



Cistercian monk Gyula Donát Lelóczy celebrated his Iron Mass in Dallas

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On Sunday, 13 September, the oldest member of the community, Gyula Donát Lelóczy – Father Julius – Cistercian monk, priest and teacher, celebrated the 65th anniversary of his ordination in the Abbey of Our Lady of Dallas of the Cistercian Order.

Iron is not a precious stone like diamonds or rubies, nor is it as expensive a shiny metal as gold or silver; Iron is an ordinary, prosaic element, but it is strong, reliable, and can be used for hundreds of purposes, either as simple iron or hardened steel, and it also has the peculiar property of attracting magnetic objects. Perhaps all these properties of the metal were present together when the oldest member of the Hungarian-founded Our Lady of Dallas Cistercian Abbey celebrated his “iron mass” in the abbey church in Texas in the presence of her fellow monks, hundreds of friends, alumni, their parents, Hungarians from the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolis and numerous nuns. Gyula Donát Lelóczy, a Cistercian monk, priest and teacher, has been a member of the Texas Abbey community for 64 years, and the high school has been teaching for nearly 50 years.



The main celebrant of the liturgy was Abbot Peter Verhalen, the homily was held by Augustine Hoelke (Father Donát was his Form Master at the Prep School), and Brother Chrysostom, one of the new novices, sat at the organ.

At the beginning of the Mass, Peter Verhalen revealed that the name Julius was not his real monastic name, but the name he had received it in baptism.



His Cistercian monastic name is Donát. Donatus, that is, Given to God. He received this name in communist Hungary in 1954, when the religious orders had already been dissolved, and in Budapest he put on the white robes of the novices in a tiny room, completely hidden, as an underground Cistercian novice. From the time he was able to continue his studies in Rome in 1956, everyone called him

Brother Donát or Don Donato. But when he arrived in America in 1964, Abbot Anselm advised him to use the first name Julius in his new homeland, because the name Donat was ambiguous and his students might call him "Father Doughnut."



As Father Donát celebrated Mass in the presence of hundreds of his former students and friends, the love and the presence of the Holy Spirit were almost palpable in the church. The harmonious sounds of the organ's chords, the undulating beauty of the ancient Gregorian chant, the melody of "Our Blessed Mother" sung in Hungarian, and the cheerful tone of Augustine Hoelke's homily created a true community of friends.

Before the closing blessing of the Mass, Father Donatus first expressed his gratitude to God for calling him to the priestly and monastic life and then thanked the celebrating community and his friends for their many years of faithful support. Afterward, Éva Beluska, president of the local Hungarian association, greeted Father Donatus with a brief, heartfelt speech on behalf of the Hungarians living in the metropolitan area.

Translated with DeepL.com (free version)



At the reception after the Holy Mass, in the courtyard of the abbey, the celebrating crowd was indeed greeted by a warm welcome – nearly 40 degrees Celsius. A large tent softened the scorching effect of the sun's rays a little. Guests were awaited by a wide selection of food and drinks. The celebration continued here: many friends greeted Father Donát with a short but unforgettable handshake and hug.

Source and photo: Cistercian Abbey of Our Lady of Dallas

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