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(Hungarian Research and Evaluation Note) -- Archbishop Dr. Joseph Groesz was born on 9 December 1887 at Felterony. He began his theological studies at the Seminary of Győr. An outstanding student, he was sent to Vienna to attend the Theological Faculty of the University. On 14 July 1911 he was ordained at the Vienna "Pannoneum" (the college of Hungarian priests attending the University of Vienna). After graduating as doctor of theology, he returned to Győr where he joined the staff of the diocese. He rose quickly in the hierarchy. On 26 February 1929 he was consecrated auxiliary bishop. In 1936 he was transferred to the diocese of Eszombathely as apostolic administrator. On 9 July 1939 he was consecrated bishop of Eszombathely. He distinguished himself as founder of seven new parishes. His stay in Eszombathely lasted only until 7 May 1943 when he was appointed Archbishop of Ekalossa on the death of Archbishop Sándor Bathy.

After the sentence of Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty, Primate of Hungary and Archbishop of Esztergom, to a life term, (Feb. 49) Archbishop Groesz became chairman of the Conference of the Bench of Bishops.

In May 1951 it was his turn to be arrested and in June, to be put on trial on trumped-up charges: conspiracy against the people's democratic order, illegal currency deals and other "anti-state" acts. On 28 June 1951 he was sentenced to 15 years in prison. He spent a long period in solitary confinement. In October 1953 the Minister of Justice interrupted the execution of the sentence, complying with a request of the Archbishop of Győr, Gyula Csapik, since Groesz imprisonment, chairman of the Bench of Bishops, was transferred to the village of Tóznag (in Central Hungary) and kept under house arrest. In April 1956 Archbishop Csapik died. The regime was anxious to fill the presidency of the Bench of Bishops without delay. The decision on hand was to remit the sentence not yet served of Archbishop Groesz with an act of clemency and restore him both to the Archbishopric of Ekalossa and the presidency of the Bench of Bishops. This took place on 11 May 1956. A day later Prime Minister Adnan Hegedus received Archbishop Groesz informing him that the Council of Ministers had no objection to his resumption of both offices. It is pointed out that Archbishop Groesz has never been given rehabilitation which involves the dropping of the charges brought against a person (as was the case, for example, with László Rajk and his associates but also with Lutheran Bishop Lajos Ordass, the latter also convicted on trumped up charges for illegal currency deal in 1948). Until his very death Archbishop Groesz was "guilty" in the eyes of the regime of the charges brought against him in June 1953 (though the charges were so "less trumped up" than, for instance, in case of Lajos Groesz). He was out of jail only on the basis of an act of clemency.

The physical and spiritual sufferings of the prison badly shattered the health of Archbishop Grosz. The extremely difficult conditions under which he had to guide the Catholic Church of Hungary, exposed to an increasing pressure of the regime, put a further strain on his health. In 1938 and 1939 he had to be taken to hospital for months.

In July 1961 Archbishop Grosz celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination. The "golden jubilee" took place however, in the baleful shadow of the regime's latest fierce onslaught on the freedom of the Catholic Church (the persecution and putting on trial of Catholic churchmen and laymen).

The regime has often tried to exploit the immense popularity of Archbishop Grosz attributing to his statements apparently supporting the foreign or domestic policy of the regime. Such statements became known in all cases from regime media only. This alone would suffice to give rise to the gravest doubts about the authenticity of such statements. But there is concrete and irrefutable evidence that Archbishop Grosz never spoke in that way. The keynote to his long ecclesiastical career is, instead, contained in a sentence of his, uttered on July 20 in Budapest at a celebration of his golden jubilee in the presence also of high regime representatives: "For half a century I have been a missionary of the eternal Gospel not leaving that word for an iota..."

On October 3rd, 1961, Radio Budapest reported that the Archbishop had died of a heart attack at Kalocsa.