завжди збережемо пам'ять про нього в наших серцях!

Ключові слова, що відображають суть роботи: XX століття, Берегове, КГБ, церковні гоніння, вікарій, антирадянщина, в'язень ГУЛАГу, мученик, його пам'ять.

Dupka Nándor

Pásztor Ferenc vértanú „Hitét nem tagadta meg, inkább a halált választotta” A Kárpátaljai Római Katolikus Egyház hitvallói (1945–1991)

2020-tól foglalkozom[225]a szovjet hatalom által a kárpátaljai szolgálati helyükről elhurcolt 19 római katolikus pap sorsának tanulmányozásával a levéltári dokumentumok alapján.

2023-tól kutatási és doktori munkám témája: „A római katolikus egyház Kárpátalján: túlélése a totalitarizmus körülményei között (1945–1989 években)”, amely magába foglalja a GULÁG kényszermunka táborban raboskodott Árvay Dezső tiszaújlaki, Bakó Zoltán kisszelmenci, Bártfay Kálmán nagyszőlősi plébános, dr. Bujaló Bernát ungvári főesperes-plébános, Csáti József munkácsi segédlelkész, Galambos József benei, Haklik Sándor ráti, Heveli Antal szolyvai, Homolya Péter felsődomonyai, Horváth Ágoston ungvári, Hudra Lajos kerepeci, Lőrincz István őrdarmai plébános, Pásztor Ferenc beregszászi vikárius, Placinger Pál ungvári, Sörös (Pivovar) János munkácsi, Tempfli József nevetlenfalui, Tindira Ernő bárdházi, dr. Tóth József szerednyei, Tőkés (Trefszker) György huszti plébános szenvedéstörténetét. Közülük Haklik Sándor esperesés Pásztor Ferenc vikárius szibériai földben alusszák örök álmukat.

Először a méltatlanul elfelejtett mártír, Haklik Sándor atya életének és elhurcolásának körülményeit tártam fel a Kárpátaljai Területi Állami Levéltár forrásai alapján az eddig ismert szakirodalom tükré-

[225] Nándor Dupka, „Ki volt Haklik Sándor? A kisráti római katolikus esperes letartóztatása, koncepciós pere, vértanúhalála” [Who was Sándor Haklik? The arrest, show trial, and martyrdom of the Roman Catholic dean of Kisrát], in *„Oroszföldön meggyötörve... A GULÁG-GUPVI-kutatók nemzetközi fóruma Kárpátalján, 2022. Nemzetközi emlékkonferencia Beregszász, 2022. november 18.*, ed. György Dupka (Ungvár–Budapest: Szolyvai Emlékparkbizottság–Intermix Kiadó, 2023), 99–113, https://kmmi.org.ua/uploads/attachments/books/books-pdf/2023/konf-2023.pdf.

ben. Sikerült feldolgozni az NKVD nyomozótisztjei által összeállított mintegy 100 oldalas Haklik-aktát, amely könyv formában is megjelent[226], szülőhelyén, Beregardóban a Szent Kinga templom falán domború-tábla is megörökítette a vértanú emlékét.

Halála: egyik verzió szerint útközben halt meg Lemberg és Kijev között a börtönbe szállítás közben. Másik verzió, hogy mivel megtagadta, hogy a nyakában lévő aranykeresztet levegye és őrzőinek átadja, a kijevi börtönben agyonlőtték, 56 éves volt.

Ezen a nyomvonalon haladva, a további levéltári források értékelésével, más dokumentációs ismeretanyag birtokában, ezúttal a mártírhalált halt Pásztor Ferenc (Ungvár, 1880 – Ozernij láger, 1951) beregszászi plébános, vikárius atya meghurcoltatásának kérdéskörét tártam fel. A második elkészült könyvemhez írt Bevezetésben az életútjáról eddig megjelent szakirodalmat is áttekintettem. Megállapítottam, hogy a Kárpátaljai Területi Állami Levéltárban található, a KGB nyomozótisztjei által összeállított mintegy 180 oldalas Pásztor-akta tüzetes elemzésével, a dokumentumok oroszból magyarra fordításával az általam ismertetett kutatók nem foglalkoztak.

Az első fejezetben Pásztor Ferenc „Életpályája" címszó alatt mutattam be az ungvári születésű, a középiskolai tanulmányait ebben a városban kezdő és ugyanitt a papi pályára készülő fiatalembert, aki teológiai tanulmányait Szatmárnémetiben fejezte be. Pappá szentelését követően az ifjú káplán, majd plébános 1902–1911-ben Szatmár és Máramaros megyei magyar és német lakta települések templomaiban végezte életszolgálatát, majd 21 éven át volt Dobóruszka megbecsült plébánosa, akinek nevéhez fűződik az itteni, még a neves Dobó-család által építtetett templom teljeskörű felújítása, bővítése, melynek újra avatásáról egy emlék füzetet írt és jelentetett meg. Pásztor Ferenc Dobóruszkai emlékezete máig elevenen él, tiszteletére emlékszobát is létesítettek.

[226] Nándor Dupka, *Haklik Sándor vértanú: A Kárpátaljai Római Katolikus Egyház hitvallói (1945–1991)* [Martyr Sándor Haklik: Confessors of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia (1945–1991)], KMMI-füzetek XXIX, ed. László Zubánics (Ungvár–Budapest: Intermix Kiadó, 2023), 128, https://kmmi.org.ua/uploads/attachments/books/KMMI-fuzetek/Haklik.pdf.

A második fejezetben tárgyalom az 1932 május elején Beregszászba áthelyezett Pásztor Ferenc főesperes „Isten és a nemzett szolgálatában" kifejtett tevékenységét a békeidőben, majd az 1941–1944 közötti háborús években. Ezúttal, mint Scheffler János (1887–1952) szatmári megyéspüspök által feltehetően 1945-ben kinevezett vikáriust mutatom be, aki az egyháza és a Vatikán melletti elszánt elkötelezettséggel igyekszik helytállni az erőszakos szovjetizálás idején.

A harmadik, egyben a legnagyobb terjedelmű fejezetben a 17 évig Beregszászban tevékenykedő Pásztor Ferenc vikárius, a tragikus sorsú főpap szovjet korszakbéli életének utolsó stációit, meghurcoltatási és elítélési körülményeit, a 149252. sz. Pásztor-aktát az 1948–1950 között keletkezett KGB- dokumentumok alapján mutatom be.

Ezen belül, tíz alfejezetben foglalkozom a letartóztatott Pásztor Ferenc levéltári aktájának részletes, témákra bontott bemutatásával.

Kiindulópontként fontosnak tartottam a vikárius ellen valló 8 hamis tanúvallomás jegyzőkönyvének elemzését. Az általam lefordított több mint 60 számozott KGB-ügyirat tükrében vázolom fel a vikárius további golgotajárását.

Címszavakban ezek a következők: letartóztatás, házkutatás és vagyonelkobzás; kihallgatások az ungvári és a kijevi börtönben; vádirat; ítélethozatal, vagyonelkobzás; fogsága és mártírhalála a szibériai lágerben; rehabilitálása.

A KGB beregszászi, ungvári és kijevi nyomozó tisztjeinek egybehangzó, koncepciós vádirata szerint a szovjetellenességgel megbélyegzett vikáriust az SZSZKSZ Állambiztonsági Minisztériumának Különtanácsa 1949. július 6-án, Moszkvában 25 évre, teljes vagyonelkobzásra ítélte, ez egyenértékű volt a halálra ítélés meghozatalával. A 71 éves Pásztor Ferenc GULÁG-rab a hírhedt Irkutszki régióban létesített Ozernij „szigorított" büntető lágerben 1951. október 16-án, végelgyengülésben hunyt el, ugyanezen láger temetőjében a 15. sz. sírban M-15-1, S-66 azonosító jellel, október 17-én temették el. Az 1989-ben kiállított rehabilitációs okirat kimondja: ártatlanul ítélték el.

A negyedik fejezettel zárom a könyvet, amelyben a mártír vikárius beregszászi emlékezetéről számolok be. A rendszerváltozás után nyílt lehetőség az első emléktábla állítására. Majd az ezredforduló után

a Pásztor-mellszobor felavatására, emlékkonferencia megrendezésére, Pásztor Ferenc-díj alapítására és már számos, jeles személyiség kitüntetésére is sor került. A Beregszászi Római Katolikus Egyházközség eddigi legnagyobb vállalkozása a Pásztor Ferenc Közösségi és Zarándokház megvalósítása, ahol napjainkban – a Pásztor Ferenc nyomdokain haladó és hagyományát követő Molnár János plébános-esperes és vikárius irányításával - pezsgő egyházi és a keresztény értékekre épülő kulturális rendezvényeknek is teret ad, lehetőséget biztosít.

Talán jövőbeli célként lehetne megfogalmazni, hogy kormányzati-egyházi összefogással segítsék haza Pásztor Ferenc atya földi maradványait és indítsák el boldoggá avatását.

A jelenkor fiatalságának pedig legyen feladata megemlékezni évről évre a vértanú Pásztor Ferenc atyáról, akinek egyetlen bűne volt, hogy magyarként ragaszkodott római katolikus vallásához.

Emlékét szívünkben örökké megőrizzük!

Kulcsszavak: huszadik század, Beregszász, KGB, egyházüldözés, vikárius, szovjetellenesség, GULÁG-rab, mártír, emlékezete.

NÁNDOR DUPKA

MONSIGNOR FERENC PÁSZTOR, EPISCOPAL VICAR AND MARTYR

„He did not deny his faith, but rather chose death." The confessors of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia (1945–1991)

Since 2020, on the basis of archival documents, I have been studying the fate of nineteen (19) Roman Catholic priests deported by the Soviets from their places of service in Transcarpathia.[227]

The topic of my research and doctoral thesis that I started in 2023, is entitled *The Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia: Its Survival Under The Totalitarian Regime (1945-1989)* which examines the suffering of the following priests imprisoned in GULAG forced-labour camps: **Dezső Árvay** of Tiszaújlak, **Zoltán Bakó** of Kisszelmenc, **Kálmán Bártfay** of Nagyszőlős, **Dr. Bernát Bujaló**, parish priest of Ungvár, **József Csáti**, assistant pastor of Munkacs, **József Galambos** of Bene, **Sándor Haklik** of Rát, **Antal Heveli** of Szolyva, **Péter Homolya** of Felső Domonya, **Ágoston Horváth** of Ungvár, **Lajos Hudra** of Kerepec, **István Lőrincz** of Ődarma, **Ferenc Pásztor** of Beregszsász, **Pál Placinger** of Ungvár, János Sörös (Pivovar) of Munkacs, **József Tempfli** of Nevetlenfalu, **Ernő Tindira** of Bardháza, **Dr. József Tóth** of Szerednye, **György Tőkés (Trefszker)** of Huszt. Among them there are the deacon **Sándor Haklik** and also the vicar **Ferenc Pásztor** who rest in eternal peace in Siberian soil.

[227] Nándor Dupka, „Ki volt Haklik Sándor? A kisráti római katolikus esperes letartóztatása, koncepciós pere, vértanúhalála" [Who was Sándor Haklik? The arrest, show trial, and martyrdom of the Roman Catholic dean of Kisrát], in *„Oroszföldön meggyötörve... A GULÁG-GUPVI-kutatók nemzetközi fóruma Kárpátalján, 2022. Nemzetközi emlékkonferencia Beregszász, 2022. november 18.*, ed. György Dupka (Ungvár–Budapest: Szolyvai Emlékparkbizottság–Intermix Kiadó, 2023), 99–113, https://kmmi.org.ua/uploads/attachments/books/books-pdf/2023/konf-2023.pdf

First, based on the sources of the Transcarpathian Regional State Archives and the literature known so far, I explored the life and circumstances of deportation of the undeservedly forgotten martyr, Father **Sándor Haklik**. I was able to process the 100-page Haklik-file compiled by the NKVD investigating officers, which was also published in book-form[228], and the martyr's memory was commemorated on a relief plaque on the wall of the St. Kinga Church in Beregardó, which is his birthplace.

His death: according to one version, he died on the way between Lviv and Kiev while being transported to prison. Another version is that because he refused to take off the gold cross around his neck and hand it over to his guards, he was shot dead in the Kiev prison. He was 56 years old.

Following this line of research, through a thorough study of archival sources and other documents discovered later, I have explored the issue of the martyrdom of **Ferenc Pásztor** (Ungvár, 1880-Ozerniy camp, 1951), who was a parish priest and vicar of Beregszász.

In the introduction to the second book, which I am currently writing, I have also reviewed the literature on his life published so far. I have found that the 185-page Pásztor-file, compiled by the KGB investigators and held in the Transcarpathian Regional State Archives, has not yet been thoroughly analysed or translated from Russian into Hungarian by the researchers mentioned above.

In the first chapter, under the title *The career of Ferenc Pásztor,* I presented a sketch of the life of the young man born in Ungvár, who started his secondary school in this town and was preparing to become a priest also there, and finished his theological studies in Szatmárnémeti (Satu Mare). After his ordination, the young chaplain

[228] Nándor Dupka, *Haklik Sándor vértanú: A Kárpátaljai Római Katolikus Egyház hitvallói (1945–1991)* [Martyr Sándor Haklik: Confessors of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia (1945–1991)], KMMI-füzetek [KMMI Booklets] XXIX, ed. László Zubánics (Ungvár–Budapest: Intermix Kiadó, 2023), 128, https://kmmi.org.ua/uploads/attachments/books/KMMI-fuzetek/Haklik.pdf.

and later parish priest served in the churches of settlements populated by Hungarian and German inhabitants in Szatmár (Satu Mare) and Máramaros (Maramures) Counties from 1902 to 1911. For twenty-one years, he was the highly respected parish priest of Dobóruszka, where he had been responsible for the complete renovation and extension of the church built by the renowned Dobó family, and for the rededication of which he had written and published a commemorative booklet. The memory of Ferenc Pásztor in Dobóruszka remains alive today, and a memorial statue has been erected in his honour.

In the second chapter, I take a look at the activity of Archdeacon Ferenc Pásztor „in the service of God and the nation" in peacetime and the years of war, i.e. from 1941 to 1944. Ferenc Pásztor was transferred to Beregszász at the beginning of May, in 1932. Here I present him as the vicar appointed by János Scheffler, the Bishop of Szatmár (1887-1952), presumably in 1945. Ferenc Pásztor as vicar showed an example of how to stand by his church and the Vatican during violent Sovietisation.

In the third and the largest chapter, on the basis of the Pásztor file, No. 149252 compiled from KGB documents made in 1948-1950, the final stages of Ferenc Pásztor's tragic life: as vicar in Beregszász for 17 years, then the high priest's tragic life in the Soviet era, the circumstances of his arrest and conviction have been described.

According to a show-trial indictment compiled by KGB investigators in Beregszász, Ungvár and Kiev, the vicar, branded as an enemy of the state, was sentenced by the Special Council of the USSR Ministry of State Security in Moscow on 6 July, 1949, to 25 years imprisonment with the full confiscation of his property, which was effectively tantamount to a death sentence. The seventy-one-year-old Ferenc Pásztor, a GULAG prisoner, died of exhaustion in the infamous Ozerniy camp in the Irkutsk region on 16 October, 1951, and was buried in the camp cemetery, in grave No. 15, under identification number M-15-1, S-66, on 17 October 1951. A rehabilitation certificate issued in 1989 states that he had been wrongfully convicted and was innocent.

In ten subsections, I present a detailed, subdivided presentation of the archival file of the arrested **Ferenc Pásztor**. As a starting point,

I deemed important to analyse the transcripts of the eight false witnesses who testified against the vicar. In the light of the more than 60 numbered KGB documents I have translated, I outline the vicar's further sufferings on his Golgotha. They are the arrest, search and confiscation of property; numerous exhaustive interrogations in the KGB prisons of Ungvár and Kiev; preparing the indictment; sentencing, confiscation of property; his imprisonment and martyrdom in a Siberian camp; his rehabilitation.

I finish my book with the fourth chapter, in which I report on the martyr vicar's commemoration in Beregszász. The first memorial plaque was erected after the change of system. Then, after the millennium, the statue of Ferenc Pásztor was unveiled, a commemorative conference was held, and the Ferenc Pásztor Prize was established. Since then, a number of distinguished personalities have been honoured by this prize. The biggest undertaking of the Roman Catholic Parish of Beregszász so far is the realisation of the Ferenc Pásztor Community and Pilgrimage Home, which today – led by the parish priest and vicar **János Molnár,** who follows the traditions in the wake of Ferenc Pásztor and of the parish, provides wide possibilities and opportunities for vibrant ecclesiastical and cultural events based on Christian values.

Perhaps a future goal could be to bring the remains of Father Ferenc Pásztor home and to start his beatification via a government-church cooperation.

The young people of our days I think should make it their task to keep Father Ferenc Pásztor's memory alive every year by remembering that his only sin was that he, as a Hungarian Roman Catholic priest, kept his faith and religion despite all the cruelty of Communism.

His memory is always in our hearts forever and ever!

Key words reflecting the essence of the thesis: twentieth century, Beregszász, KGB, persecution, vicar, enemy of the people, GULÁG, martyr, memory.

NÁNDOR DUPKA

MONSIGNOR FERENC PÁSZTOR, EPISCOPAL VICAR AND MARTYR

"He did not deny his faith, but rather chose death."
The Confessors of the
Roman Catholic Church of Transcarpathia (1945–1991)

Tanslated from Hungarian by
Dr. Peter Ortutay
Reviewed by Dr. Natália Váradi

Review Report
on Nándor Dupka's book:
MONSIGNOR FERENC PÁSZTOR,
EPISCOPAL VICAR AND MARTYR

Brief Assessment of the Significance of the Work

The volume is a historical-biographical study by Nándor Dupka, which presents the life, ministry, and martyrdom of the Roman Catholic priest Ferenc Pásztor. Its particular significance lies in the fact that, drawing on extensive archival research–especially on the documents of the Soviet state security services–it reconstructs a life path that has hitherto remained largely unexplored. The work constitutes an important contribution to the study of the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia, as well as to a broader understanding of the anti-church policies of twentieth-century totalitarian regimes.

Structure and Conceptual Framework of the Work
The structure of the volume is clearly organized, following both chronological and thematic principles. The first part provides a classical bio-

graphical reconstruction of Ferenc Pásztor's life, which is followed by a detailed presentation of his pastoral and public activities. The subsequent chapters broaden the historical context, situating the narrative within the period of Soviet persecution of the Church, and the work concludes with a thorough analysis of the documents related to the show trial and persecution.

The author's conceptual approach is twofold: on the one hand, it aims to reconstruct an individual life trajectory; on the other, it seeks to present, through this life, the broader ecclesiastical and socio-historical conditions of the period. The documentary character of the volume strongly shapes the work as a whole, becoming particularly dominant in the third chapter. While this approach enhances historical reliability through its strong grounding in primary sources, it occasionally comes at the expense of narrative coherence.

Methodology and Use of Sources

One of the greatest strengths of the work is its rich source base. The author relies primarily on archival documents and makes extensive use of the records of the Soviet state security services, particularly the investigative materials compiled by the KGB, which provide detailed insight into the mechanisms of show trials.

The application of source criticism is especially noteworthy, particularly in relation to the handling of state security documents. The author consistently emphasizes that these materials must be approached with caution, drawing attention at several points to their potentially biased and ideologically shaped nature. This conscious and critical use of sources significantly enhances the scholarly value of the work.

Style and Scholarly Approach

The work is of a scholarly nature and adopts a fundamentally objective and analytical approach. The text alternates between narrative and documentary sections, reflecting the dual character of the study.

Although certain linguistic inaccuracies are present, these can be addressed through editorial revision and do not diminish the overall value of the work.

Conclusion

The volume is a significant and much-needed contribution that greatly advances the study of the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Transcarpathia. Through the author's thorough research, a life trajectory emerges that transcends individual biography and reflects the broader historical experience of an entire era. The work is valuable both from a scholarly and a memory-political perspective.

The significance of the volume lies in the fact that it:

- reveals the concrete mechanisms of Soviet persecution of the Church,
- contributes to the preservation of historical memory,
- presents an exemplary model of fidelity to faith and vocation.

The book is of considerable value both for historians and for scholars of church history, and it may also attract the interest of a wider readership beyond the academic community. It not only reconstructs the past but also sustains a living memory that continues to resonate in the present. The volume discusses the rehabilitation of the martyr priest in 1989, the history of the memorial plaque and statue in Berehove, as well as the establishment of the community house and award bearing his name—all of which testify to the enduring meaning of his sacrifice.

Nándor Dupka's work is at once a scholarly monograph and a work of spiritual reflection. It serves both as a warning for the present and as a tribute to the past, recalling the words of Tertullian: "the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church. (Semen est sanguis christianorum.)" It is recommended to all those who wish to gain a deeper understanding of the true history of Transcarpathia and the confessional life journey of a man of steadfast faith.

Berehove, March 31, 2026

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LEKTORI VÉLEMÉNY

NÁNDOR DUPKA: PÁSZTOR FERENC ÉLETE CÍMŰ KÖTETÉHEZ

A mű jelentőségének rövid bemutatása

A kötet Dupka Nándor történeti-biográfiai munkája, amely Pásztor Ferenc római katolikus pap életét, szolgálatát és mártíriumát dolgozza fel. A mű különös jelentősége abban áll, hogy széles körű levéltári kutatásokra, különösen a szovjet állambiztonsági szervek iratanyagára támaszkodva rekonstruál egy eddig kevéssé feltárt életutat. A munka fontos hozzájárulás a kárpátaljai egyháztörténet és a 20. századi diktatúrák egyházellenes működésének megértéséhez.

A mű szerkezetének és koncepciójának ismertetése

A kötet szerkezete világosan tagolt, kronologikus és tematikus elrendezést követ. A mű első része Pásztor Ferenc életútjának klasszikus biográfiai rekonstrukcióját nyújtja, amelyet a lelkipásztori és közéleti tevékenység részletes bemutatása követ. A későbbi fejezetek a történeti kontextus kiszélesítésével a szovjet egyházüldözés időszakába helyezik az eseményeket, végül pedig a koncepciós eljárás és a meghurcoltatás dokumentumainak részletes elemzése zárja a művet.

A szerző koncepciója kettős: egyrészt egy egyéni életút rekonstruálása, másrészt ezen keresztül egy korszak egyháztörténeti és társadalomtörténeti viszonyainak bemutatása. A dokumentumközlő jelleg erősen meghatározza a mű egészét, ami különösen a harmadik fejezetben válik dominánssá. Ez a megközelítés a forrásokra épülő történeti hitelességet erősíti, ugyanakkor a narratív egységet helyenként háttérbe szorítja.

Módszertan és forráskezelés értékelése

A mű egyik legnagyobb erőssége a forrásgazdagság. A szerző főként levéltári dokumentumokra, támaszkodik. A szerző elsődleges forrásként használja a szovjet állambiztonsági szervek iratait, különösen a KGB által összeállított vizsgálati anyagokat, amelyek részletes betekintést nyújtanak a koncepciós eljárások mechanizmusába. Kiemelendő a forráskritikai megközelítés, különösen az állambiztonsági iratok kezelésében. Kiemelendő a forráskritikai attitűd jelenléte: a szerző több helyen felhívja a figyelmet arra, hogy az állambiztonsági dokumentumokat fenntartásokkal kell kezelni. Ez a tudatos forráshasználat a munka tudományos értékét jelentősen növeli.

Stílus és tudományos megközelítés

A mű tudományos igényű, alapvetően tárgyszerű megközelítést alkalmaz. A narratív és dokumentarista részek váltakoznak. Az előforduló nyelvi pontatlanságok szerkesztéssel javíthatók, nem csökkentik a mű értékét.

Összegzés

A kötet hiánypótló munka, amely jelentős mértékben hozzájárul a kárpátaljai egyháztörténet feltárásához. A szerző alapos kutatása révén egy olyan életút válik rekonstruálhatóvá, amely túlmutat az egyéni sorson, és egy korszak történelmi tapasztalatát jeleníti meg. A mű tudományos és emlékezetpolitikai szempontból egyaránt értékes.

A mű jelentősége abban áll, hogy:

– feltárja a szovjet egyházüldözés konkrét mechanizmusait,
– hozzájárul a történeti emlékezet megőrzéséhez,
– példát állít a hithez és hivatáshoz való hűség tekintetében.

A kötet mind tudományos, mind egyháztörténeti szempontból értékes, és a történész szakmán kívül szélesebb körben is jelentős érdeklődésre tarthat számot. A kötet nemcsak a múltat idézi, hanem a máig ható emlékezetet is ápolja. Ismerteti a mártír pap 1989-es rehabilitációját, a beregszászi emléktábla és szobor történetét, valamint a nevét viselő közösségi ház és díj alapítását, amelyek mind azt hirdetik: az áldozat nem volt hiábavaló.

Dupka Nándor könyve egyszerre tudományos monográfia és lelki olvasmány.

Figyelmeztetés a mának és tisztelgés a múlt előtt, amely emlékeztet minket Tertullianus szavaira: „a vértanúk vére az Egyház magvetése” (“Semen est sanguis christianorum”) . Ajánljuk mindazoknak, akik meg akarják ismerni Kárpátalja valódi történelmét és egy igaz ember hitvalló életútját.

Beregszász, 2026. március 31.

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