

# **CATHOLIC MOVEMENTS – POLITICAL MOVEMENTS**

Comparative research methods:  
from persecution to revival

Szabolcs J. Illyés



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## PREFACE

The pruned root always brings new growth. Even during the years of pression, despite prohibitions, the Hungarian church continuously tried every possible means to maintain the practice of faith – if not in other ways, then in small communities and through photocopied writings. For it was about much more than mere resistance. As opportunities allowed, spiritual movements organized into larger groups following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the “samizdats” also contributed to the work of the mission with the weekly or monthly writings of most base communities, along with a few printed editions. These initiatives were very important. They gave the movements their character.

I think some of the movements that became established in the West quickly found followers here as well, such as: Regnum, the weekend activities of families, the spiritual renewal of the third orders, and the life of parish youth groups. During the years of persecution, we could regard them as genuine spiritual resources, and after the turning point, we could also hold real mass events at the diocesan level.

Over the long period, I was very pleased whenever a spirited pastor contributed to the sprouting of a movement initiative by gathering his own group, and it was sad to experience the inevitability: the fading of a base’s life could also be caused by a pastoral transfer.

The work of SZABOLCS ILLYÉS is also important from the perspective of highlighting the value-carrying force that the movements actually represent in the dimension of church history, similar to the influence they could have at the level of political movements, with their power to transform society. At the practical level, it is indescribably joyful to witness the unfolding of spiritual energies in a community, especially the development of youth spiritual education, which is essential to their nature. They could be lighthouses in this world, not valued by everyone from a Christian values perspective. The church wants to live, and for this, the guidance of enthusiastic, exemplary people is necessary. Whatever the future of the movements may be, any good initiative is worth its weight in gold in our century.

Msgr. S.Em.R. Endre Gyulay