

**CANADIAN CANON LAW SOCIETY  
55<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OCTOBER 25-28, 2021  
PROPOSAL I  
HONORARY MEMBERSHIP CCLS  
FATHER LADISLAS ÖRSY, S.J.**

**INTRODUCTION FATHER LADISLAS ÖRSY**

**Louise Charbonneau sco  
Secretary-Treasurer of the CCLS**

It is my pleasure to present some background to this Proposal I which is before you this afternoon.

On 30 July, 2021 the outstanding canon lawyer of the twentieth century, Father Ladislav Örsy SJ, celebrated his hundredth birthday. In 2021, Father Örsy also celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of his membership in the CCLS.

A recent article published in *The Tablet* (July 17, 2021) written by James F. Keenan entitled “As Long as I Breathe, I Hope”, a reflection of Father’s motto “*dum spiro, spero*” provides an overview of Father’s outstanding career. Who is not aware of the profound influence that Father Örsy has exercised on several generations of Catholic theologians and canon lawyers? We may be less aware of the journey that led him from Hungary via Rome where he studied and later taught at the Gregorian during the Second Vatican Council, then to Leuven, Oxford and finally to the U.S.A., and to becoming a world-renowned theologian and canon lawyer.

Keenan states: “The man who invites us – perhaps more compellingly than any other living Catholic theologian – always to be open to the Spirit is someone who has himself walked with the Spirit his entire life.” (p. 14), during very difficult and challenging times which lead him to place himself in God’s hands as a member of the Society of Jesus. He taught at the Gregorian, at Fordham University and at Catholic University of America; he gave courses at Georgetown University well into his nineties (Keenan, p.15).

In an article written in 2002 entitled “In the Service of the Holy Spirit: The Ecclesial Vocation of the Canon Lawyer” (*Jurist* 62(1) 2002), Father Örsy eloquently described the vocation of canon lawyers, that is “to be partners of the Spirit in building structures and setting norms for the unfolding kingdom of God”. Father Örsy has personally accompanied many generations of partners of the Spirit. Today we celebrate and give thanks to God for the gift of Father Örsy to the Church and for his outstanding contribution to the discipline of canon law.

In recognition of Father Örsy contribution, it is my honor and my privilege to present the proposal moved by the members of the Executive Board of the CCLS.