

Letter Of Presentation To Szentes Israelite Community



This is a letter of presentation published in Szentes in 1929 [5689]. The chalice seen in the photo was presented to the Szentes Israelite community on the occasion of the religious association's 120th anniversary of existence. You can read in the letter, that this is an artistically produced silver decorative cup, which the donors are presenting so that 'in the hand of the person chosen by the community at the traditional feast of the seventh of the month of Adar, he may proclaim the promise of fidelity, mercy, truth, love and peace.'

This document is especially important to me because it's the only memorial [record] where three generations of my family are all represented, even if only by their signatures. My grandfather, Lipot Gunst, my father, Sandor Gunst and myself, Laszlo Galla (then I was still Laszlo Gunst). My grandfather died in the same year, not long after.

In Szentes there lived about 500-600 Jews, and they were all middle-of-the-road religious. Mako was 80 kilometers away, where a much more intense Jewish life went on than in Szentes. There was an Orthodox synagogue and a Neolog one, and a few thousand Jews lived there. Szentes was nothing compared to that. The town was about as big as Mako and the region was also the same, but the Jewry in Szentes was fairly assimilated. There was a synagogue, it was very beautiful, today it is the town library. There was a Jewish community, my father was its vice-president, then its chairman. There was a Chevra Kaddisha too, of course, which dealt with burials - the cemetery was very beautiful. There was a Malbish Arumim Society which dealt with charitable works for the poor, and there was a Jewish Women's Association, my mother was its chairwoman for a while.