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## Introduction

Our Reformed Theological Academy is a higher education institution of the Reformed Church of Hungary maintained by our local Church District, founded in 1531.

**In our education we have a Master of Divinity** program, it is a training of ministers for the Reformed Church who serve according to the law of God in the literal sense of the world, and not ministers for the politics in order to reign. In 12-semester and in a full-time program. The last two semesters are practical trainings for the student.

The second program is a **Master of Theological Studies**. It is a master program in 10 semesters for those not wishing to enter the ministry as ordained ministers but they want to have theological knowledge at academic level.

The third program we have is the **Teacher of Religion - Pastoral Assistant (BA)** It is a training of teachers of religious education and workers for the ministry in 6-semester in full-time and part-time program which is available not only here in Sárospatak but in Ukraine.

Our fourth program is a **Training of Reformed Church Community's Organizer (BA)** – The students can specialize in four fields: 1) **General Community's Organizer**; 2) **Mission among the Gipsy people** 3) **Church Social Work**; 4) **Church Music** in 6-semester in part-time program.

Our last training is a **Lay Training for Church Elders and church members in 1 year.** – The participants of this program simply want to know more about the Bible, the Reformed confessions, the history and structure of the church. This program is available here in Sárospatak, in Ukraine and in Slovakia.

We work in three institutes. First of all in the

**Institute for biblical studies,** in

**Institute for systematic theology and church history** and in

**Institute for practical theology and Christian education.**

**In the DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES** our students can learn three languages: English, German and Dutch.

Our students **have a self-governing student's union ('presbiterium') led by two students with 8 members delegated from the students.**

### Prayer

First of all I want to give you a cordial welcome here in Sárospatak in our reformed college. May I ask you when was your institute, seminary, university, school established? Thank you! Ours in 1531. It means: we have a relatively long history behind us, which we have no greater problems with. With the past. With the future we don't have problems either, because we know that the Lord will come back. Also the second fact after the past we do not have problem with is the future. What we have problem with is the present. Always the present. But this is why we are here to find solution for the problems of the present time as part of the future. I hope this is the purpose of this conference.

You have arrived here after a long journey. You are tired. I think you don't need a long sermon. What a tired traveller needs is a refreshing spring, fountain.

This is what I found in Isa 54,16

We officially and continually read this chapter in our church.

Where we read: "Behold, I Myself have created the smith who blows the fire of coals, And brings out a weapon for its work; And I have created the destroyer to ruin.

Which means: God as creator holds his people in his hands including his enemy. This is why he can protect them, their lives because he is the Creator.

We read about this protecting of life by God in our first entire hungarian Bible translation from the year 1590: God's Spirit fed the waters (Gen 1:2).

Not like in the common translations: Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. (Gen 1:2 - KJV)

The translator Károlyi with this word „move, hover” (מְרַחֵף) thought of the eagle:

The eagle rubs together her feathers through a special moving, during the brooding of her eggs. This special moving of the feathers produces heat. This promotes the formation of life.

The translator indicates God's intention in time at the beginning of the world through the history: He stands on the side of the life, against the power of death and therefore if death and life encounter, life must win this battle.

In the time, as Genesis 1 was formulated, there was a little experience behind this formulation:

God stands on the side of life.

As our hungarian translator translated it like this: God's spirit fed the waters, he took thought of the history in which God is present promoting life.

As Károlyi translated it, he has more experiences, therefore he could translate this sentence so courageously. He felt God's presence during the time of the counter-reformation. It was very important for him, that God is present in the history.

For me your arrival, landing, this conference is an other sign of God's presence, that He promotes life, He is feeding waters and life. My hope is, that the experiences of this conference and your arrival in your homeland after the first pentecostal experiences of God's spirit, provide you and everybody around you much more proof of the fact, that God's spirit feeds the waters, promotes, protects life and we personally become signs, how life triumphs over death.

"Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions. (Deuteronomy 32:11-NAS)

Don't worry! He is hovering over us, He is carrying us, He catches us if we fall down, even if we get into the depth of death.

May I introduce the wife of the bishop.

If you listen to her you will understand why we are episcopalists.  
Because our bishops have a wife like she is.

### Guide

On our trip we'll see a castle. The name of the castle is Boldogkő vára. The name of this castle was always a sign for me: We can stay here like a stone and feel the happiness and go forward on the way of happiness by God's guiding. Because the name today of this castel is connected with happiness and stone: boldog-kő. And happiness in the sense of the Bible indicates always the fact that one goes on a way or is led.

(Prov 9,6 - וְאֲשֶׁרוּ בְדַרְךְ בִּינָה - and go in the way of understanding.; Jes 9,15

וַיְהִיוּ מְאֻשְׁרֵי הָעַם-הַזֶּה מִתְעַיִם וּמְאֻשְׁרָיו מְבֻלָּעִים For the leaders of this people cause *them* to err; and *they that are* led of them *are* destroyed. )

Why is it so special to stay here and feel happiness. Because in Budapest at the Calvin square there are 20. 000 members of the church and they have to maintain 1 church, 4 pastors 4 cars – I think. Here in this district we have 10. 000 members who maintain in 96 willages 55 pastors, 96 churches, 20 cars. Sticking to the facts I'll tell you: in 11 villages we have nobody, in 34 under 10, in 57 under 50.

Therefore it is necessary here to have faith, in order to stand in the gap. In this regard the castle mentioned before was always a sign for me. At the time when faith for people was important lived Dévay Bíró Mátyás who was in connection with this castle. As he was fighting for his faith with his opposer he suggested a good method to decide the combat who is right. Dévay suggested them to sit on a powder keg, to shoot into the kegs and whose keg detonates is the loser of the combat for the pure faith. Dévay dared to sit on his keg, but his opposer did not. In our circumstances it only makes sense with this heroism to believe.

### Agreement

In the corridor there are pictures - framed.

This is for me the agreement – a frame, and not more.

It is important, but what's more important is, always the point what is framed.

Of course the picture in the case of the picture.

We are theologians and know, that we are images, according to the likeness of our Creator ( **אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ** - Gen 1:26)

This image has a frame too: the law of God helping us in order to be real MAN.

These agreements make sense if they help us, our lands, universities, students, professors to make this idea real.

In order to be prepared for the task to help the people form themselves into the likeness what is present in Christ.

For this happy synergism we need many blessings in order to be the law the fulfillment of love what can help us to create communities over the borders which shows and realises the message of Christmas, Immanuel.

### Introduction

May I introduce our artists and teachers. Timea is our teacher and thank you Timea that you play for us with your husband. Our artists have finished the highest level of education, The Music Academy Budapest. We are happy to hear your music. The program of this concert is in your hands.

At the end of my introduction I wanted to say:  
where the word has an End, there is the beginning of the music.  
Now I want to say:  
where the music has an end there is nothing afterwards.  
The new creation must come.  
Thank you for this creation and new creation at the same time.

### Book presentation

Our bishop told us yesterday that in the past we had a phrase in our language: biblion in singular. With the meaning: book. He has mentioned the example: bibliotéka. That time the plural form of the phrase had referred to the christian bible alone: ta biblia. Thank you for these books (biblia) dear professor Vos. I hope that these books (ta biblia) help us come nearer to our book, the bible (biblia). Thank you!

### Farewell

If such a great professor like professor Brinkmann has a paper in his hand, I need even more.

Dear professor Brinkmann, the most clever sentence in my life I have heard, came from You: I quote you: You have done everything what you have promised. Yes this is why I have done nothing, because I have promised nothing. – And You have known this, therefore you said, that I have done everything I have promised.

To tell the truth, I have learned very much, dear systematic theologians:

- citi-cati – in your land people cut chains, but we cut börit, establishing covenant in order to do something together
- there are tensions overall – in order to come to Sárospatak, we need orientation by nomos and logos in the cosmos; if you want to come to Sárospatak; but you are going from here

I have a dream: you have said dear professor Brinkmann that we have a unified church. We were unifying streams: muddy stream – Sárospatak and Potchefstroom. Your stream and our stream dear professor. And my dream is that we become the stream of living water as Jesus said (John 7,38).

Today we have heard in the prayer, that Torah and DÁBÁR are changable. I hope that we are changable too. The word we were busy with could change us.

Therefore through our experiences here the world isn't going from frying pan to fire when we arrive home but everything around us will be better.

For me this conference was a good tree and the good tree must bear good fruits. Yes, we were busy here with knowledge being aware of the danger of the eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

In Hungary we say: it doesn't grow on trees, which means, it is not to find everywhere. Yes these fruits what the tree of this conference can bear, only this tree of this conference can bear, because it was fed upon through his roots in Sárospatak. Thank You God, thank You IRTI.