

ANGEL OF MERCY

The Story of Sister Margaret Slachta



Sister Margaret Slachta, SSS
(1884-1974)
Sisters of Social Service

**A documentary film
by GEORGE CSICSERY**

Angel of Mercy tells the story of Sister Margaret Slachta, a courageous woman who defied the Nazis and the communists in her fight for social justice. Slachta, a teacher and activist,



Sister Margaret with the
Sisters of Social Service in
Canada in 1925

became the first woman elected to Hungary's Parliament in 1920. Her unique vision of social intervention on behalf of the poor, combined with a strong feminist streak and devout Catholic faith, led to heroic acts of courage during the Hungarian Holocaust of 1944–45.



Sister Margaret and the Sisters of Social Service at a
group retreat

Slachta and the Sisters of Social Service, the order she co-founded, are credited with saving over 1,000 lives. Hundreds of letters of safe conduct were obtained by the sisters from the International Red Cross, the Swedish Embassy and the Papal Nuncio.

www.zalafilms.com/films/angelofmercy

ANGEL OF MERCY is a film in progress.

- In 2006, a shoot at Budapest's St. Stephen's Basilica documented the beatification ceremony for Sára Salkaházi of the Sisters of Social Service. Sister Sára was murdered by the Nazis in 1944 along with several people she was helping to hide.
- In April 2008, interviews were filmed with Marika and László Somogyi in Kensington, California. Marika Somogyi was eight years old when her parents gave her to Sister Slachta to protect her. Her story is an anchor piece in the film.
- In December 2008, we filmed at the cemetery in Buffalo, NY, where Margaret Slachta is buried, and interviewed three sisters who knew her. We also interviewed Tibor Baránski, who worked for the Papal Nuncio in 1944 in Budapest and participated in the Vatican's ambassadorial efforts to secure thousands of safe conduct visas to Jews in Hungary. In October 2013, we covered the award ceremony where Baránski was honored by the Hungarian government for his actions in 1944.
- In 2010, we taped an interview in Budapest with István Csicsery-Ronay, who Sister Margaret in her garden knew Sister Slachta when they were both in the Hungarian Parliament.
- In August 2014, an interview was conducted with two children of one of the victims murdered with Sister Sára Salkaházi.
- In November 2014, a rough cut of *Angel of Mercy* was screened at two venues during Holocaust Education Week in Toronto, Canada, thanks to a sponsorship of the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre. A closed program at Blessed Cardinal Newman Catholic High School on November 4 was sponsored by Hungarian Holocaust survivor, Miriam Frankel, in memory of her loving parents, sister and brother. The program included two screenings and a discussion with George Csicsery, attended by around 1,000 high school students. A third, public screening on November 5 at St. Gabriel's Passionist Parish in Toronto was co-sponsored by the Embassy of Hungary in Canada and the Consulate General of Hungary in Toronto. Hungary's Ambassador to Canada Bálint Ódor and Consul Stefánia Szabó both attended, along with producer George Csicsery and two representatives of the Sisters of Social Service from Calgary.



The project was awarded a generous grant from The Hungary Initiatives Foundation in 2014. We anticipate completion of the film in 2020.

DONATE TO ANGEL OF MERCY

Angel of Mercy is a sponsored project of the International Documentary Association (IDA), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization. Contributions in support of *Angel of Mercy* are payable to IDA.

Tax-deductible donations by check can be made out to the International Documentary Association (or IDA) with the title of the project ANGEL OF MERCY and film ID number #4619 clearly noted in the memo line of the check. Checks should be mailed to:

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See a sample reel of scenes from *Angel of Mercy* at <https://vimeo.com/22847382>

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