



By Deacon Zoli Kunszabo
COUNTRY COORDINATOR
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Deacon Zoli is the founder-leader of the New Jerusalem Catholic Community, a permanent deacon of the Archdiocese of Esztergom-Budapest, and the current president of the National Service Committee for Hungary's Catholic Charismatic Renewal. He has worked in full-time missions since 1994. He began collaborating with Renewal Ministries in 1996 and is the Country Coordinator for Hungary, Serbia, and Croatia. He also aids in outreach to Romania and the Ukraine.

Deacon Zoli and his wife, Panni, live in Budapest, Hungary. They have five children and two grandchildren.



Spreading the GOSPEL in Hungary

ARRIVAL

We were looking forward to this weekend with Jim Murphy, then-president of International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS), my fellow country coordinator from Renewal Ministries, and a dear friend, one of the most authentic Christians I have ever known.

After I picked Jim up at the airport, we had a late lunch together in my house and then left quickly for Miskolc, almost two-hundred miles northeast, where the Hungarian Catholic Charismatic Conference was beginning the next day. My wife, Panni, escorted us and helped me in everything during the coming days. When we arrived at the General Arena, we joined the local organizers for a Holy Mass and prayer of preparation. After Mass, we went around the arena singing and praising, while a priest sanctified the place with holy water. Since some areas were filled with people not affiliated with our conference, we saw a lot of surprised faces. We simply smiled at them and prayed more!

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Jim's first talk was a kerygmatic mission speech based on his own story of conversion, with the title *Jesus is Life!* With his characteristic sense of humour and pathos, Jim grabbed the hearts of the audience of approximately two-thousand people. After his speech, he asked everybody to dedicate their lives to Jesus. The sixty prayer pairs found their places around the floor in a big circle to welcome the newcomers. During the forty-five minutes allotted to this ministry time, they prayed with a few hundred men and women. After this very fruitful time, Jim continued with his second speech on the vision of spiritual growth in Christian life, *Remain in Me!* Jim continued his personal testimony, and he spoke more about a pilgrimage he made in which he crossed the entire United States on foot while carrying a big wooden cross.

He used this experience as a symbol of the Christian life. Most days, you don't have strong experiences with God. You are on your road with the hard cross



Former ICCRS President and Renewal Ministries' Country Coordinator Jim Murphy shared three talks at a national conference in Hungary, and three more at a leadership training day.

“ Most days, you don’t have strong experiences with God. You are on your road with the hard cross on your back, but God blesses your faithfulness! ”

on your back, but God blesses your faithfulness! In that way, you will be purified and transformed. **You should stay close to Jesus every day with the help of five tools: prayer, the Word of God, the sacraments, community, and a lifestyle of service.** After this speech on such deep and real-life topics, we had a time of Adoration and prayer ministry.

After lunch, Jim gave a third talk, titled *Bearing Remaining Fruits*. He explained how it usually takes a long time to bear fruit that will remain and endure. The unfaithful and the impatient will never see such fruit. Before the real fruits come forward, a time of purification is necessary. Without that, there is no place for God to put in his own works. The time of purification is very painful. God cuts out everything from us that is against his plans. Sometimes, He cuts off good things too (things we loved and honored as God’s works) to make room for new works He wants to accomplish in us. It is essential to trust in God during this period. If we draw back our permission from Him, He will step back, but our hearts will run wild, and we will miss the fruits. By remaining faithful during the whole process, we will be steeped in the characteristics of the

Holy Spirit! And then real fruit will be born in our character!

After this powerful message, Jim invited us to ask God about the things we should offer to Him to be pruned. What are these things? Will we really give Him permission to do anything in us? We asked for the help of the Holy Spirit, and people once again went to the prayer pairs for help.

After the prayer time, Bishop László Varga, the honorary president of the Hungarian Catholic Charismatic Renewal, addressed a message to the whole Renewal to call for more and deeper unity. We are on the good path, but the Lord wants to use us like one non-divided body.

After a short break, the closing Holy Mass started with the main celebrant Archbishop Csaba Ternyák, the local bishop. Everybody noticed how happy he was watching the praise of the two-thousand participants. He encouraged us to fulfill our missional calling with the help of the Holy Spirit, who is the main actor of the mission throughout the history of the Church. A very lively worship time started after the Holy Mass! We were really thankful to the Lord for this day filled with his wisdom and power!

LEADERSHIP TRAINING DAY

On the next day, we taught and ministered to 120 leaders and ministers of the Renewal with a leadership training day. We started with a Holy Mass in the chapel of the Fráter György Catholic High School, in downtown Miskolc.

After that, we started our session with Jim. We asked him what kind of hardships and temptations we will face while dedicating our lives to ministry. Jim gave three talks, and we had a long question-and-answer session at the end.

Jim shared his experiences as someone who has worked full-time for the Lord for more than forty years. He spoke about his experiences in building community, and the ways we can handle conflicts between leaders. He spoke a lot on the theme of prayer and the spiritual life of the leader. He was more than sincere and open for us—without a mask—and it touched our hearts. He shared with us that he has faced a cancer diagnosis three times in his life, and about his struggle of faith until reaching recovery.

We understood that being a Charismatic leader does not free us from the hardships of life, but that with the Lord, we can overcome everything. Also, his message reminded us that God turns every bad thing to be a benefit for us. Every leader was really thankful for this day together.

Two-thousand people attended the Hungarian Catholic Charismatic Conference. Below, the attendees pray the Our Father during Mass.

