Pope Francis receives the decorative facsimile copy of the Pray Codex – photographs

2021/09/14



On 12 September 2021, on the occasion of the 52nd International Eucharistic Congress, President János Áder presented the Holy Father with two volumes of outstanding historical importance.



[1]

Pope Francis was received by President János Áder, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén at the Museum of Fine Arts, followed by members of the Hungarian Episcopal

See, as well as a delegation from the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Hungary and a delegation of Jewish organisations in Hungary. Accompanying Pope Francis were Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin and Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Head of the Section for Relations with States.



[2]One of the gifts presented to Pope Francis was a decorative facsimile copy of the Pray Codex, including the text of the *Halotti beszéd és könyörgés* [Funeral sermon and prayer], which was prepared for the Holy Father by the staff of the NSZL.

The invaluable composite manuscript was donated to the NSZL by the Chapter of Pozsony (today Bratislava) in 1813 and it was named by the literary historian Ferenc Toldy (1805–1875) after the Jesuit historian György Pray (1723–1801), who first published a report on it in 1770. The Pray Codex is one of the most important documents of 12th-century Hungarian ecclesiastical culture. In the Latin liturgical codex, the sacramentary – a book containing the prayers of the priest who celebrated the mass – is edited for use in Hungary, followed by the texts of certain rituals outside the mass (anointing, laying the foundation stone of the church, funerals). *The Halotti beszéd és könyörgés* [Funeral sermon and prayer], our earliest coherent text in Hungarian, is found at the end of the funeral service, in its appendix, accompanied by a somewhat more extensive funeral sermon in Latin, on leaf 136 of the codex.

Our previous report on the gift [3]



[4]

The second volume, a valuable copy of the book entitled *Magyar hősök – Elfeledett életutak a 20. századból [Hungarian heroes – Forgotten lives from the 20th century]*, based on the English volume Heroes Among Us. 50 True Stories of Brave Hungarians in the 20th Century, was published by the Committee of National Remembrance and the MCC Foundation.

The Pope presented the President of Hungary with a mosaic copy of a painting by the Italian painter Ippolito Caffi, painted in the mid-1800s and now kept in the National Museum of Rome. The painting, entitled Papal Blessing in St Peter’s Square, depicts people waiting for the Papal Blessing gathering in St Peter's Square in the morning sunshine.

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Links:
[1] https://oszk.hu/sites/default/files/OSZK_aj%C3%A1nd%C3%A9k2_.jpg
[2] https://oszk.hu/sites/default/files/OSZK_aj%C3%A1nd%C3%A9k3_.jpg
[3] https://www.oszk.hu/en/news/decorative-facsimile-copy-pray-codex
[4] https://oszk.hu/sites/default/files/OSZK-Aj%C3%A1nd%C3%A9k1_.jpg
[5] https://oszk.hu/en/category/foszotar-es-pozicionalo/hirek