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SERVICE HELD AT ORDASS GRAVE

BUDAPEST, July 21 (lwi) -- Representatives of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Lutheran Church in Hungary have held a 20-minute memorial service at the grave of the late Hungarian Bishop Lajos Ordass. Officiating at the service was the present presiding bishop, Zoltan Kaldy; in attendance were members of the LWF Executive Committee and staff, Hungarian Bishop Gyula Nagy, Bishop Ordass's daughter Maria and her husband, the Rev. Gyula Dedinsky.

The service was held July 20, at the cemetery in the Buda hills, between the close of the Executive Committee meeting and the start of the LWF Assembly, Sunday, here. The service brought to the forefront Ordass's contributions to the early years of the LWF (he was twice a vice president) and the difficulties of Hungarian Lutherans during the early years of the present socialist government (Ordass was imprisoned but later cleared of charges of currency violations).

In his brief homily, Bishop Kaldy gave thanks to God for Bishop Ordass's service and recalled aspects of his ministry through "both World Wars and the material and spiritual misery following them." Despite bearing the burdens of "one-sided judgment, neglect and aloneness," Ordass had "spiritual peace," because he believed "the mighty and goodwill of God...could prevail," said Kaldy.

He quoted a lecture comment by Ordass, in which he had said, "The church is a steward -- a servant. It is by no means determined to rule." He described Ordass's pastorates in Cegled and Budapest as characterized by preaching "based on the Scripture."

Ordass had participated in the founding Assembly of the LWF in Lund, Sweden, in 1947, Kaldy noted, and had preached at the Minneapolis (United States) Assembly in 1957. His enthusiasm for the LWF stemmed from a belief that "the Lutheran family should successfully cooperate and live together in brotherly community," Kaldy noted. "Although he traveled all over the world and was received with much love and affection," Kaldy suggested his first love was the Hungary, among whose people he ministered and in whose soil he is
buried. But, Kaldy added, a graveside memorial cannot provide "the full portrait" of Ordass's work and life. But, "I have told you what we have in our hearts." Kaldy said he stood at the graveside "with penitence" with "a distressing feeling for not having loved enough those we have buried," but "trusting in God's forgiving love" and, having received it, continuing "in the path of service."

The service also included two hymns, a psalm, and prayers led by LWF President Josiah Kibira of Tanzania, Bavarian Lutheran Bishop Johannes Hanselmann, and American Lutheran Church Bishop David Preus.