

The monastery was established in a proclamation issued in Szepesi Káptalan (today Spišská Kapitula) in 1319 with consent given to its status the following year by King Charles Robert of Anjou. By the 18th century, the Camaldolese "Red Monastery", as it is known in English, had become an important pharmacy centre in Slovakia and operated as one.

While the legend of Cyprian has become famous as the story of the flying monk, in the world of science he had already earned a grand reputation with his Herbarium, whose specimens he collected between 1765 and 1771. The 97-page-long herbarium provides a thorough scientific description of 272 plants, which he wrote in Greek, Latin, German and the local Zamagurie dialect. For most of them he also mentioned their healing properties.

Friar Cyprian (1724-1775) was born Franz Ignaz Jäschke and was quite well educated, having studied in Brunn (now Brno in the Czech Republic), Czestochowa, Breslau and, everyone would say, also in Italy. It was there that he became fascinated with the flying machines drawn by Leonardo da Vinci, who had attempted in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to construct a glider, a helicopter and a parachute. Cyprian was considered a master in thousands of crafts. He knew not just about folk healing, but also botany, alchemy and medicine. He also travelled, drew designs, was a collector and even was skilled in glassmaking. It is also known that he enjoyed a little hunting. Every Thursday, he would paint the legs of hens and ducks black so the monks could eat them on Friday. This was because on the day of fasting, they could only eat on their plates poultry they had caught in the forest, not what they raised in the monastery. And the birds in the forest had black legs...

Legend says that Cyprian, despite having been warned by the angels, felt he had to build a machine to fulfil humanity's ancient dream of flying. Cyprian secretly constructed a glider, taking to the air with it from the Three Crowns Massif across the river in Poland. He flew so high that an angel saw his mirror image at the bottom of Morskie Oko in the Polish Tatras and knocked the monk to the ground with a bolt of lightning.