

A HUNGARIAN FRANCISCAN FRIAR IN JERUSALEM IN 1766

by

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One could write about the relations between the Holy Land and the Hungarian Franciscans compiling a full catalogue of friars, who have ever taken part in this mission of 800 years.¹ Instead of this “extensive” vision, I prefer to take the “intensive”, in-depth vision, and describe a concrete case of those relations, looking at a concrete person.

When this paper is published, it will be 260 years since Franciscan Father István Kiss, age 33, set off to the Holy Land from Hungary. He left his Franciscan home convent in Kecskemét on May 10, 1766 and arrived in Jerusalem on August 23, 1766. Finishing his time of service, he left Jerusalem on August 16, 1767, and after a journey in Italy, he returned to Kecskemét in 1768, “before the feast of Saint Anthony”, that is, shortly before June 13. He wrote down his experiences first in Latin, later in Hungarian. The Franciscan library in Buda has preserved this treasure to this day. Modern editions of his hand-written book were made out of the Hungarian account, while the Latin is still waiting to be published. The manuscript was first published in 1958 by Lajos Pásztor, long-time archivist of the Vatican², then in 2018 by Szent István Társulat³, after a process of modernization in spelling carried out by a group invited by the Franciscan Province: literary historian László Nagy Szelestei, Franciscan historian Kapisztrán Varga, librarian Zoltán Fáy, book editor Bernadett Kiss, and myself. (*Fig. 1*)

¹ This kind of research was attempted by László Gyürki: *Magyar zarándokok és emlékek a Szentföldön*, Szent István Társulat, Budapest, 2008.

² P. Kiss István: *Jeruzsálemi Utazás*. Bev., notes: Lajos Pásztor, Anonymous, Rome, 1958. Lajos Pásztor (1913–1997) moved to Rome in 1946 when he was appointed secretary of the Hungarian Academy. Later he became an archivist in the secret archives of the Vatican and a professor at the Faculty of Church History of the Gregoriana University. We have been unable to find out how the manuscript found its way to him. His wife, Edit Pásztor (1925–2015) was an internationally prominent scholar of Franciscan History.

³ Kiss István: *Jeruzsálemi Utazás*. A Magyar Ferences Könyvtár és Levéltár 018000 számú kézirata. Szent István Társulat, Budapest, 2018. This edition indicates the pages in the manuscript. We use these page references all through this article.

Foreign literature on the history of the Franciscan Order in the Holy Land does not mention István Kiss's work in Jerusalem or his travelogue. Yet, it is thanks to the loyalty and devotion of such "everyday" Franciscans that the Order, and through it, the Roman Catholic Church have been present in the Christian Holy Places for eight centuries.

ISTVÁN KISS, THE FRANCISCAN PILGRIM

Today, a Hungarian Franciscan can travel to the Holy Land relatively easily. It is usually possible for the traveling brother to break away from his place of service for a one- or two-week pilgrimage. Pilgrim groups are happy to welcome a Franciscan to join them. The flight is just over three hours from Budapest to Tel Aviv. The friars in the Holy Land are happy to provide him with guest room accommodation and food. If he cannot find a Hungarian-speaking Franciscan out there, there will be a local friar in most major languages who can guide him. Visiting the holy places requires little organization, he can enter almost anywhere, the conditions are safe – despite the media images that tend to transmit the news of any terror action that will disturb many viewers. And if the idea of a longer stay or service arises, the friars in the Holy Land will happily accept any help. The financial background for the trip is not an unaffordable amount, and the provinces of the Order would also give support.

This was not the case 260 years ago. In the time of István Kiss, the way for a Hungarian Franciscan to visit the Holy Land was different. In what capacity did he arrive there? In what kind of framework did his journey fit? We must exclude the category of the *classic traveler*, who discovers distant lands with ample time and money. The title of *pilgrim* is closer to István Kiss's self-interpretation, which mainly indicates his inner attitude. But the journey itself is not a classic pilgrimage. It fits into a third framework: István Kiss applied for *service*, which was how a Franciscan could reach the Holy Land in his time. The aim of this essay is to explain the conditions of this service, presenting the contemporary organization of the Franciscan Order and, within it, the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land.

All this we are going to study following the witness of István Kiss, born in 1733 in Jászberény, Hungary, actually born together with a twin brother. He finished the school of the Piarist Fathers in Vác, and entered the Franciscan Order with his twin brother. He was ordained a priest in 1757. Until his death in 1798, he worked in various Franciscan convents, and the longest periods he spent in Kecskemét, Szeged, and Jászberény.

István Kiss did not date his work. We can only rely on clues in the text. The mention of the crowning of Emperor Francis I shows that the manuscript had to be completed after 1792, in the last years of the life of Kiss. A mention of the

Jacobins also suggests a late date: this movement was active in Hungary in the years 1794-1795. We find a reference that he lives in “Lower Hungary” during writing, as he describes the Holy Mass in Alexandria, which he attended on the feast of the Assumption of Mary. In the years 1792-1795 he actually was assigned to the convent of Szeged in the south. So, it can be argued that right after returning from the Holy Land in 1768, he drew up only the Latin version, and about 25 years later, he got down to writing the Hungarian version. (*Figs. 2-6*)

THE FRANCISCAN MISSION IN THE HOLY LAND

The Franciscan Order was divided into provinces at the 1217 General Chapter under the leadership of Saint Francis, and at that time a territorial unit was created that included the Holy Land.⁴ In 1263, this was divided into smaller units which were called *custodia*. The Holy Land territory retained this designation later, when it became independent, and today it operates almost exactly like any other province of the Order. In 1342, Pope Clement VI confirmed the Franciscan service in the Holy Land with a separate bull: the Franciscans guard the holy places with a papal mandate, their task is to celebrate Masses and the office, the Franciscan presence in the Holy Land is the mission of the entire Order, not tied to any nation. Their superior is the “Guardian of Mount Zion”, and all members of the Order who work in the Holy Land are subject to him. They have a permanent convent in Jerusalem on Mount Zion, at the Cenacle and in Bethlehem. They carry out a permanent ministry in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre and in the Kidron Valley, at the Tomb of Mary. From the beginning, their task was to take care of pilgrims, so they soon settled in Jaffa, Acre and Ramle, too. From the 17th century, monasteries were also built in Nazareth and Ain Karem, the birthplace of Saint John the Baptist.

Two types of status developed for the Franciscans serving in the Holy Land. One was that of the so-called “apostolic missionaries”, which lasted at least twelve years and involved learning Arabic or Greek.⁵ They represented continuity in pastoral ministry. The other status was that of the “visiting” Franciscans (*visitanti*), which lasted for a period of three years.⁶ Both types of

⁴ For general facts of Franciscan history we do not provide references, please consult any history of the Order.

⁵ As István Kiss presents the community in Alexandria, he indicates that 4 of the 6 members were “apostolic missionaries”. (p. 187-188.)

⁶ Kiss gives a translation of the printed letter from the Franciscan General Curia in Rome, in which this is explicitly stated: „We also command that upon entering the Custody of the Holy Land, you shall remain for three years under the obedience of the Reverend Father Custos as Guardian of Jerusalem.” (p. 19)

service had to be authorized by the Roman headquarters of the order. The system of the three-year service in the Holy Land was in use already in the time of Gábor of Pécsvárad, in 1517:

“That is why the friars are rotated together with the guardian [the custodian of the Holy Land]. So then, when the new guardian arrives from the general chapter with the friars, the other friars go home, each to his own province of the Order from which he came. They allow it with difficulty that a friar should remain there for a long time, even until the end of his life, so that the other friars who have not yet seen the Holy Land and would like to see it can also go there and have their desire fulfilled.”⁷

THE BRANCHES OF THE FRANCISCAN ORDER AND THE HOLY LAND MISSION

The Order founded by Saint Francis divided into branches over time. The educated public mostly knows that there are still three of them today: “Conventuals, Capuchins, Franciscans”. The Franciscans (“Observants”) and the Conventuals first became separate orders in 1517. Their separation was preceded by centuries of conflict. In 1439, thanks to the action of Saint John Capistran, leadership in the Custody of the Holy Land was transferred from the Conventuals to the Observant branch. Not long after, in 1529, the Capuchins separated from the Observant branch.

However, there were other reform initiatives within the remaining Observant branch. These were organized in so-called retreat houses, where they led a more withdrawn, simpler, poorer lifestyle. However, some residents of the retreat houses wanted to become independent, they wanted their own custody, province, and even a separate minister general. Thus, in France the so-called *recollects*, and in Italy the so-called *riformati* branch appeared. The superior of the Order “obliged those who did not join the new Capuchin congregation, but still wanted a stricter way of life, to form the *riformati* family, to which Pope Clement VII gave rules in 1532.”⁸ Initially, there were “riformati” houses within the individual (observant) provinces, and then larger units called *custodies*,

⁷ GÁBOR PÉCSVÁRADI: *Jeruzsálemi utazás* (transl., introd., notes by Béla Holl), Budapest, 1983, 139. Pécsváradi was a former Minister provincial in Hungary who went for a three-year service with another friar from Hungary, János Pásztói, between 1517 and 1519. His account is also quoted by the Franciscan historian Leonhard Lemmens, using a pirate edition from Vienna under the false authorship of *Nikolaus von Farnad*.

⁸ HERIBERT HOLZAPFEL: *Handbuch der Geschichte des Franziskanerordens*, Freiburg, 1909, 335.

still within the provinces. In 1639, Pope Urban VIII raised all the *reformati* custodies in Italy and Poland to the rank of independent provinces with the title of the mother province and the addition of “*reformata*” or “*observantiae strictioris*” (“living in stricter discipline”).⁹ After the separation of the Conventuals and Capuchins, the designation of the remaining branch, the “observants”, was “*observantiae regularis*”. The *reformati* movement originated in Italy, and was most significant there. In contrast, the other provinces are called *osservanti* (we keep the Italian name to distinguish them from the Franciscan Observant movement that began in the 14th century). The separation led to different customs, worship rules and iconographic culture. In other European countries, the reform movement did not split provinces in two, as in Italy, because entire provinces adopted the reform and adopted the adjective “*reformata*” in their names. This happened in Bavaria, Poland, and in 1629 the Hungarian Salvatorian province (named after the Most Holy Savior), and in 1659 the Province of the Virgin Mary joined the *reformati*. The province in Hungary named after St. John Capistran was formed from the Hungarian houses of the Bosnian province in 1747 as part of the *osservanti* branch.

The leadership of the Custody of the Holy Land remained all along in the *osservanti* branch, in the Regular Observance. The *Propaganda Fide* missionary congregation, established in 1622 within the framework of the Holy See, initially exerted pressure to transfer the leadership of the Custody into the hands of the *reformati*, but without success. The fact that the Custody basically belongs to the *osservanti* branch remains valid, but there are two aspects that are even more important: the Holy Land is the mission of the “whole Order”, and furthermore, the service in the Holy Land involves such difficulties that whoever can endure it can be considered “reformed” by any standard. Therefore, *reformati* friars were also accepted. For a while, mixed communities were formed, but then, for the sake of peace, the places were distributed: the *reformati* would have Cyprus, Constantinople, Egypt, and the *osservanti* would have Syria and Palestine.¹⁰ Is it a coincidence that István Kiss presents the community living in Alexandria, Egypt, where he first arrived by ship, in such detail?

In the person of István Kiss, we have a brother who applied from a *reformati* province for service in the Holy Land. On the level of the general leadership of the Franciscans, the Hungarian provinces belonged to the so-called *familia cismontana*, together with the Italian, Austrian, Bavarian and Polish provinces. The family was led by the “general commissary” as the general’s deputy, in the

⁹ HERIBERT HOLZAPFEL: *Handbuch der Geschichte des Franziskanerordens*, Freiburg, 1909, 345.

¹⁰ PIERACCINI, PAOLO: *Il ristabilimento del patriarcato latino di Gerusalemme e la Custodia di Terra Santa. La dialettica istituzionale al tempo del primo patriarca Mons. Giuseppe Valerga (1847-1872)*, Cairo–Gerusalemme, 2006, 51.

person of Pasquale Frosoni da Varisio (1762-1765), then Giuseppe Maria da Vedano (1765-1792).¹¹ In 1764, Kiss applied to Varisio for service, but the number of friars in the Holy Land was complete, and he was not allowed to go there. On March 9, 1766, he applied again, this time to Vedano, and the Hungarian provincial, Márton Sipos, also put in a good word for him. This time the application was successful. In the Latin version, Kiss addresses his superior as follows: *in universa cismontana familia tam observantium quam reformatorum et conceptionistarum*¹² *commissario generali*.

His quality of being one of the *riformati* also appears in István Kiss's introduction. In his work written in Latin, he gives his identity as follows:

Fr. Stephanus Kiss, Ord. Min. Ss. P. Francisci Reformatae Provinciae Hungariae SS. Salvatoris in Conventu Kecskemetiensi ad S. Nicolaum – “Brother István Kiss, of the Order of Friars Minor, of the Hungarian Reformed Province named after the Most Holy Savior, of the Convent of St. Nicholas in Kecskemét”.

In the Hungarian version, he simply writes: “Of the Hungarian Province of our Saviour”. In Latin, he uses the designation *reformatae*, but in Hungarian he omits it. He does so in some other places in the book as well. From this, we can conclude that it was important to state it “on an international level”, mostly in the context of the Italian provinces, but it was of no significance in Hungary. With his departure, István Kiss entered the international interaction of the provinces, which is why the distinction becomes important, as we will see.

THE “OBEDIENTIAL LETTER”

István Kiss therefore applies for service in the Holy Land, is initially rejected, but two years later receives the permission to go. The description of the preparation of the mission and the publication of the letters in István Kiss's book is an important document of the history of the Order.

From the General Curia in Rome, he receives the so-called obedience letter, which was dated in the Aracoeli Convent in Rome on March 14, 1766. The obedience letter is the official document of the minister general, with which, by virtue of “obedience” (*obedientia* in Latin), he instructs the member of the Order to do something, in this case, to serve in the Holy Land. In István Kiss's work, we find many variations of the Hungarian name: “letter of obedience”,

¹¹ HERIBERT HOLZAPFEL: *Handbuch der Geschichte des Franziskanerordens*, Freiburg, 1909, 628.

¹² A reference to his jurisdiction over the „Sisters of the Immaculate Conception”, the „conceptionists”.

“letter of being obedient”, “obediential letter”, “letter serving for obedience”, “letter necessary for obedience”. Its importance indicates the entry in the travel diary for Aug. 23. In the convent of Alexandria, he meets a Venetian man dressed as a monk who has arrived from Smyrna and

“Here he racked his brains about how he could enter the Holy City, Jerusalem, but he could not obtain permission by any means: not having a sure letter from Rome, his cart was turned back to Venice, so that he might seek the future eternal rest of his soul at home.” (p. 215)

In the archives of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land in Jerusalem, a file preserves the obedience letters of the friars who arrived that year. This is actually a printed form, folded in two, thus comprising 4 pages. The first two pages have the letterhead of the superior printed on them and the long text of the letter, filled out in Rome with the name of the friar in question. It is blank from the third page on, because the brother must have a declaration from all members of his local community and of the provincial leadership of his own province that he is considered suitable. (*Figs. 7-8*) A valuable detail of the travelogue is that Kiss translates this letter into Hungarian. At the beginning of the journey, the letter almost becomes a character in the story, as in Galgóc he notices that the provincial seal was not put on it in Gyöngyös, so he sends it back, then loses patience and sets off on his own, finally in Szécsény he learns from the provincial that the seal has already been put on it and that the letter is waiting for him in Galgóc:

“... my Roman letter of obedience was already there in the post office, which, taking it in my hand, I touched with a loving kiss at the seals of my holy Province and my entire Order” (p. 56).

The 1766 dossier preserves this specific letter in Jerusalem, with the signatures and the hard-to-get seal on it. On the last page, we find the entry: “arrived here, in the port of Alexandria on August 11, 1766”. (However, leafing through the file, we can also see that in that year, for example, someone was sent from the Hungarian Province of St. John Capistran – without a provincial seal on his obedience letter...) Among the members of the leadership who signed the obedience letter of István Kiss, we also find the signature of an outstanding personality: the renowned preacher József Telek (1716–1773), whose two-volume collection of sermons entitled *The Crown of Twelve Stars*, with its nearly one and a half thousand pages, is among the most outstanding works of the era, with its delicious Hungarian baroque language.

The text printed on the obedience letter also reveals the conditions of service in the Holy Land. The traveling friar was not allowed to take money with him. The journey was nevertheless realized, since the support of the Franciscans in the Holy Land was part of the culture: “the hand of God is wider than

the purse of money for the sons of Saint Francis” (p. 68). Furthermore, the application was invalid if two or three people from the applicant’s province were already in the Holy Land, not counting the apostolic missionaries. The assignment was for three years, and according to the instructions of the Custos, he had to live in “inferior places” for the first year and a half, and return home after three years, unless he was allowed to stay longer. We will see that things did not exactly go this way in the case of István Kiss.

FRANCISCAN LIFE IN 18TH CENTURY HUNGARY

Before we set off on our journey together with István Kiss, let’s take a look at the situation of the Franciscan Order in Hungary during István Kiss’s pilgrimage, since on the first 66 pages of the travelogue we still move around in this world, from May 11, 1766, to June 30, 1766, until he left Vienna.

During the century, every province of the Order grew with many new houses, especially in the first half of the century. Monastic life in the era was clearly determined by Baroque piety. The internal discipline, devotional practice, literature and furnishings of the monasteries developed accordingly. Quite a few relics have survived from the era, from which we can get a good idea of the monastic life of that time, and we know of many friars with exemplary lives in each province.¹³

The activities of the Franciscans show a very varied picture in the century. The most characteristic of these is pastoral work. A rich and diverse community and association life developed within the reach of the Franciscan monasteries. These lay communities were not only for an external spectacle, but were also the scene of a more intense Christian life, and often had a social commitment. Pilgrimages, which flourished in the Baroque era, also helped to deepen spiritual life. The Franciscans took care of many notable pilgrimage sites, such as Andocs, Máriaradna, Mátraverebély-Szentkút, Szeged, Máriagyűd, Csík-somlyó. Preaching was an inseparable part of their pastoral activity. The century is truly not short of famous Franciscan orators, the most significant of whom, József Telek, was mentioned above. It should also be mentioned that in many cities, orators from various nationalities living in the country (German, Slovakian, Croatian) also emerged from the Franciscans. This issue is also reflected in István Kiss’s journey.

In the years when the provincial superior of the Salvatorian province was Hungarian, its seat was in Gyöngyös. Then a Slovak was elected, and the

¹³ For the presentation in this chapter I am relying on a manuscript by the Franciscan historian Kapisztrán Varga.

provincial curia moved to Galgóc, and then it was a Hungarian again. Contrary to popular belief, in the 17th-18th centuries, many schools were maintained by the Franciscan order. Since it is not always clear what can be called a *gymnasium* during the century, we put the number of public secondary educational institutions of the Order at 16-18 in the 18th century. In the second half of the 18th century, about 10% of the secondary schools in Hungary were run by the Franciscans, with 40-50 teachers, and teaching about 2,200 students in all the Franciscan secondary schools, many of which had 3-400 students.

THE FRANCISCAN FRAMEWORK OF THE JOURNEY

Let us continue following István Kiss's journey. He travels to Vienna by various coaches from Hungary, then his trip by stagecoach to Trieste is organized by the Vienna *commissar* (the friar assigned in each Province to serve as a link to the Custody of the Holy Land). This is a clear indication that there was no commissar in the Hungarian Province: contacts with the Holy Land were carried on by a friar in Vienna, capital of the Monarchy. Even with regularly sending friars to the Custody, Hungary was not a direct partner at this time and had to rely on other countries. During the journey by ship, he travels together with the *conductor* from Vienna – this is the name for the friar who brings donations in cash and in natural goods (mainly for church use) to the Custody.

István Kiss boards a ship for the first time in Trieste, going to Venice. Here, the difference between the two branches of the order, the *osservanti* and the *reformati*, becomes apparent. The Venetian organizer of the trips was Domenico da Venezia, a member of the *osservanti* branch and a Custos of the Holy Land from 1756 to 1762. Traditionally, Venetian ships transported the members of the Custody. According to the established procedure, the travelers had to gather at the monastery of San Francesco della Vigna. Kiss notes that there is a separate wing of the monastery for those preparing for the Holy Land, completed in 1754. In Venice, on July 19, he visits the *reformati* monastery, which was built in 1620 by the *reformati* branch after it had moved here from the island of San Francesco del Deserto. (When Napoleon banned the monastic orders in 1810, the monastery was demolished.)

“...I went up to the upper end of the city to the venerable Franciscan Fathers, who are in the stricter order, who are similar to us, to the convent of St. Bonaventure. They strictly observe the rule of our father St. Francis under strict restrictions, and in humility and evangelical holy poverty, 70 persons serve the Almighty God day and night. Seeing

this, the Venetian people hold them in the greatest respect, as the venerable Father Observants themselves have confessed, where I kept lodgings here in Venice according to our law.

In their church there is no gold, nothing gilded, but they are kept so clean that the slightest dirt or cobweb does not offend the eye of man. There is also such beauty in the sacristy, in the convent, in the refectory, in their little gardens.

Having dined with these holy fathers of the monastery, having observed the good rules: the simple holy conversation, the pure straightforwardness when I experienced them, I confess, I was filled with joy, I was filled with spiritual consolation.” (p. 131-132)

This is the only place in the book where we learn details about the difference between the two branches of the order. During the voyage, on August 1, they arrive at the island of Zante (Zakynthos), here Kiss goes to a convent where three fathers and a tertiary live, then

“we honored the venerable father observants; there are only four fathers and three tertiaries.” (p. 163)

On August 11, he enters the territory of the Custody of the Holy Land, when the Venetian ship arrives in Alexandria. In the case of the friars living in Egypt, we find fundamentally a *reformati* environment, but members of the *osservanti* branch also live with them.

There is a list in the Jerusalem archives, in which it is kept written down who arrived in the territory of the Custody. The list only records the name, nationality, province of origin, and the date of arrival, it does not provide any further information. From the volume relating to the period 1668-1840 we learn that the Hungarian “Ladislao Kisch”, from the province of San Salvatore (which is mistakenly marked as observant) arrived on July 27, 1765, while “Stefano Kiss”, a member of the “*reformata provincia di S. Salvatore*”, entered the territory of the Custody on August 11, 1766. When indicating the province of origin, affiliation to the branch of the order is also indicated.¹⁴

THE ASSIGNMENT OF ISTVÁN KISS IN JERUSALEM

The then superior of the Custody, Custos Paolo da Piacenza, was also a member of the *reformati* branch, as we learn from the Latin version: *Reformatae Provinciae Bononiensis*. The Hungarian work, which is generally more extensive than the Latin, does not mention which branch of the Order the Custos

¹⁴ See the Appendix.

belonged to. In the history of the Custody, there were about twenty *riformati* Custos – this was consistent with the view that the *osservanti* branch basically led this entity of the order.

In Jerusalem, the newly arrived were given better care for three days, but after that they had to be assigned a position. Kiss is assigned to the office of the custodial curia as an assistant secretary: (*Fig. 9*)

“I spent the three days, during which I was just like a new guest: every portion of food was given in double portions. After that, I also remained here to help the most venerable Father Guardian, the Holy Land curia and the secretaries, since there were busy expeditions here.” (p. 274)

In addition to Kiss’s knowledge of Latin, his belonging to the *riformati* branch probably also played a role in this decision. Despite the requirement of the letter of obedience, he was not placed in an “inferior place” after the first few days. The first place, by the way, is usually the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, where the demanding service, the confinement, and the nightly liturgies are a test. (*Figs. 10–11*)

There is no doubt that working in the custodial curia is a great honor. In describing the convent of San Salvatore, one can sense a certain pride in his words when he mentions his position:

“I also lived mostly in this cloister, since in the Curia I held the office of second secretary, and that I really was.” (305)

When István Kiss describes that on the feast of the Ascension, during which the Franciscans and other Catholic faithful would go to the Mount of Olives, we find another mention of his position (*Fig. 12*):

“The luncheon was made up of cold dishes. Since I was in the Curia in the Holy Land, I had lunch with the rich Greek Catholic lords of Damascus, in the Eastern way, without any knives, forks, or spoons...” (p. 375)

Finally, another reference to Kiss’s position. It is still customary today for the Secretary of the Custody to celebrate Mass in the Chapel of the Franks next to the entrance to the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre. It is therefore not a coincidence that we read in Kiss: “I myself have been assigned here several times for seven days.” (p. 271) When describing the chapel, he again boasts of it: “I have been here many times on weekly service, and I came here with great joy to present the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass” (p. 401).

The Jerusalem archives keep the book of minutes, where the decisions of the meetings of the council of the custody, the so-called *discretorium*. Curiously enough, the language of this Church document is Italian. An interesting fact about István Kiss’s journey is that the minutes of the *discretorium* mention two

of his companions with whom he traveled from Venice to Acre. On September 19, 1766, it is noted from the *discretorium* meeting that “the Viennese conductors” (*condottore*) entered the Holy City on the 17th. This was the name given to the Franciscans who brought the collection of a province to Jerusalem in money and in kind. According to the minutes, the council often received conductors, and their donations were also recorded in the description. We also read the names of the Viennese conductors: “Father Robert Arbesser and Fra Gioacchino Anschiz”. They are the ones whom Kiss meets on July 10: “When they were admitted to the convent, two Viennese monks were already present: one was Father Robertus Arbesser, the other was a layman, Fra Joachim, who had once been a shoemaker; they were traveling with the holy alms – which was begged in Germany for the friars in the Holy Land.” (p. 115) The following day, he writes:

“In the afternoon, with the aforementioned Viennese priest conductor – this is how the holy alms-bearers are usually called – we sat in a covered gundula, which belongs to the priests travelling to the Holy Land. We went out to the wonderful city on the sea, not to show off, but to that great frigate galley of a ship, which also accepted us for the journey. And the priest handed over the Viennese alms-chests to Captain Agostino Petrina, a Dalmatian.” (p. 116)

Kiss traveled with the two Viennese Franciscans to Alexandria, then to Acre, and there he said goodbye to them on September 5, 1766, because they were going to Nazareth first. So, Father Robert and Brother Joachim, who were Kiss’s traveling companions, handed over the donations they had brought to the *discretorium* on September 19. The note details the donations: 4000 “Onghari”¹⁵ sums of money, as well as liturgical vestments: six vestments, twenty-four festive and twelve everyday chasubles, twelve corporals, with their accessories. This is what the “alms chests” contained – so the minutes book tells us in the archives.¹⁶

¹⁵ Hungarian golden „forint”, often used in transactions with the Turks.

¹⁶ “Entrarono nella santa città i condottori di Vienna il P.re Roberto Arbesser e fra Gioacchino Anschiz a dì 17.7bre dell’anno corrente ed in questo giorno fecero alla presenza del Ven.le Discretorio la consegna della loro condotta consistente in Onghari quatro mille dico n.o 4000. Di più sei pianete, tre di color bianco e tre di rosso colore co’ suoi rispettivi veli e borse: ventiquattro cotte con altrettanti amitti solenni per il pontificale: altre dodici cotte feriali co’ suoi rispettivi amitti, dodici corporali con altrettante palle per calici, dodici scope grandi ed altrettante più piccole e da mano.”

THE CUSTODY OF THE HOLY LAND DURING THE MINISTRY OF ISTVÁN KISS

What was life like among the Franciscans of the Holy Land during the ministry of István Kiss? Let us recall some aspects of the history of the order.

National privileges in the Custody

In 1746, Pope Benedict XIV, approving the electoral system introduced in 1628, gave new constitutions to the Custody of the Holy Land. In this way, he confirmed the system of “national privileges”:

- a) The custos must be Italian, the vicar French, and the *procurator* (financial manager) Spanish.
- b) The *discretorium* (the council of the superior) is composed of one Italian, one French, one Spanish and one German friar.
- c) Italian, French and Spanish friars alternately appoint the superior of the Holy Sepulchre and Bethlehem. (The privilege of the three nations was later extended to Nazareth and to the vicars in all three places.)
- d) The Spanish have the privilege of appointing superiors to Ain Karem (St. John), Jaffa, Ramleh, Damascus, Nicosia and the guesthouse in Constantinople.

Unlike the other provincial superiors, the custos is not elected by his own community, but is elected in Rome by the leadership of the Order and must be approved by the Holy See. This system has contributed to the Custody not becoming the exclusive domain of any one nation, but remaining an international community. The Benedictine Constitutions also determined the number of brothers serving in the Holy Land: 100 priests and 60 lay brothers, but this could be increased at the request of the Custody. The Benedictine Constitutions were in force until 1985.

Papal dispensation was also necessary to regulate the conflicting relationship between the Italian and Spanish Franciscans. Given the situation of the Custody at the time, it is fair to say that Kiss always speaks in a balanced way about nationalities, without feeling prejudiced in his words, and views his fellow friars based on their Franciscan and priestly identity and is attached to them. On Maundy Thursday 1767, during a pilgrimage on the banks of the Jordan, he describes how the Franciscans were from “four nations” and how they attended Mass accordingly: “One from the Italian side, the second from the French side, the third (after the French) from the Spanish side, and I have been told to take care of the German and Hungarian parts.” (p. 447) The word “nation” sometimes denotes a denominational identity for him: “Christian nation”.

Relations with the Greeks

The year 1757 recalls a serious tragedy. On Palm Sunday of that year, an attack was launched against the Franciscans in all three places of common use. The Greek Orthodox physically attacked the Franciscans in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. They attacked those performing the liturgy in the holy place of “Mary’s Tomb” next to Gethsemane and forcibly expelled them. Petitions, denunciations, and accusations were addressed to the Sultan, but in the end, the Sultan gave the Greeks the benefit of the doubt and even curtailed the rights of the Custody at the Holy Sepulchre and in Bethlehem. The protests of the Christian powers were unsuccessful, and the supervision of the holy places is still determined by this 1757 Sultan’s decree, after Sultan Abdul Mecid I “fixed” the situation in 1852, that is, he ordered that everything remain as it was in 1757, without appeal.¹⁷ The provision clearly favored the Greek Orthodox, and the Apostolic Armenians were also granted rights. The reference to the *status quo* was an easy opportunity to evade the issue in later negotiations. The two legal concepts underlying the *status quo* are: “The fact creates the right” and “Possession also means ownership”. The *status quo* is therefore a precise regulation of the use of property: which denomination can worship when and where, what repairs can be made, what can be cleaned. Each party is careful to ensure that the other two parties do not make changes, because this would give them rights. This causes serious problems when, for example, it is necessary to agree on renovations.

When István Kiss is in the Custody, we are only ten years after this trauma. In his work, he refers to the incident very briefly:

“But oh pain! Now the Holy Sepulchre is under the power of the secessionist Greeks, which I believe was taken with Greek treachery.” (356)

Kiss spends Easter 1767 in Jerusalem, when the Latin and Orthodox Easter days coincided on the calendar. These periods rarely pass without conflict in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre. Reading the travelogue, we see with relief that István Kiss’s memories only retain the experience of the basilica festively illuminated by the lamps of all denominations (p. 415).

In the series of discretorium entries, it is interesting to see that on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Greek attacks, Custos Paolo da Piacenza not only remembers the sad event, but also, in his circular letter written on the tenth anniversary on April 3, 1767, he wishes to provide forward-looking, future-building spiritual encouragement and, with specific provisions, he wishes to promote the veneration of a saint: Blessed Benedict of Santo Fratello, also called “the Moor”, asks for his intercession and tries to develop his cult.

¹⁷ See the French translation of the ferman in: BERNARDIN COLLIN: *Recueil de documents concernant Jerusalem et les lieux saints*, Jerusalem, 1982, 93–94.

Franciscan life in the Holy Land

We learn from Kiss's account that "when I left the Holy City, I still left 234 religious fathers throughout Palestine" (p. 297), and that "In the entire Custody of the Holy Land ... we have 24 residences for the sons of Saint Francis" (p. 201). The work presents moments of the life of the Franciscans in the Holy Land that are still known today, or at least can be recalled: the daily procession in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, the opening of the basilica, the Stations of the Cross, the procession in the Bethlehem Basilica, the yearly *peregrinationes* to the various holy places.

If we try to reconstruct the "program" of István Kiss's one-year stay in the Holy Land, it becomes clear that he was not allowed to visit the holy places as he pleased. He toured the city within the walls of Jerusalem according to a guided tour, perhaps several times. There is also reference to several group visits to Gethsemane. In connection with the Christmas holiday, he visits the holy places in Bethlehem and Ain Karem with many of his fellow friars. At the beginning of Holy Week, the peregrination on the Mount of Olives, at the Jordan, in Jericho and Bethany also seems to be an established custom. Finally, he reaches Galilee by accompanying the Custos on his way to Acre, already preparing to return home himself. The reason for all this is the lack of public security: they had to be protected by a Janissary troop at all times in the places they visited.

"I could not go out to visit the holy places in the city for some time: it is not possible, but only on certain holidays and days, since, even for the payment of an unreasonable amount of taxes, the Turkish officers do not grant the monks residing in the Holy City much freedom." (p. 275)

Their lives revolved around the convent, the churches, and the service of the holy places; they probably rarely went out. He writes about the Hakeldama hill outside the Old City of Jerusalem:

"I was here sometimes with the most venerable father guardian and several monk fathers to get some fresh air" (pp. 366-367)

Today, it may be difficult for us to imagine that one of the most famous forms of Catholic devotion was not practiced during the years István Kiss served in Jerusalem: the *via crucis*. We are used to seeing prayerful crowds of Catholic believers going along the accepted route from the Chapel of the Flagellation up to the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre. On Fridays, at 3 p.m., the Franciscan friars of the Custody lead this worship, stopping at each of the 14 stations in prayer. Now, all through the 18th century and until 1850, this exercise was banned by the Ottoman rulers, probably because of security issues. That is the reason why István Kiss gives us an account of the stations – in an inverse order! We find no mention of this exercise in his book, and the stations

are given simply as a list of holy places that are interesting to visit. All along these 150 years, all the friars could do was to go along the route without stopping for formal prayer.¹⁸

István Kiss visited the Holy Land at a lucky time: there was no plague epidemic in those years. In the conditions of hygiene in the region, the plague ravaged almost every year. When the plague reached a city where Franciscans lived, some of them strictly closed themselves off from the outside world, while others nursed the sick and cared for the dying – and when one of them caught the disease, another friar took his place. In some years, the plague almost completely wiped out the Custody. According to historian Ince Takács, the number of Franciscans who died in the plague throughout history can be estimated at around six thousand.¹⁹ In Kiss's report, we find references to this real danger (cf. pp. 198, 299).

THE SOURCES USED BY ISTVÁN KISS

Kiss writes in an age with other literary standards than ours. He tried to cite authors as famous as possible, to gain more authenticity. Lajos Pásztor shows in his edition that the main source for Kiss was the work of Conrad Hietling (*Peregrinus affectuose per Terram Sanctam et Jerusalem*, I-II, Graecii, 1713). But since Hietling was in turn using another, more famous author, Kiss never mentions Hietling, only his sources.

A great personality in the Custody of the first half of the 17th century was Francesco Quaresmi (1583–1656). Born in Lodi near Milan, a theological lector, Pope Urban VIII spread the veneration of the five holy wounds of the Crucified Jesus throughout the Church at his inspiration (he also wrote part of the liturgy for it). In 1616 he went to the Holy Land. In 1619 he was elected Custos during a difficult period when the plague killed about thirty brothers in seven months. In the same year, he was appointed apostolic delegate to the Chaldeans and Maronites and patriarchal vicar of the Nestorians, later leading these groups to unity with the Catholic Church. His reports for the Propaganda Fide Congregation cover six large volumes. He spent about twenty years in the Holy Land and wrote his two-volume work: *Elucidatio Terrae Sanctae historica, theologica, moralis* (Antwerp, 1639) that became extremely influential over a long period of time. Returning to Italy, he worked to have the “Burial of Christ”

¹⁸ The Italian language monthly review *La Terra Santa* gives a historical account of the *via crucis* tradition in 1922, pp. 125–127.

¹⁹ TAKÁCS INCE: Ferencesek és a Szentföld, in ZADRAVECZ ISTVÁN: *Szentföld*, Budapest, 1931, 288–289.

that was customary in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem on Good Friday evening adopted there as well.²⁰

So, Kiss cites Quaresmi, but seems not to have read him directly, only through the work of Hietling. Kiss quotes even the old authors by way of Hietling: Josephus Flavius, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustin, etc.

TESTIMONY OF BAROQUE DEVOTION

We consider István Kiss's account to be a valuable testimony also from the point of view that he presents "Baroque devotion" to us in a sincere and authentic way. The religiosity in which he lives and which, as a friar, represents his "mother tongue" strongly emphasizes emotional experience, typical of the era. He stops at visible signs, statues, and pictures, and tries to experience the religious content. All this takes time, and it seems that the Franciscans in that age devoted time to such a contemplation of religious content. Then, this "spirituality" also leaves its mark on the performance of the liturgy, which is why it is a lasting memory for István Kiss, whenever he had a liturgical role somewhere. His approach is primarily not theoretical or historical, but emotional. He recalls the strong emotion he felt when visiting holy places:

"During the Holy Week of Lent, I was so fortunate that, being assigned as a deacon right then, I placed the Great Sacrament of the Altar on the coffin of the true Lord, and I lifted it up at the glorious resurrection. I would not give this fortune for half the deceitful world and half the stars. Other priests envied my spiritual fortune." (p. 414)

He also experiences negative emotions intensely:

"This place, where Judas kissed Christ Jesus who was bound by executioners, is still considered a cursed place by both Jews and Christians. I myself experienced it when I stood here where Judas stood; it seemed as if all my blood was shocked and I was terrified." (p. 346)

We also find signs that this was a common phenomenon with his fellow friars and the faithful, not just his personal attitude, and that they shared it with each other. He writes about his experience at Calvary, the place of Christ's crucifixion:

²⁰ STÉPHANE MILOVITCH: *Quotidianamente da prima del 1336. La processione che celebra la Morte e Risurrezione del Signore nella basilica del Santo Sepolcro di Gerusalemme*, Milano, 2014, p. 123., footnote 268.

“I confess that whenever I prostrated myself in front of it, all my blood boiled within me and I burst into tears, shedding bitter tears. Others have said the same about themselves.” (p. 397)

The experience of the Midnight Mass in Bethlehem is particularly memorable for him:

“The chief secretary began the gospel of the birth of Jesus and when he came to: ‘and wrapped him in swaddling clothes’, he stopped and fell down before the naked little Jesus. At this we all burst into tears, friars and laymen alike, and for about ten Our Fathers no one could sing because of the crying. The father secretary, weeping, wrapped him in velvet swaddling clothes, then wiped his tearful eyes and wet cheeks, and continued the gospel; but he cried rather than sang, although he was a very good singer.

And when he came to: ‘and laid him in a manger’, he lifted the little Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes and said: ‘and laid him in this manger’. At this he burst into tears and could not sing. Similarly, we also cried afterwards, sobbing and weeping, and no one could sing a word. He could not sing for a little while. Then he began to sing with tears. I have never seen greater zeal than this anywhere I have visited. Such are the dwellings in the holy place. (pp. 429-430)

In Ain Karem, where the Virgin Mary visited Elizabeth and where, according to the Gospel of Luke, her song of thanksgiving, the *Magnificat*, was sung, he again reports a shared experience:

“When the friars come here, they always sing the Magnificat, and they all feel such joy that one asks the other if he has ever felt such joy? And they confess that it is so. I have certainly experienced this myself, thank God.” (p. 444)

These personal confessions not only bring the person of István Kiss closer to the reader, but also make the Christian and Franciscan spirituality of an entire era perceptible to us.

THE CONCLUSION OF ISTVÁN KISS’S MINISTRY

In the letter of obedience we read that he was supposed to serve for three years, but he left for home after one year. What happened? At the discretorial meeting of July 31, 1767, we find this entry:

“the petition of the two brothers, P. Stefano and Ladislao Khiss, was read, who asked to be exempted from the remainder of the three years

in the Custody, on grounds that the most venerable Discretory recognized as fair, for which reason its members graciously gave their consent to their departure.”²¹

This information further increases our curiosity as to what the “fair grounds” could have been, but the entry is silent on this. However, it supports the fact that he and his brother requested their earlier return home.

The return home of the twin brothers is also an unexpected event because we find an interesting mention at May 14, 1767 in the minutes of the discretory meeting of the Custody. On this day, three local superiors were elected: Fabrizio da Paetano from Rome for Latakia in Syria, Ascanio da Solero for the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, and “Ladislao Kiss” as guardian for Bethlehem. Ladislaus had not yet been in the Custody for two years at that time, and he was granted confidence, which is a significant thing.

Let us also mention another interesting entry in the discretorium book, dated August 16, 1767, which supports István Kiss’s travelogue regarding the time and certain circumstances of the return journey. This entry concludes the work of Custos Paolo da Piacenza:

“These are the legal acts of the Discretorium, which were made during the time of the venerable Paolo da Piacenza, who, having still to visit some places, will leave the Holy City today at 2 pm. In view of the remaining visitations, he brings forward his resignation from the service and intends to travel to Valencia, where the General Chapter will be held on May 25, 1768.”

If we understand Kiss’s reference correctly, the Custos later gave evidence of his goodwill towards him with a personal letter:

“...we arrived in the city of Acon, or Acri, which was formerly called Ptolemais. In this city, the most venerable father guardian, Paulus of Placentia, administered the sacrament of confirmation. He successfully completed his guardianship in the Holy City within the space of six years and was obliged to go to the general chapter in the Spanish city of Valencia for the election of the minister general. There was also great news that this most venerable father would be elected. Perhaps he would have been, but he deliberately gave up his main position to someone else and wished to live and die in his own province and in his native city, Placentia. From there he wrote me.” (p. 479)

²¹ “Dopo aver ricevute le soprad.te condotte, lessero una supplica presentata dai due fratelli pp. Stefano e Ladislao Khiss, i quali cercavano d’essere dispensati dal tempo che lor rimane a compir il triennio in questa S. Custodia per motivi, che il Venbl. Discretorio riconobbe veri, laonde i pp. componenti acconsentirono benignam.te alla loro partenza.”

THE BASIC INTENTION OF THE TRAVELOGUE

István Kiss gives us a memory of an era in church history, of which emotional experience was undoubtedly one of its important elements. However, we also find other elements related to the era, which we must also be aware of as not being characteristic of our time. This includes a kind of “impatience”, which in a positive sense can be called a sincere attachment to one’s own Catholic tradition. His statements regarding the Orthodox, Protestants, Jews, and Muslims are understandable in the context of his time and the conditions in the Holy Land, but they are not part of the Catholic Church’s way of speaking today. At the same time, we must see the serious value of the Catholic, Franciscan identity that István Kiss experienced with his whole being.

There is also no doubt that the group of people who receive the most severe reprimands throughout the book are the “cold-hearted”, “bad, trashy life”, “no faith, simple-minded” Christians. He undoubtedly wrote his book for their betterment:

“...so that at least I may be of spiritual benefit to those who read the book quietly without prejudice, or to those who hear reading it, and that I may awaken them to a distant reverence for holy places” (p. 481).

The world has changed a lot since the time of István Kiss: we may smile at his geographical and historical knowledge today, and the Catholic Church has also overcome certain opinions and oppositions. The Hungarian language has changed, but its light still shines in its old state, we can enjoy its taste and admire its power. What has not changed are the values that guided István Kiss: appreciation of honesty, loyalty and honor, deep patriotism, love of his community – his Order and his Church –, attachment to European culture, appreciation of knowledge and craftsmanship, reverence for natural and artistic beauty, sincere and experienced faith, sacrifice and willingness to serve.

RELATIONS WITH HUNGARY

Although there were not many Hungarian friars in the service of the Custody, we see the person of István Kiss integrating well into the international fabric of the community. His devoted attitude and honest spiritual quality is a value shared by the other friars currently serving with him. We are right in presuming his integration, even if the unrevealed circumstances of his departure might allow one to think otherwise.

APPENDIX

A list of presumably Hungarian Franciscans of the Custody between 1670 and 1781. The entries were taken from the register of the Custody of all friars entering the service of the Custody, reproducing the Italian of the original, except for the dates.

Austriaco	P. Lorenzo Cvitevich	Osserv. Pr. d'Ungheria, predicatore	20 Feb 1670, Rama
Ungharese	P. Paolo da Pannonia	Osservante Pr della Bosna, Lettore	5 Apr 1700, Cipro
Ungharese	P. Benedetto Sailer	Riformata Pr di S. Salvatore, Missionario Apostolico Greco	14 Oct 1722, Cipro
Ungharesi	P. Giovanni Capistrano Sebach ¹	Riformata Pr. di S. Maria in Ungheria, Pred. Generale	25 Apr 1726, Alessandria
„	P. Berardo Imre	Riformata Pr. di S. Maria in Ungheria, Predicatore	25 Apr 1726, Alessandria
Ungarese	P. Ricardo Vlecken	Recolletta Pr di S. Elisabetta in Turingia	9 June 1727.
Tedesco	P. Antonio Rachalio	Riformata Pr di S. Salvatore in Ungheria, Predicatore	18 July 1733.
/Slovacco/	P. Capistrano Korinschi	Riformata Pr di San Salvatore	11 Jun 1754, Aless.
Ungaresi	P. Ladislao Kisch	Osservante [obvious mistake, should be „riformata”] Pr di S. Salvatore	27 July 1765.
	P. Stefano Servati	Riformata Pr di S. Maria	27 July 1765.

¹ Mentioned in works on Franciscan History of Hungary, prominent musician and former Minister provincial.

Ungaro	P. Stefano Kiss	Riformata Pr di S. Salvatore in Ungheria	11 Aug 1766.
Ungaresi	P. Pasquale Kidler	Riformata Pr di S. Maria	2 Apr 1767, Aless.
	P. Colomano Nuvase	Oss. Pr S. Giovanni Capistrano	2 Apr 1767.
Ungharesi	P. Mariano Zsigani	Osservante Pr. di S. Ladislao	2 June 1768, Cipro
„	P. Innocenzo Viberner	Riformata Pr d'Austria	2 June 1768, Cipro
Ungharese	P. Tommaso Knin	Osservante Pr del Ssmo Salvatore	7 Jan 1770, Cipro
Tedeschi	P. Basilio Bosniach	Osservante Pr. di S. Giovanni da Capistrano	1 June 1772, Aless.
	P. Francesco Rachitic	Osservante Pr di S. Giovanni da Capistrano	1 June 1772, Aless.
Ungharese	P. Bernardino Leakovich	Osservante Pr di S. Giovanni da Capistrano	23 June 1774, Cipro
Tedeschi	P. Vito Lehel	Riformata Pr di S. Salvatore in Ungheria	19 June 1778., Aless.
	P. Bonaventura Bartolomeo Szvircseivich	Oss. Pr. di S. Giov da Capistrano	24 July 1778.
Tedesco	P. Clemente Schaciner	Riformata Pr di S. Maria in Ungheria	20 July 1779, Aless.
Ungharese	P. Narciso Ördög	Oss. Pr. di S. Giov Capistrano	17 June 1781, Aless.

Lay friars, in a list apart

Tedeschi	Fr. Giuseppe Mosnadar	Rif. Pr S. Ladislao	17 Aug 1701, Cipro
	Fr. Dionisio Staudacher	Rif. Prov. d'Ungheria	17 Aug 1701, Cipro
Tedeschi	Fr. Nicolò Moro	Rif. Prov. S. Salvatore nell'Ungheria	20 July 1724, Aless.
Tedeschi	Fr. Nicolé Morro	Rif. Prov. S. Salvatore in Ungheria, Condottore	13 July 1730, Cipro
Ungharese	Fr. Vincenzo Wajer	Rif. Pr. S. Salvatore in Ungheria, Condottore	16 Apr 1737, Cipro
Tedesco	Fr. Bonifacio Uber	Oss. Pr S. Giovanni da Capistrano	9 Oct 1761, Aless.
Tedeschi	Fr. Diego da Vienna	Oss. Pr S. Giovanni da Capistrano	27 Apr 1766.
	Fr. Antonio Vaaz	Oss. Pr S. Giovanni da Capistrano	27 Apr 1766.
Tedeschi	Fr. Antonio Lauturner	Osserv. Pr S. Giovanni Capistrano	22 Apr 1767, Acri
Ungharese	Fr. Roberto Ebesdor	Oss. Prov. S. Ladislao	18 Oct 1767, Acri
Tedesco	Fr. Damiano Perner	Oss. Pr S. Giovanni Capistrano	28 Oct 1769, Aless.
Tedesco	Fr. Francesco Gijurkovich	Oss. Pr S. Giovanni Capistrano	23 June 1774, Cipro
Ungharese	Fr. Antonio Gnoschl	Oss. Pr S. Giovanni Capistrano	24 July 1778, Aless.
Ungharese	Fr. Quirino Lugerth	Oss. Pr S. Giovanni Capistrano	17 June 1781, Cipro



Fig. 1: The particularly adorned first page of the *Journey to Jerusalem*.

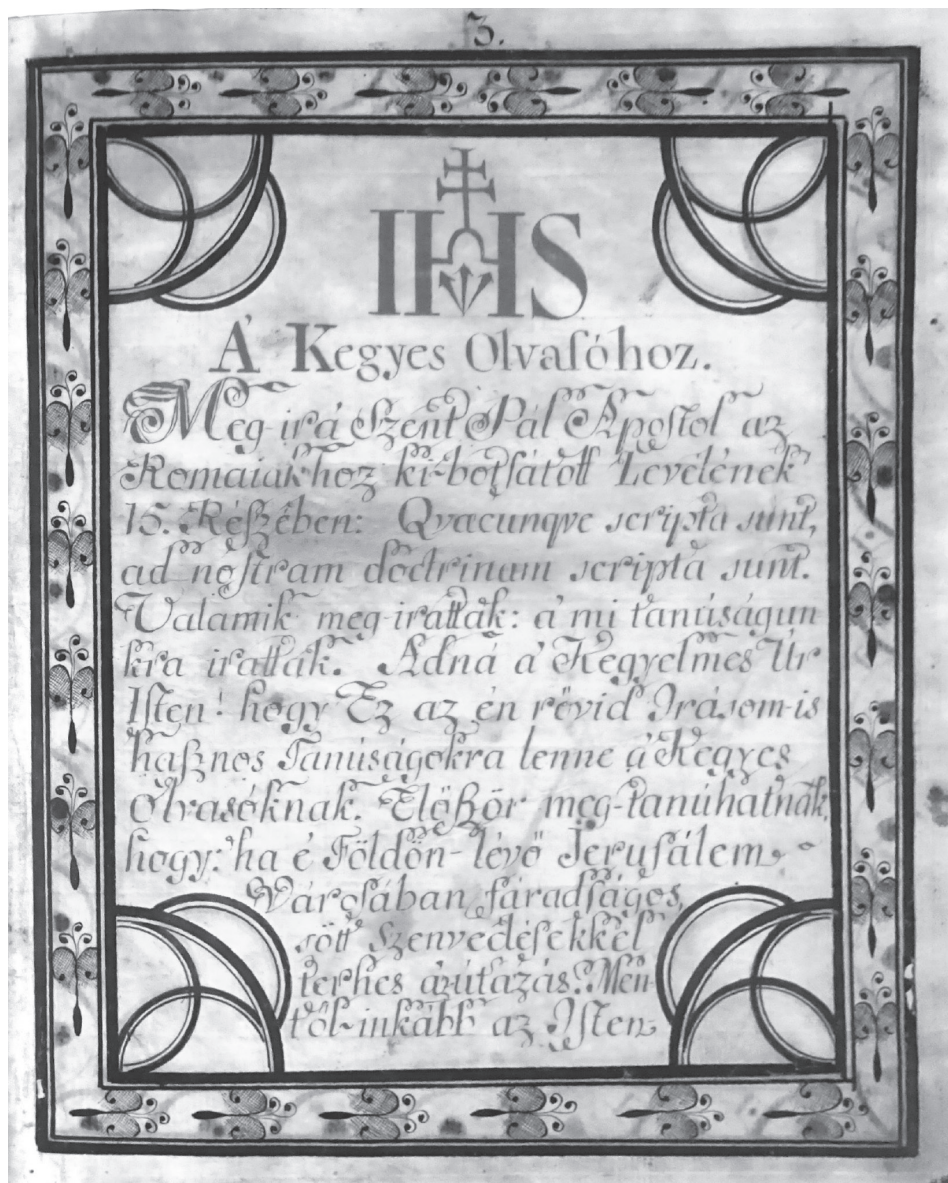


Fig. 2: Page 3 of the *Journey to Jerusalem*. Until p. 38 (the start of the voyage) the text has this kind of double framework, often adorned, from then on, the framework is simple.

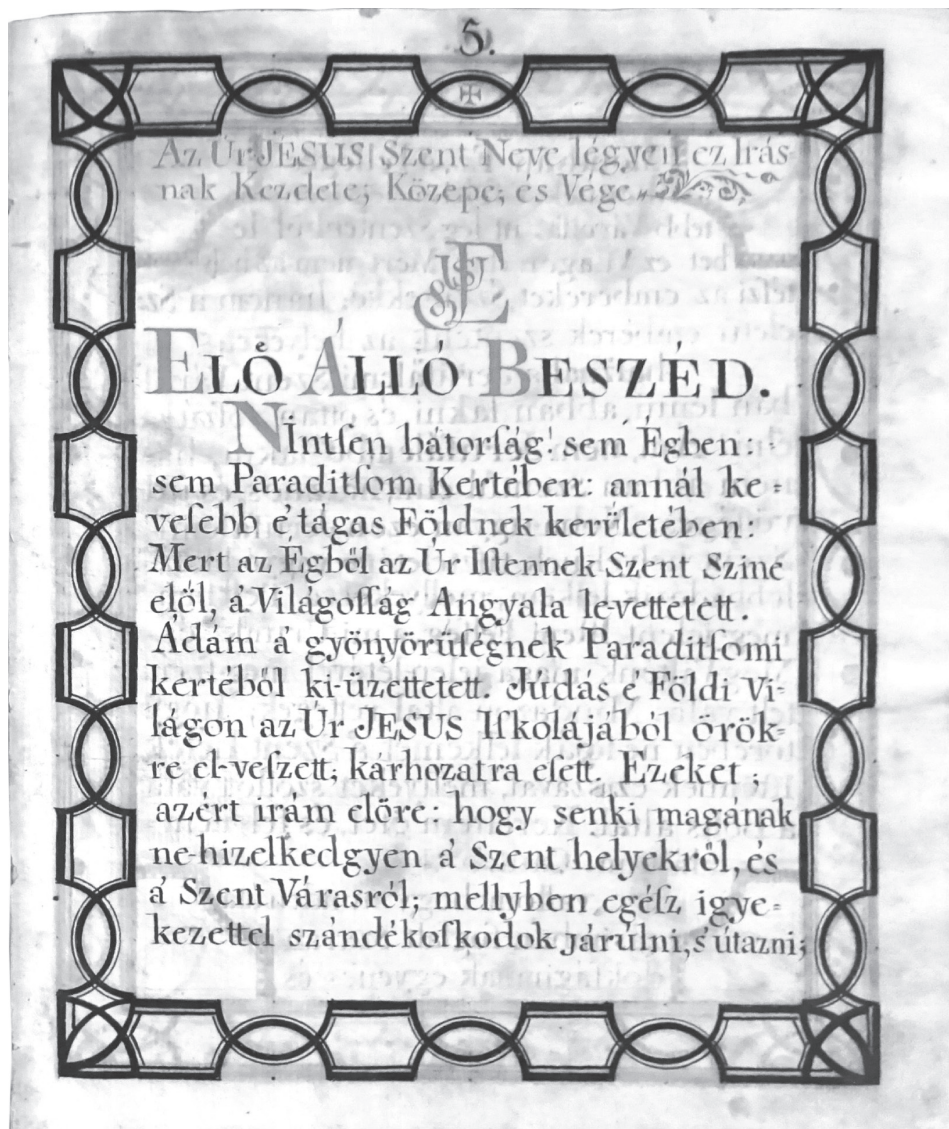


Fig. 3: Page 5 of the *Journey to Jerusalem*, the Introduction.

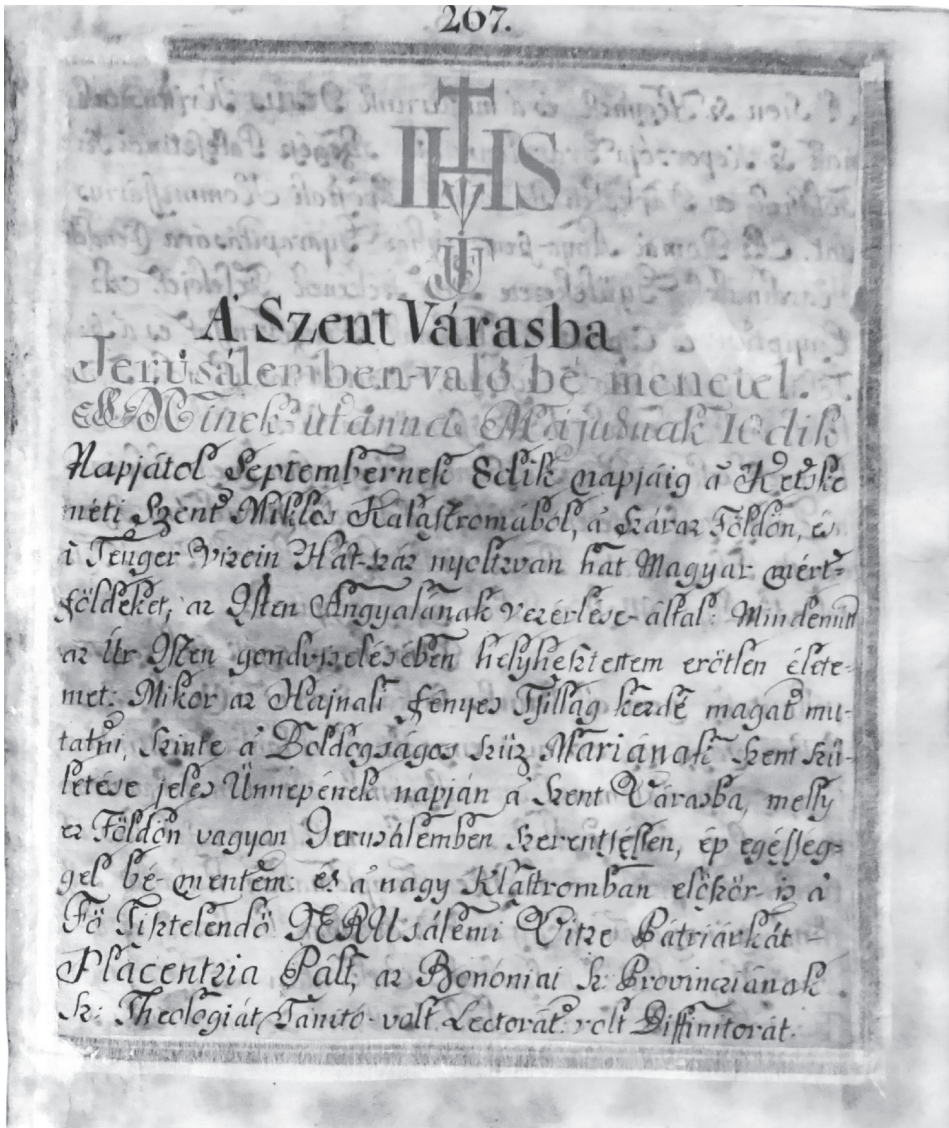


Fig. 4: Page 267 of the *Journey to Jerusalem*. The monogram of Jesus indicates the beginning of a new section: after the diary-style description of the voyage, István Kiss enters the Holy City and the description will follow a spatial arrangement.

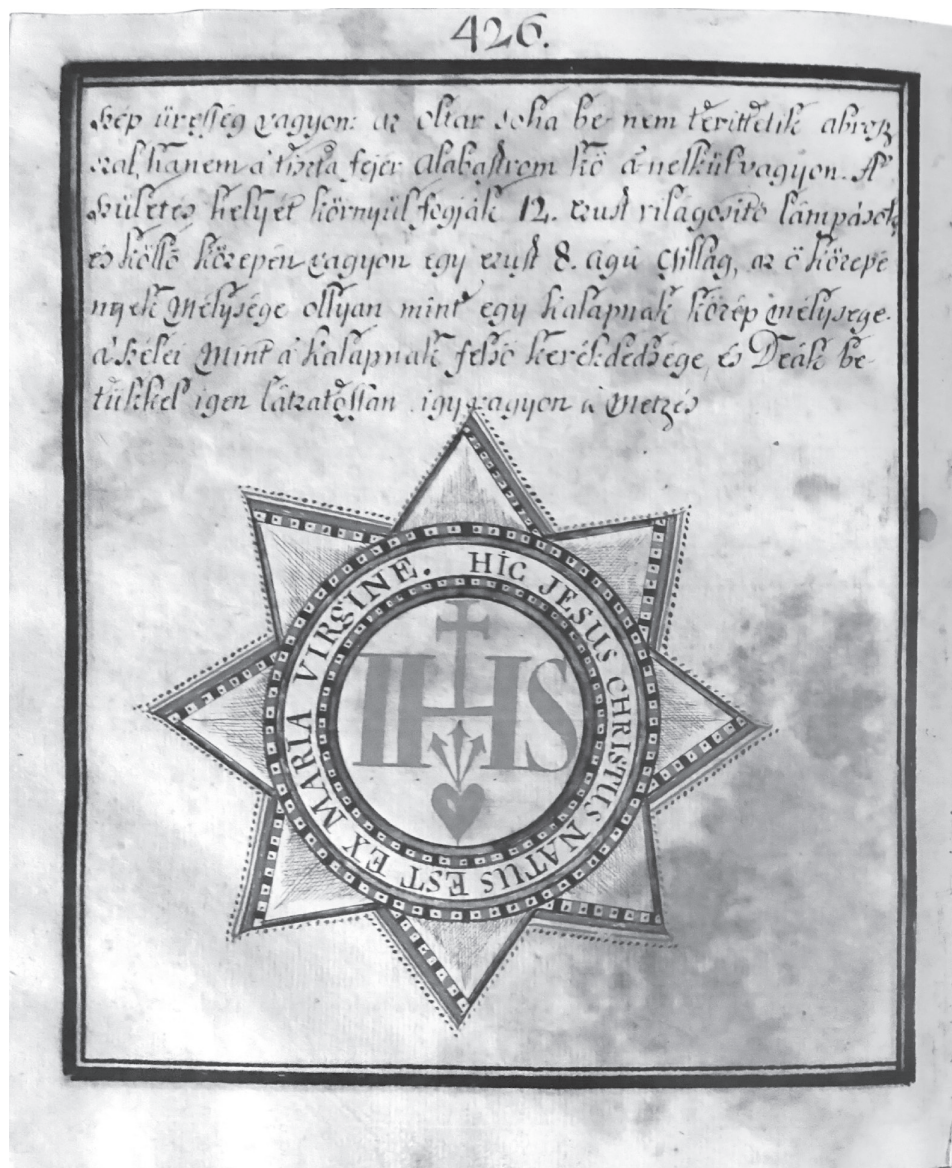


Fig. 6: Page 426 of the *Journey to Jerusalem* shows the silver star in the Bethlehem Basilica indicating the birthplace of Jesus Christ.

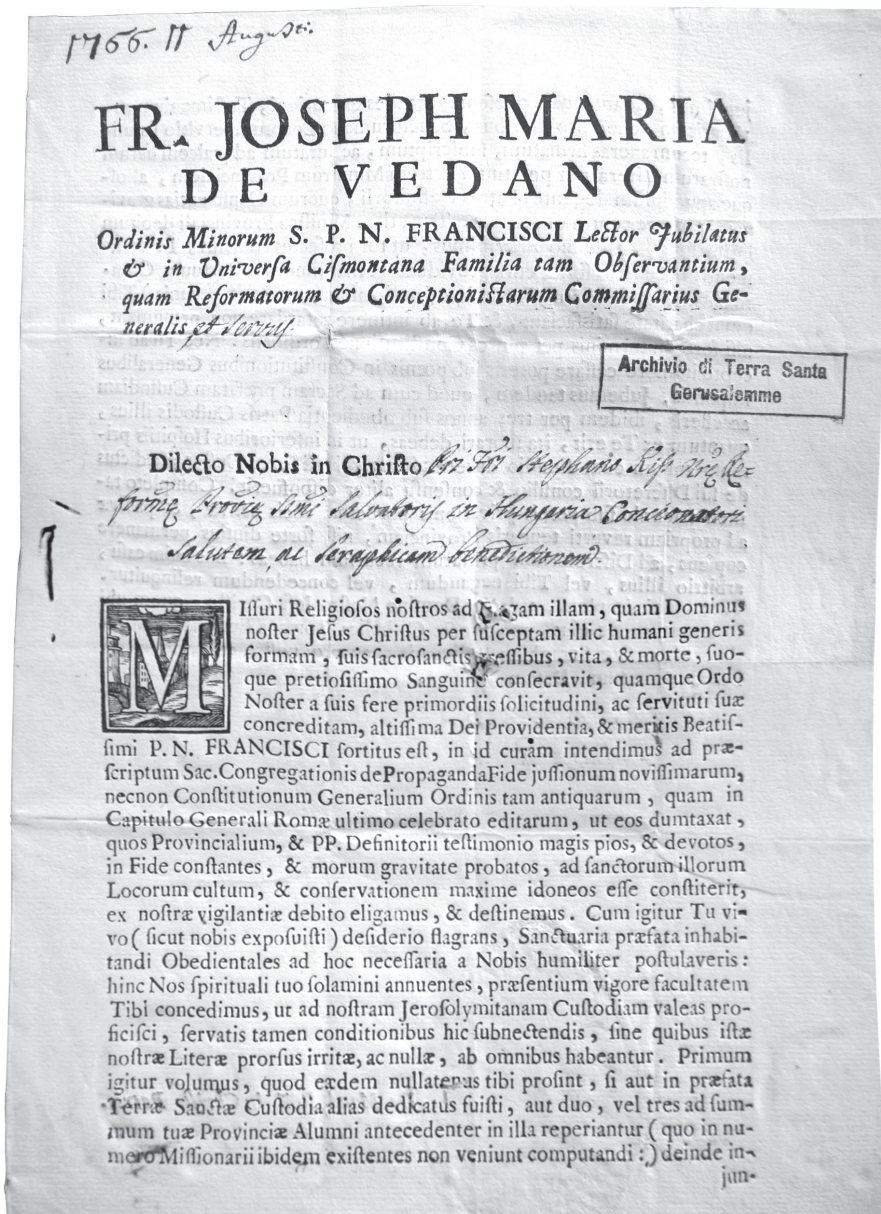


Fig. 7: The Letter of Obedience of István Kiss, still preserved in the Central Archives of the Custody in Jerusalem. The form was filled in for the name of István Kiss at the General Curia in Rome. The front page of the Letter of Obedience shows a printed text, translated by Kiss into Hungarian (pp. 14-25).

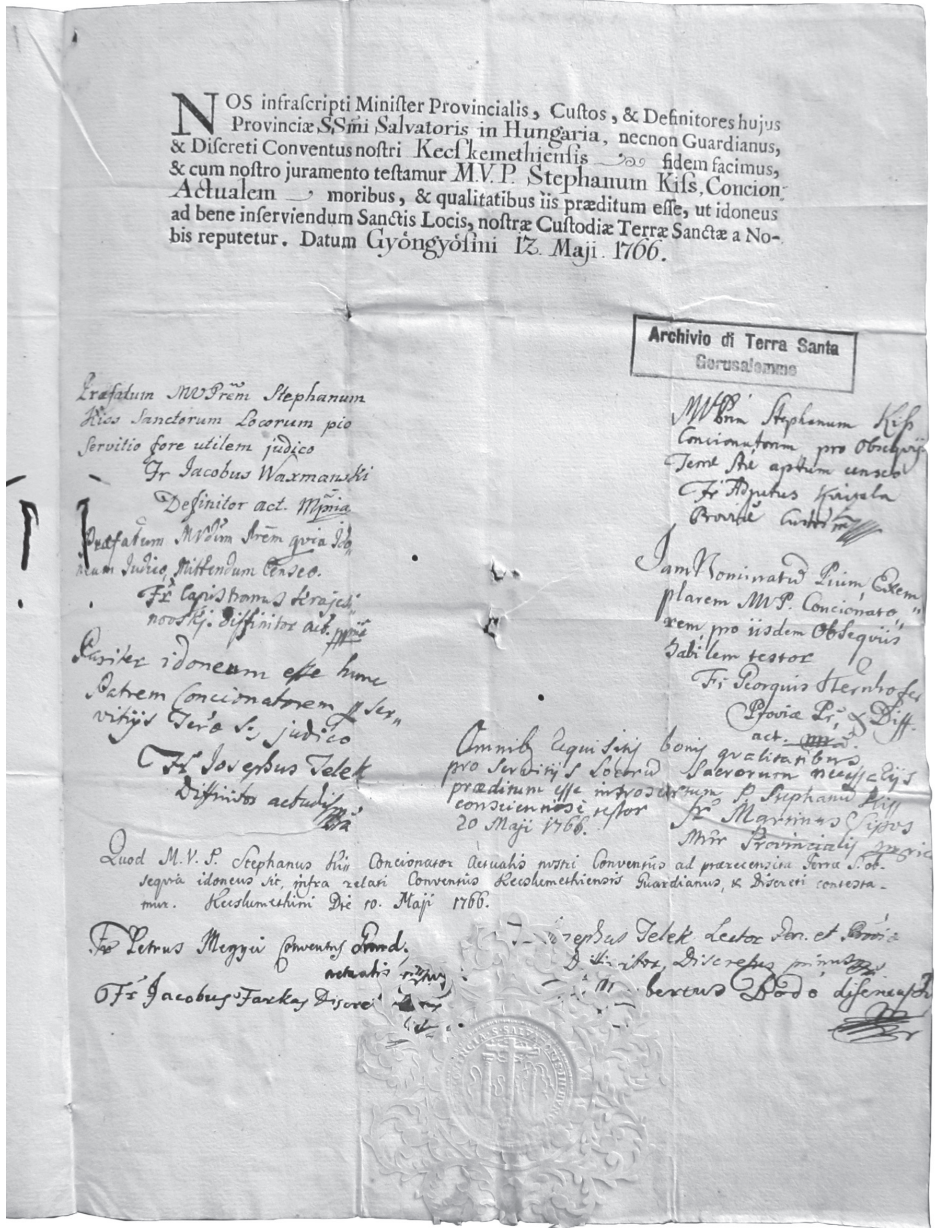


Fig. 8: Page 3 of the Letter of Obedience, where the name of the province and home convent of Kiss are filled in. Probably the handwriting of Kiss, imitating the print. See below the series of notes from friars, endorsing his trip, and with the ominous seal of the province: first they forgot to place it on the document, and Kiss had to travel back to get it (pp. 50-56).

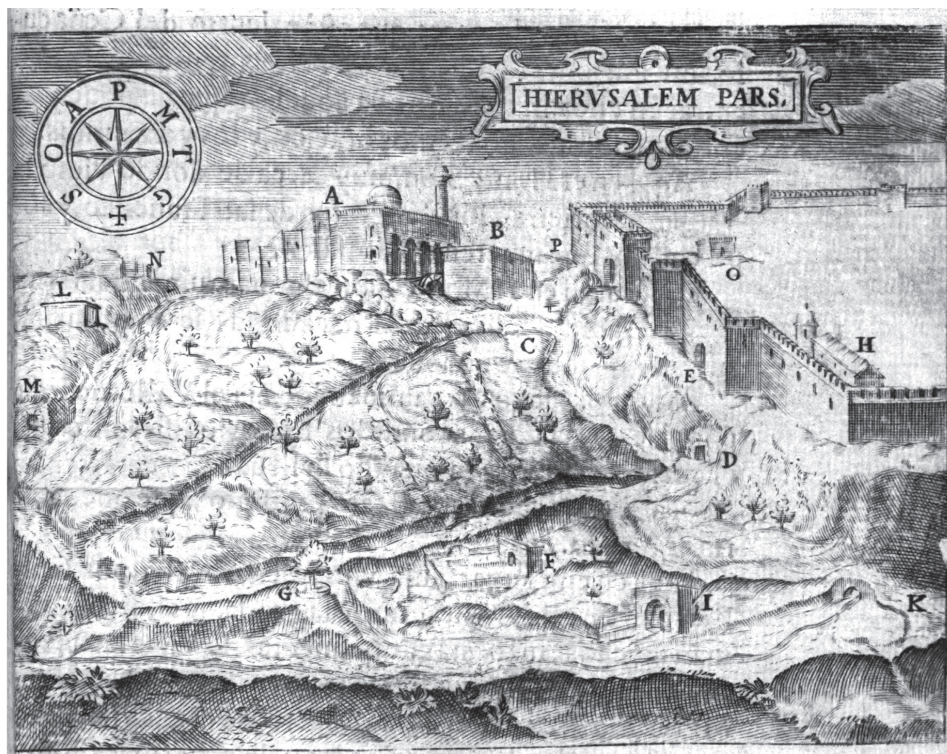


Fig. 9: This engraving from 1654 shows the southern wall of Jerusalem and Mount Zion „outside the walls”. We can still see the Church of the Cenacle, center of the Custody until 1559. Rare detail on Temple Mount, signed „H”, in the corner between the southern and eastern walls, the Church of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary, also mentioned by Kiss. Source: Antonio del Castillo OFM (?-1699): *El devoto peregrino. Viage de Tierra Santa*. Madrid, En la imprenta RL., 1654, 81. Work of Johann Friedrich Greuter (1590-1662).



Fig. 10: Engravings from the Central Library of Franciscans in Budapest can help us visualize the environment of the *Journey to Jerusalem*.

View of Jerusalem in an engraving from 1693. Around the middle, no. 20 indicates the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, „above it” (i.e. to the West) no. 25 indicates the convent of San Salvatore, the center of the Custody where István Kiss lived. Needless to say, there is no sign of the New Gate which was opened in 1887. Source: Franciscus Caccia OFM (1694–1723): *Compendium seu brevis relatio locorum sanctorum quae seraphicus ordo franciscanorum ultra quadringentos Annos legitime possedit* [...]. Viennae Austriae, Typis Andreae Heyingeri, 1693.

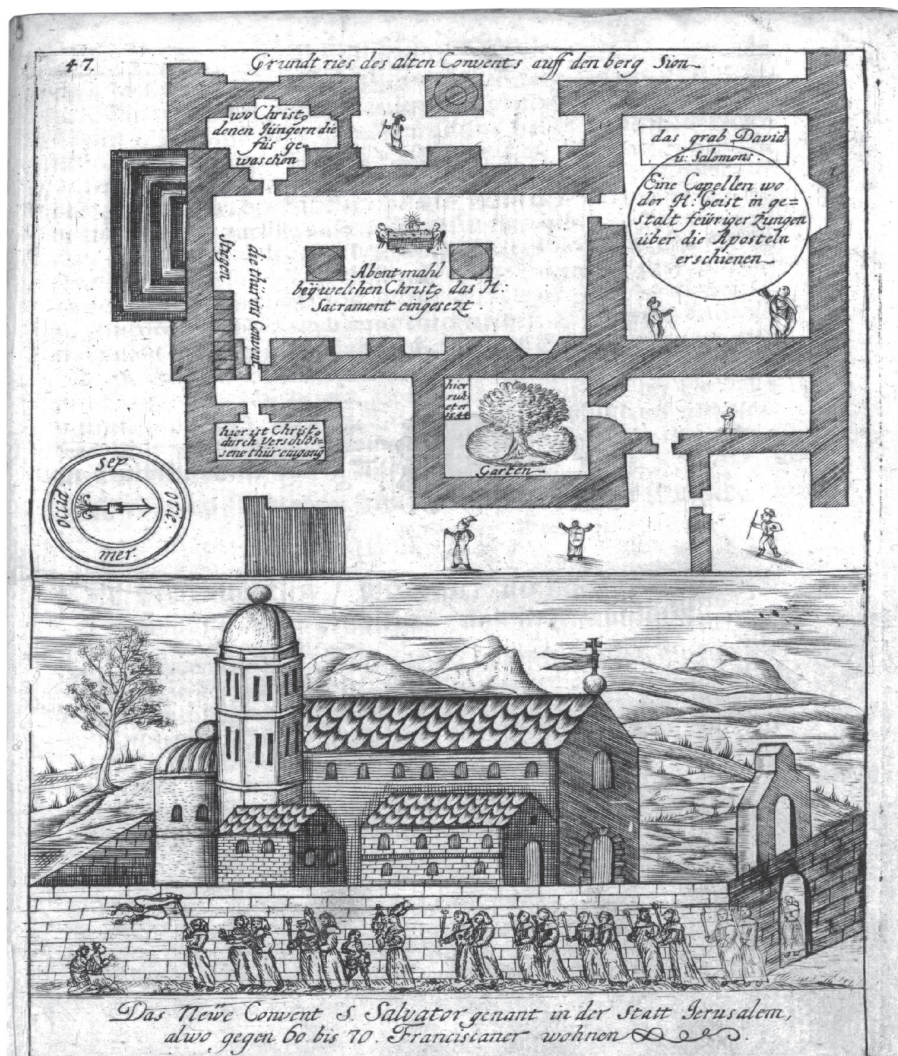


Fig. 11: Engraving from 1706. Above: layout of the Church of the Cenacle indicating the titles of the altars: „Christ washes the feet of His disciples”, „Institution of the Eucharist”, „the risen Christ appears through closed doors”, „Descent of the Holy Spirit”. These titles were carried over to the Church of San Salvatore of today. Below: the convent of San Salvatore. The inscription below mentions that '60-70' friars are living there. Source: Franciscus Caccia OFM (1694-1723): *Jerusalem, Seu Palaestina Nova, Oder Das von Christo Jesu selbst geliebte, gelobte, bewohnte [...]*. Wien, Lercher, 1706.



Fig. 12: A similar engraving about the Mount of Olives is also inserted into the book of István Kiss. The three hilltops are clearly visible. „R” indicates the site of the prayer of Christ in the Getsemani, but no building is shown. Lower left-hand corner, „P”: the tomb of Mary in the valley of Josafat. Source: Antonio del OFM Castillo (?-1699): *El devoto peregrino. Viage de Tierra Santa*. Madrid, En la imprenta RL., 1654. 106.