



The Order of Malta's News in Hungary



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2006 summary



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**The Order of Malta's
News in Hungary**

The magazine of the Hungarian Association of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and Malta and its Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat (MMSz)

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Top left: the Order's HQ entrance;
Top right: the late Kállay Kristóf;
Bottom left: the summer handicapped camp in Cracow;
Bottom right: the Hungarian and the Order's Head of State.

Dear Reader,



2006 was a year of renewal in many respects for the Order of Malta's organizations operating in Hungary. The most apparent manifestation of this renewal was the relaunching of the official quarterly magazine published jointly by the Order's Hungarian Association and Care Mission (Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat [MMSz] – the Order's Hungarian volunteer charity and humanitarian auxiliary). There are three features to the newsletter's remake:

- 1) a new look and feel, adopted from best practices across the Order's worldwide organization,
- 2) a new style geared to communicate to members, volunteers, friends and benefactors in a way that is easily consumed and yet has maximum impact, and
- 3) a new standard content structure, reflecting the Order of Malta's diverse Hungarian activities.

The new content structure includes a letter from the Association's President, spiritual thoughts from the MMSz's President, a calendar of events (past and future), one or two summary articles covering major current or past activities, a section profiling MMSz's region-

al organizations, "personal news" covering noteworthy events associated with the Knights of Malta's Hungarian members and volunteers, and finally the back cover containing promotional articles for the Order.

You are holding in your hand the first English version of the Order of Malta's News in Hungary. It is an abbreviated compilation of the four quarterly Hungarian newsletters published in 2006.

Although we have added additional introductory and clarifying lines to many of the sections, you may still have outstanding questions regarding the text or you may wish to receive more information about certain activities conducted by the Order in Hungary. Please do not hesitate to contact me – I will be delighted to help!

The Editor

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Dear Members of the Order, dear Friends,*

We are deeply grieved to say our last farewell to the honorary President of our Association, **Dr. Kristóf Kállay**, Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion in Obedience, Ambassador of our Order to the Holy See for more than 20 years. The life and persona of Kristóf Kállay were defined by three qualities and three obligations accepted with responsibility.

The Kállay dynasty of Nagykálló has been serving the Hungarian nation from the original settlement of Hungary in the 10th century to the present. This family has given our country distinguished statesmen, soldiers and other outstanding individuals in all areas of society. Miklós Kállay, the father of Kristóf Kállay, belongs to this group as Prime Minister, who took over the government of the nation at an especially difficult historical moment to try and find a way of easing the suffering of the Hungarian people and insuring its national survival. Kristóf Kállay accepted with dignity the high responsibility associated with national calling and the corresponding heavy burden of expectations, which he always met. He was a dedicated follower of the great traditions of his family.

His patriotism and his love for his nation tied him to Hungary. When he was 24 years old, he was already serving his nation as a diplomat, and served to the end of his life. He was present during the revolution and fight for freedom in 1956 to do what he could to help fighters and refugees in any way possible. His patriotism manifested itself not only for the

whole nation but also for the specific area of his birth: Nyíregyháza, Nagykálló and Kállósemjén in Szabolcs county. As these towns looked upon him with respect and affection, he correspondingly always considered this land as his home, reaffirming the constant and deep relationship with the members of the community with his presence, with his spiritual and financial support for decades, thereby continuing the history of his country through the last thousand years.

Kristóf Kállay was the most significant Hungarian Knight in the history of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. He served the Order for 15 years, from 1954 to 1969 as the First Secretary of the Hungarian Association and for 26 years, from 1969 to 1995 as its President. In these years the Association was based in Rome. Kristóf Kállay was not only the First Secretary and President of the Association, but also its personification. He was the Association of the Hungarian Knights. As an ex-patriot in Rome, he maintained the organisation of the Association. He chose and initiated its new members, assured its spiritual leadership, organised the enormous charitable work, through which the Order's donations of medicine, clothing, food and other necessities arrived abundantly in our oppressed, suffering country for decades.

Besides all this, he was the Ambassador of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta to the Holy See for 20 years, from 1978 to 1997. This position is one of the high-



est and most dignified of the Order. Nobody occupied this post for as long as he. With his outstanding diplomatic activity Kristóf Kállay raised the prestige of the Hungarian Knights to an unprecedented level both in the Order and at the Holy See.

We take leave of him now as a Hungarian compatriot, as a member of the Order of Malta and as a friend. His deep faith, his Catholicism, his philanthropy, unselfishness and helpfulness, his kindness, good humour and joy of life, including his love of hunting are like so many mosaics revealing his personality, which we lock in our hearts, one by one and as a whole.

Let us bid him farewell.

György O'sváth

** President O'svath's eulogy honoring Kristof Kállay at the funeral on May 8, 2006, in the Cathedral of Nyíregyháza.*

Calendar of Events – The Order of Malta in Hungary

● The **new leadership** of the Order of Malta's Hungarian Association was officially confirmed by the Grand Master, Fra Andrew Bertie, and the Sovereign Council on December 5, 2005, following the Hungarian Association's elections:

President: György O'sváth;

Vice President: Ferenc Bakách-Bessenyei;

Vice President: Ubul Tamás Kállay;

Chancellor: Erzsébet Podmaniczky Puzstainé;

Hospitaller: Imre Ugron;

Treasurer: Lajos Okolicsányi;

and 7 Council members. The Hungarian Association's Council also includes ex officio: the Association's spiritual leader, Father Miklós Frank; the President of the MMSz, Father Imre Kozma;

the leader of the Hungarian Delegation, Béla Ugron;

the leader of the German-speaking Delegation, Miklós Karácsonyi;

and the leader of the North American Delegation, John Jeszenszky.

● The newly elected **Council of the Hungarian Association** held a regular semiannual meeting at the Budapest headquarters on April 21, 2006. After debating and accepting the reports of the President, Chancellor, Hospitaller, Treasurer and Delegates, the Council elected committee presidents and members for the 11 functional committees of the Association. It also took decisions regarding personal matters and other business.

● The **2006 annual retreat** of the Hungarian Association was held between April 21 and 23 in Székesfehérvár, south-

west of Budapest (see picture below). Bishop Antal Spányi of the Diocese of Székesfehérvár led the retreat with spiritual nourishment for everyday life as expressed in the his message: "Do not live your lives half-heartedly. We have to take a stand for our faith consciously in our own little environment, first of all by our exemplary conduct. Let us bravely share our faith! Religion is not a private matter!" During the retreat, participants had the opportunity to learn about the ideals of Bishop Ottokár Prohászka, appointed bishop to this diocese in 1904, and view an exhibit about him in the nearby museum.

● The Hungarian contingent participating in the Order's annual **pilgrimage to Lourdes** was led by confrere László Sárdy, departing Budapest April 27th and returning May 2nd (see picture on opposite page). The preparatory work for this trip under the direction of hospitaller Imre Ugron had two primary aims: 1) to maximize participation of Association members to accompany the Hungarian participants on the pilgrimage, and 2) to

resolve problems encountered by rail travel by developing a new plan for traveling by air. Happily, both of these objectives were realized. A contingent of 50 participants (among them 15 malades and 19 members of the Association), the largest so far, made the trip to Lourdes by air for the first time. The spiritual leader of the pilgrimage, Father Ferenc Cserhádi, Chaplain of the Association, provided both the malades and their escorts with spiritual direction and inspiration. According to our custom, two Moldovian patients and escorts, chosen by the recently deceased confrere Endre Atzél, traveled to Budapest to join our group. We are grateful to corporate donors, first of all from Hérosz Építőipari, for making this journey possible.

● The Hungarian Chapter of the **Johanniter Order** held its Knights Convocation in Veszprém, May 26 to 28. During the church service, with more than a hundred participants, dr. Mihály Márkus, Bishop of the Reformed Congregation of Transdanubia, recalled the teaching of St.



Paul the Apostle regarding the defense of the faith and the primacy of love. His speech became the spiritual theme for the general assembly in the afternoon. About 70 knights participated in the knights' assembly, under the leadership of Commendator Miklós Bánffy.

- A major annual event for the Hungarian Association is the pilgrimage to the shrine of **Our Lady in Csíksomlyó, Transylvania, a national pilgrimage** site for Hungarians. This year on the 10th anniversary of this event, a group of forty Association members, led by Vice President Tamás Ubul Kállay, traveled to Csíksomlyó on June 2nd for four days. Association members participated with hundreds of pilgrims in the Pentecost procession of Csíksomlyó, that had also become a revered tradition for the local groups of the MMSz that attend regularly. Members of both organizations meet in Csíksomlyó each year, under the protection of the Blessed Virgin of Csíksomlyó.

- On June 12th, the **Grand Master of the Order, Frá Andrew Bertie**, together with the Grand Commander, the Grand Chancellor and the Foreign Minister, received the members of the leadership of the Hungarian Association: György O'sváth, Tamás Ubul Kállay, Lajos Okolicsányi and József Rabi at the Magistral Palace in Rome. President O'sváth presented a detailed report on recent activities and issues facing the Association to the Grand Master and informed him of the situation in the country and the Church following the Hungarian elections. Grand Master Bertie acknowledged the importance of the Hungarian Association in the Order and praised the constant presence and participation of the Association and the MMSz in the widespread activities of the Order.



- On the 22nd of June, **Prof. Dr. Erich Kussbach, Ambassador of the Order to Hungary**, held a St. John's Day reception in the Museum of Military History in the Buda Castle. Among the more than 200 guests were numerous outstanding representatives of the Church, political life and the diplomatic corps.

- On the 24th of June, the members of the Hungarian Association's **North-American Delegation** celebrated the feast day of St. John the Baptist in the Convent of the Visitation School in Washington. Among the activities of the day was the annual general meeting, where the members elected counselors Géza Habsburg and Nicholas P. Chopey and two substitute counselors Thomas DeSzily (re-elected) and Thomas Wyatt. Relatives and friends joined the members of the Delegation at holy mass celebrated by Msgr. James D. Watkins Ch.M. of the Federal Association. A reception followed with more than fifty people attending. Among the guests were Fra' James-Michael von Stroebel C.J. and three representatives of the Most Venerable Order of St. John.

- On June 28th, **Archbishop Juliusz Janusz, Papal Nuncio to Hungary**, received President György O'sváth, and Chancellor Erzsébet Podmaniczky Pusztainé of the Hungarian Association. At the warm and friendly reception the representatives of the Association rendered account of the events and activities of the Order and of the Association, and discussed the social and political situation in Hungary.

- The Hungarian contingent that traveled to Cracow to participate in the Order's **International Summer Camp for the Handicapped** between July 15 and 23, consisted of 12 handicapped youth and 10 companions, led by Tamás Kállay, Jr.. As always, this proves to be a highlight in the yearly calendar (see picture on page 6).

- **The Hungarian Association's annual reception** was held, as always, on the eve of the feast of St. Stephen at the Association headquarters in Budapest. Earlier in the afternoon the Association held the second annual Presidential Colloquium with many members of the Association participating. President



O'sváth and Father Imre Kozma gave accounts of the activities and events of the Association and of the MMSz over the past 4 months. On the next day many members of the Association and members the MMSz participated at a high mass celebrating the **feast of St. Stephen**, followed by the traditional procession, where the Order of Malta's organizations – with red flags flying – join other church groups as they process through the streets of Budapest.

- The leadership of the Hungarian Association held their annual meeting in September with the leadership of the **Hungarian Roman Catholic Church's Council of Bishops**, led by Cardinal Archbishop Péter Erdő and Bishop László Németh, the Council's newly appointed General Secretary. The exchange of information, as always, proved to be valuable for both parties.

- The Hungarian Association's **German-language Delegation** held its general meeting and spiritual retreat in Augsburg, September 15 to 17. The Association was represented by Vice-President Tamás Ubul Kállay. Confrere Friedrich Pallavicini, member of the Austrian Grand Priory took part as guest. Rev. Béla

Káposztássy, parish priest of Vecsés, led the contemplations entitled "On the Road of Continuous Conversion". The general meeting elected new leadership: Delegate: Miklós Karácsonyi; Vice-Delegate: Zsuzsa Máriássy; Secretary: Mária Clary-Aldringen; Hospitaller: László Baittrok; Treasurer: András Tahy; and Controllers: Dr. Barnabás Rédey and Dr. László Teleki.

- On the 17th of September, at the **beatification ceremony of Sára Salkaházi**, social services nun – born in Kassa (Kosice, Slovakia) – the Association was represented at the St. Stephen Basilica by members living in Kassa and by members living in Hungary.

- The autumn **Council meeting** of the Association was held in October at the Budapest headquarters. The council debated and accepted next year's budget. Approval was granted for five new candidates to begin their year of probation – Péter Dzuppa-Szemere, Tamás Kállay Jr., Judit Muskovszky-Csapó, Felicia Pályi and Dr. Ferenc Szutrély. On this occasion Rev. Pavol Drab from Kassa (Kosice, Slovakia) was invested as a chaplain in the Order at a holy mass in the church of Our Lady in the Buda Castle.

- The sixth **annual pilgrimage of the Association to Kassa** (Kosice, Slovakia) took place from November 17th to 19th. The celebration this year was of special significance because it was the commencement St. Elisabeth's jubilee year. St. Elisabeth was born eight hundred years ago. Since the exact year of her birth is unknown, the celebration of her jubilee year is marked from the year of her death, her "birthday in heaven". The high point of the pilgrimage was the Sunday holy mass celebrated by Father Miklós Frank, Conventual Chaplain, in the packed cathedral.

- The Association was properly represented at the initiation of the **Jubilee Year of Saint Elisabeth** on November 19th, in St. Stephen's Basilica in Budapest. Cardinal Archbishop Péter Erdő celebrated the opening solemn holy mass. Cardinal Erdő spoke about the life of the Princess of the House of Arpad, whose self-sacrificing love for her family was equaled by her devotion to the poor.

- Knights of Obedience of the Association participated in an **annual three-day spiritual retreat**. The retreat was held at the Károlyi palace and its chapel in Fehérvársurgó southwest of Budapest, between 7 and 10 December.

In Memoriam:

Edina Mailáth de Székhely D.H.D. (+2006)

Kristóf Kállay de Nagyálló G.C.H.D.O. (+2006)

János Wettstein de Westersheimb G.C.H.D. (+2006)

Károly Wolnhoffer de Jekelfalussy C.H.D. (+2006)

István Bornemisza de Kálnó and Ádám-föld C.H.D. (+2006)

Computer Skills Training in the Trans-Carpathia (Ukraine)

The Beregszász Chapter of the MMSz is reaching out and attempting to help the needy in a broad range of fields, as well as dealing with the problems of wider segments of the local population. From the beginning, one of our major goals was to improve the quality of life of our brethren here in the Ukraine by initiating projects, through which we can improve their job prospects. It was at this time that we hit upon the idea of computer skills training.

In 2001, three of our colleagues obtained the European Computer Driving License (ECDL) certificate (a first for the Ukraine!) and that's when we decided to organize ECDL seminars in Beregszász. In the beginning, overcoming financial and technical difficulties required tremendous effort. We obtained and reconditioned used and cast-off computers, making them functional enough for us to start operations. As a result of significant aid from abroad and our organizational

efforts, we were able to open the doors to our Chapter's ECDL Examination Center, having received our qualification certificate in Budapest in September, 2002. Instruction is being handled in accordance with the lesson plans and norms of the international ECDL programs, as all of our invited instructors hold ECDL qualifications or are internationally qualified examiners. This is the first such center operating in the Ukraine.

The seminars are held at our organization's headquarters, on a non-profit basis. To receive an ECDL certificate, applicants take part in a six month training program, which can be preceded by a three month basic course for beginners. The necessary space, the instruction materials, the experts, and the technical know-how have been provided to us through the generous help and assistance of Interelektronik Kft. (Budapest), Bull Magyarország (Hungary), the management of Sárkány Kft., the Lajos Mocsáry

Foundation and the Illyés Public Foundation, all of whom, having recognized the importance of our programs, stepped forward together and offered their help and technical expertise. After these initial steps, our goal is to blanket the entire Lower Carpathians in the Ukraine. At present, ECDL instructions are taking place at eight locations in Beregszász. We are joyful that, to date, we have registered 1,560 students and have awarded more than 642 ECDL certificates to those successfully completing our program. Since 278 of the newly awarded certificate-holders were unemployed at the time, they significantly improved their prospects for a well-paying job.

To find out more, you can reach our organization at:

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Memories of the Yugoslav War

Fifteen years ago, in November of 1991-when the guns were already thundering in Yugoslavia – on an icy, dark evening, Father Imre Kozma (the President of the MMSz) and two colleagues, Edit Paulik and András Schumicky, started out towards Croatia. Their trip was occasioned by a telephone message that sounded an ominous warning: several thousand civilians – including aged, infants, ill, injured as well as helpless people – needed to be evacuated from the towns of Vukovár and Eszék, both of which were destroyed by Serbian forces.

The borders were closed. Nevertheless, the mayor of Barcs helped the threesome to cross and, thereafter, the mayor of Virovitica assisted them to reach Eszék and, finally, Vinkovci. There the mayor greeted them by candlelight in the cellar under the shot-ridden mayoral office. He couldn't do much for them except to take them to the last village before Vukovár, the bombed-out Nustar. What's more, he warned them that further progress was impossible because their safety could no longer be guaranteed. He advised that they should go to Zagreb and confer with the commander of Chetnik forces, General Raseta. When they arrived in Zagreb, they came upon – nearly miraculously! – one of Father Kozma's old friends, Kálmán Kugli. He quickly arranged a meeting with General Raseta. When they entered the frightening system of underground bunkers, they didn't know if they would ever emerge alive. Father Kozma began the interview with the general by stating that he has arrived as the emissary of a commander who has never been defeated by any enemy. To the questioning look of the general,

Father Kozma responded that this great leader is none other than Jesus Christ! The battle-weary eyes of the old soldier glistened with a tear...

General Raseta would have supported the evacuation of civilians but lacked a guarantee of safety, because of the dangers posed by Serbian forces not under his command and control.

From there, the three proceeded to the Croatian President, Franjo Tudjman, and then to the President of the Croatian parliament-sadly, the answers they received were the same. Thus, the only option left was to ask the Croatians to at least help them gather up the wounded from the basements of the destroyed hospitals of Eszék and Vukovár, along with the aged people remaining alive in the elderly homes and transport them to Hungary. The buses were ready on the other side of the border, but Hungarian Interior Minister, Peter Boross, prohibited them from crossing into Yugoslavia, since he had received information that there were plans to attack the convoy.

The only choice was to take the Order of Malta's ambulances and transport vehicles across the border with appropriate escort; thereafter, they were continuously transporting the wounded, day and night, to hospitals in Pécs. The aged, women and children were taken by Croatian buses to the border, where they were transferred to Hungarian buses and driven to refugee camps. During the operation, two Maltese ambulances and one automobile were destroyed, fortunately without loss of life.

The MMSz then founded a camp for families and the aged in Tiszaörs, which it kept operating for several years under the directorship of Jozsef Csurgo.

Father Kozma, for his role in these events and for the care of the refugees, received the "Apostolic Protonarius" title in 1992 from Pope John Paul II and the "Hungarian Republic's Service Cross" from Prime Minister Dr. Jozsef Antall. For his efforts in caring for the sick in the Vinkovci hospital and for his efforts in rebuilding it, Father Kozma



received the Croatian "Zahvalnica" award in 1993.

Thanks to the many volunteers – too numerous to mention – many hundreds of wounded and many thousands of helpless, aged, and disabled people found solace, protection and care under the Order of Malta's cross. May God bless them for their bravery and sacrifice!

The MMSz's Tools

In light of the holiday season of Christ the King and, as I look back upon the year past, I wonder whether we were successful in completing the mission we are called upon to fulfill. All of this is a function of whether our Organization is satisfied with and makes full use of the set of tools it calls its own.

Our Organization does not possess instruments of power, it does not wish to rule, but it does want to provide lessons toward the truth, in this secular world, through its actions, giving evidence of its moral strength. The fact is, we must differentiate between the "human truth" of this world – which is forever battling crisis after crisis, and which is oriented toward material interests – and "God's truth", the truth of the eternal world, the truth that came down to us with Jesus, the only real truth.

Pilate speaks to our world when he asks rhetorically "what is truth?" – he is not really asking a question but is making the cynical statement of a Roman Empire bureaucrat. He knows from experience that the "truth", which he has well-learned, only serves the interests of the ruling powers of this world.

In this light, it is important for us to examine our own thought processes and our own strivings. It seems that we humans know everything precisely: what is wrong and what is right; what we must do, when and how to do it. We make lofty pronouncements, and our behavior gives evidence of our belief that we are indeed in possession of the truth. As if it was our business to validate these beliefs in every walk of life!

Shouldn't we instead consider that, behind every confidently uttered pronouncement hides a plethora of individual interests and goals?

The truth, the divine truth, which comes from on high, is not of this world and yet it is present in this world and has its effect on it. It comes from Jesus and is identifiable in his acts. Jesus, in total harmony with the Father, gives us a new meaning of what is permitted and what is not. Things man can do and things he cannot. This truth liberates us from human tyranny, and eliminates excluding limits since, according to God's measures, everyone has equal opportunities.

The mission of the MMSz is rooted in Jesus. In this secular world, our presence must be like that of salt in food, leaven on bread, light in darkness. Accordingly, we accept every being as our brother, and by bringing all together in love, we respond to God who is love itself, who comes to us with his gift of love. Thus, the love of God and the love toward our fellow men unites us, even the littlest ones, with Jesus, and in Jesus, we meet God Himself.

What are the tools that we need for these tasks?

– We must examine our traditions and relationships. Beyond the often over-emphasized blood relationships – sometimes even in opposition thereto – we must recognize those "family members" to whom we are related "only" through God, our mutual Father.

– We must accept that our love for our fellow men is not sensual and/or guided by connected spheres of interest, but it encompasses the reaching out to



strangers, the oppressed and the excluded.

– We must see that loving God is not the following of a command, but the alignment with the will of God in word and deed.

– We must realize that sins are not just the breaking of laws and rules, but man's erroneous view of himself, of his independence and of God, against Whom he tries to impose claims and conditions.

In the MMSz, those individuals who serve others do not simply act against their selfish interests, do not simply act out of brotherly love in response to the beckoning of God's love or, perhaps, in serving the common good, give evidence of their humanistic ideals. In addition, and maybe overridingly, by the use of the above-enumerated tools, they formulate the face of society.

The world needs a new system of tools, a set of "heavenly definitions", in order to escape the pit and to gain life. Christ judges our thoughts and plans, sometimes drawing a line across our calculations, and calls upon us to have commitments; he energizes our inner world toward forgiveness and the sharing of our wealth with others, so that, in the end, we may attain heavenly peace.

Father Imre Kozma

Calendar of Events – MMSz

Introduction

Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat (MMSz), the charity and humanitarian organization of the Order of Malta in Hungary, was founded in 1989. Its highest decision-making body is the National Assembly of Delegates, which holds its annual meeting in the second quarter of the year in accordance with the Memorandum of Association. The MMSz is directed by a Board, whose members are Csilla Frfr. von Boeselager, honorary president (+1994); Father Imre Kozma, President; Sándor Tombor, Vice-President; bishop László Bíró, national spiritual leader; Tamás Ubul Kállay, Vice-President of the Hungarian Association; 7 MMSz regional leaders; and 4 MMSz professional leaders.

Day-to-day management is conducted by a 6-member team led by Father Imre Kozma. The organization is made up of a national network, consisting of a National Center and seven regional establishments, each with its own local groups (142 in all). The regions operate 164 institutions and 60 institutional services across the country.

MMSz activities are performed by volunteers and employees. It only employs paid personnel in jobs where professional

expertise and degrees are required by financial, medical and/or social guidelines. Several thousand volunteers participate in fulfilling the tasks of the MMSz. All together 3,200 members of the MMSz work as volunteers or employees. The total number of unpaid hours granted by volunteers is as high as 600,000 per year.

Calendar of Events

- In commemorative ceremonies conducted in May, 2006, representatives of the Hungarian Association and the MMSz expressed gratitude to town volunteers in **Transylvania, Romania**, who selflessly and generously assisted the Order of Malta in **reconstruction work** in the nearby area after floods caused heavy damage (August 2005). A few days later, at a holy mass celebrated by the Vicar Bishop of Temesvár (Timisoara), Dr. Ferencz Bárányi, national Vice President of the Romanian Maltese Relief Service (SAMR), handed out certificates of achievement for exceptional performance to the Hungarian Association and MMSz members.

- Pécs and Komárom, local MMSz groups, celebrated the **15th anniversary** of their founding. The occasions were excellent opportunities to express thanks to Hungarian and foreign supporters for their generous donations and to the many volunteers in the city who helped in the chapter's activities during the last 15 years.

- On the 27th of May, the MMSz held its **annual general meeting** under the chairmanship of Father Imre Kozma at its headquarters in

the 12th district of Budapest. In his sermon during the opening holy mass, Father Kozma spoke about the difficult situation facing Hungary and the MMSz's unaltered sense of mission: defending the faith and supporting those who need care. The general meeting accepted the reports of 2005, the programs, and the proposed modifications to the Memorandum of Association.

- After the **floods of the Danube and Tisza River regions**, the hot summer weather increased the danger of contamination. To overcome this danger, the MMSz and **Unilever** launched a common program in the beginning of July to distribute disinfectants and detergents to the settlements in need. The detergents, valued at 160 thousand Euros, were donated by Unilever, the largest producer and distributor of detergents in Hungary.

- With the financial assistance of the firm **Provident**, the employees of MMSz's Budapest Center presented in July a **"fairy-tale wall"** to the patient children of the Children's Ward at the St. Panteleon Hospital in Dunaujváros. The "fairy-tale wall" program was first launched in 2002. So far the Children's Hospital of Madarász Street, the St. László Hospital, Children's Clinic No. I and the Pál Heim Children's Hospital are decorated with these works of art, which cheer up the ill children (see picture on opposite page).

- The MMSz conducted its **camp for handicapped children** from July 31 to August 8 in the village of Fülöpszállás in the Great Plains region of southern Hungary. Twenty handicapped children enjoyed the benefits of this year's camp. Everyone returned home enriched by



MMSz headquarter building in Budapest



pleasant memories and interesting experiences.

- Between the 5th and the 12th of August, the MMSz Kecskemét chapter participated in the “**Central European Camp of the Disabled**” in Szepsiszentgyörgy, Transylvania, organized by the Order’s Romanian Relief Service (SAMR).

- The **Meeting of Young People** of the Carpathian Basin is organized each year in Mesztegnyo by the MMSz Pécs chapter. This year, between the 15th and the 21st of August, about a hundred young people arrived from Transylvania, Vojvodina and Slovakia.

- Two years ago, within the framework of a government program, the MMSz together with the Public Foundation for the Homeless and the Tutor Foundation, made the “**receiving village**” concept a reality in the village of Tarnabod. This program envisions a solution to the problems of families living on the margins of society by creating an interrelated concept for the development of social policy, dwelling, training, employment and community. In the past two years, the MMSz arranged village homes for fifteen families, each with many children, who had been homeless until then.

The aim of the program is to make the families self-sufficient. The MMSz also set up an electronics dismantling plant on August 14th that provides employment for 33 inhabitants of the village. This model experiment was arranged in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and is a huge step forward for the village community.

- The **MMSz national conference** took place in Lakitelek from October 6th to 8th, where leaders of the chapters and institutions met. The goal of the conference was to strengthen the organization so that it would become more benevolent, open and welcoming to all those in need. Beyond the exchange of experiences and the opportunity for personal interchange, those attending received spiritual nourishment from the lectures by Father Péter Nemeshegyi, a Jesuit priest who spoke on the “outpouring of love”, by Father Imre Kozma, and by Father Attila Thorday, who emphasized the example of Christ in the Christian method of conflict resolution.

- Beginning on Saint Martin’s Day, Nov 11th, the MMSz launched a **national blanket collection** program called “Life-saving blankets”. The collection provides blankets to the needy who are in danger of freezing during the winter

season. The intention of the program was also to draw the attention to those in society, who lack even the basic requirements of life – the homeless, the aged living alone or poor families with small children.

- The MMSz hosted a **conference for the Order’s Central and Eastern European relief services**. Relief services from nine countries took part in the event. Major subjects for discussion were:
 - The determination of the common “Maltese” identity, role, goals and ideals,
 - The role, training, rights and responsibilities of the “Maltese volunteers”,
 - Preparations for the conference of the Order in Austria in November 2007, possibilities of our contribution to the event,
 - Information about the activities of the participating countries on a common basis, preparation for the campaign “introducing our work and role” and commencing this campaign in each country,
 - Introduction of the INTRANET program with the help of which organizations can communicate with one another.

In his introductory remarks, Father Imre Kozma, stressed the importance of the guiding principle of the MMSz: “saving lives and building communities” – a purpose that should guide the network of the Order’s charity and humanitarian services.

- Based on 700 requests received, the MMSz distributed **500 bicycles** in December to families living on small farms in the region between the Danube and Tisza Rivers. The recipients had no other means of transportation. Village fathers helped applicants complete requests for the bicycles.

In Memoriam:

Father Balázs Marosi (+2006)

The MMSz's Ambulance Service



MAGYAR MÁLTAI SZERETETSZOLGÁLAT (MMSz) AMBULANCE SERVICE



Thank you for your contributions, which allow us to continue to provide quality ambulance service with properly equipped vehicles and equipment.

www.maltai.hu

Donations to:
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The MMSz voluntary ambulance service began its activity in Hungary in March, 1991. Its principles are still valid today: high-quality work provided by volunteers in the spirit of the Order of Malta in the front line of public health. It is voluntary because participants in this work do not get any salary; it is high-quality because it always represents a potential to save, which meets professional requirements from both a technical and personal point of view; and it is in the spirit of the Order of Malta because it turns toward those, who truly need care with Christian love and humility.

The life-saving service of the MMSz is the oldest civil institution dealing with relief work, its voluntary character is unique today in Hungary.

There are 80-100 volunteers (doctors, professional ambulance nurses, drivers, trained helpers) who are on duty 24 hours four times a week. At present the MMSz operates this single life-saving

service in Budapest. It is supported and financed solely by the MMSz. It does not receive any directly linked or normative subsidies. No local or EU project bidding opportunities have been available for years.

Besides voluntary life-saving work, our service has also been conducting – also in a unique way in Hungary – basic training for ambulance nurses for years, which has developed into an educational system recognized and supported by offi-

cial national professional organizations during the past years. Training is free for students and is performed by trainers on a voluntary basis.

The sphere of activity of the ambulance service is further enhanced by transportation of the sick in a limited capacity and by occasionally organizing medical events. (It is unparalleled in Hungary that the latter task is performed free and voluntarily in certain justified cases.)

To help support the Hungarian handicapped youth wishing to participate in the Order's International Summer Camp in Switzerland this year, please send your contributions to

Magyar Máltai Lovagok Alapítványa

Foundation of the Hungarian Knights of Malta

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