

Bridges

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THE YEAR OF ST. CASIMIR, 1484-1984

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TIME states that Barbra Streisand's *Yentl* takes place in Lithuania, while the Wall Street Journal identifies the locale as Poland. Such confusion abounds in the records of late 19th century immigrants: many of us would find that our ancestors were recorded as having been born in Russia. However, when it comes to the question of the origin of St. Casimir, the matter is more serious because he became a beloved saint whose cult spread over Europe and the Americas. The Poles claim him as their own. And so do the Lithuanians. The official Lives of Saints, with an imprimatur by Francis Cardinal Spellman, presents him as a saint of Poland, with no mention of Lithuania except that it was the locale of his death. Historian Ivinskis gives you the facts.

YOUNG SAINT CASIMIR

WAS HE POLISH? OR LITHUANIAN?

Because the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Casimir, ruled Poland as King (1447-1492), it is erroneous to conclude that his son, St. Casimir, was Polish. Historical facts prove that, among the kinsfolk of St. Casimir there was not a single descendent who was Polish. St. Casimir belongs to the dynasty of the Grand Duke Gediminas who gave Lithuania her many heroic and noble statesmen. However, since the time when Lithuanian Grand Duke Jogaila ascended the throne of Poland, having married the Polish Jadvyga, the Poles claimed and renamed the Gediminas family as the Jogaila dynasty. This dynasty during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries brought Poland a high degree of fame and prominence. Jogaila, St. Casimir's grandfather was Lithuanian. His Polish wife bore him no children and died young. His fourth wife Sophia was Lithuanian and became the mother of Casimir and the grandmother of St. Casimir.

One of St. Casimir's famous miracles was his apparition in 1518 to Lithuanian soldiers whom he inspired against the Russians. An overpowering Russian army threatened the city of Polock. A small Lithuanian army set out to oppose this formidable foe. The only way they could realize their scheme of defence was to cross the overflowing Dauguva River and save their fort. At this critical moment, the miracle took place. St. Casimir, armored as a knight and seated on a white horse, appeared to the Lithuanian army and urged the men to cross the river. He himself took the lead and the entire army followed without hesitation. The enemy was forced to retreat. On that spot, a beautiful church was erected in 1645, but eight years later, Russian Czar Aleksej ordered his army to demolish it. St. Casimir was considered the enemy of Russia. Subjugated by Russian Czars, Lithuanians were strictly forbidden to celebrate the Feast of St. Casimir . . . saint of Lithuania.

Zenonas Ivinskis



Jonynas' St. Casimir



Grand Duke of Lithuania
Gediminas whose dynasty
produced St. Casimir

LIETUVOS
NACIONALINĖ
M. MAŽVYDO
BIBLIOTEKA

Destiny ...

YOUNG CASIMIR'S ASCENT TO SAINTHOOD

What went on in the mind and heart of the young Casimir who was destined to become the patron saint of Lithuania and youth? Historian William Urban of Monmouth College states, "The pagan medieval Balts did not choose Christianity primarily as a result of intellectual or emotional conversion. They chose Christianity, or rejected it, largely as a matter of politics." At the time Casimir was born, a mere seventy years had passed after Lithuania became Christian in 1387.

Casimir's mother, Elizabeth, was a descendent of the Hapsburg family. The daughter of the emperor of Germany, she was a determined, strong-willed, no-nonsense woman whose Christian faith was unbending. Her powerful personality must have threatened the security of all who came within her sphere of influence, especially her son Casimir and husband. Her husband, King Casimir who was Grand Duke of Lithuania and ruler of Poland, was illiterate. Elizabeth could read and write, a rare accomplishment for a woman in those days.

The Poles considered King Casimir, a Lithuanian, one of their finest kings. Neighboring Germans regarded him as intelligent, thoughtful and fair minded. A considerate and peaceful man, he had Lithuanian patience and moderation. It was possible that, in his dealings with people, he was more Christian than headstrong German Elizabeth. From one point of view, contrasted with Elizabeth, he might be considered a weak father; but from a Christian point of view, he was the stronger of the two. Young Casimir grew up between these two opposites in strength and, having been gifted with intelligence and sensitivity, he must have confronted many a crucial situation which demanded a decision whether to go Elizabeth's narrow, willful way or his father's broader, more Christian way.

A third, and as confusing an influence on Casimir's spiritual development was John Dlugosz a famous Polish scholar employed by King Casimir to educate his sons. Dlugosz was a historian who had written a history of Poland, describing the historical relationship of Poland and Lithuania. Casimir was taught Latin which he learned to read, write and speak. He mastered German and Polish. Lithuanian he probably picked up from his father who took him to Lithuania on occasions.

John Dlugosz added to Casimir's spiritual education because he was a charitable man who sympathized with the poor and the unfortunate and did what he could to make life more endurable for them. But Dlugosz' attitude towards Lithuania was not charitable. He was biased. He described the country as "dismal, marshy, intensely cold" and he disapproved of Casimir's

noble Lithuanian forefathers because they had failed to cooperate with the needs of Poland.

Young Casimir, struggling to understand the world around him through his mother, father and elitist teacher, came to his own conclusions. He lived to see Lithuania and her people with his own eyes. He learned by observation how men struggle for power, and crush others to enlarge that power. He saw the conditions under which the nobles lived and the conditions under which the peasants tried to eke out a livelihood. He rejected materialism, pride and politics and chose to live out his short life dedicated to Christ-like self-direction. He became the patron saint of Lithuania and of youth.

Fortunately, in his spiritual development, St. Casimir had another teacher, Callimachus Buonacorsi, who was very different from the Lithuanian-debasing and Pole-exalting scholar Dlugosz whose lack of humility impeded his success as a spiritual tutor. Buonacorsi was a humanist, better equipped than Dlugosz to inculcate pure Christianity. Both teachers recorded comments about St. Casimir as a student which reveal the kind of relationship each had with him. Dlugosz evaluated him as "an excellent youth of rare talents and remarkable knowledge". Intellectually brilliant, St. Casimir was undoubtedly a questioner, a prober, natural logician and thinker. It was the humanist Buonacorsi who called him "a holy youth — *divus adolescens*." for he witnessed, evolving in this young adolescent, a deeply spiritual being committed to humanity.

When St. Casimir was barely thirteen years old, he became a victim chosen to victimize others for the sake of his parents' ambitions. Elizabeth's ambition was to be the "mother of kings" (she had six sons!) and marry off her six daughters to European royalty. King Casimir's ambition paralleled Elizabeth's because he had the need to hold on to his throne and expand his power. Thereupon, the thirteen year old Casimir was sent to the frontier as the head of an army of 20,000 to claim the throne of Hungary.

The outcome was a disaster. St. Casimir returned home without a crown, a failure, a victim not only of his parents' ambition but of Hungarian and Polish politics. St. Casimir, at the age when sensitivity becomes overpowering and adolescent self-assertiveness materializes, suffered through the shock of this disaster. He could never again be prevailed upon to seek a throne even when, at a later time, the Hungarians again "invited" him.

He chose a life style in which he could pursue his divine Father's business, and yet cooperate reason-



St. Casimir's father King Casimir and mother Queen Elizabeth shown on tapestries in Neuberg castle and Munich Museum, Germany.



ably with his earthly father's needs. He periodically accompanied King Casimir on journeys of state to Lithuania and Poland. When a conspiracy to dethrone King Casimir materialized, St. Casimir stepped in and administered the affairs of state in Poland for two years, alone. He distinguished himself by successfully handling state finances and meting out justice to unfaithful statesmen. After growing political dissension caused King Casimir to lose favor with the Pope, St. Casimir improved Poland's diplomatic relations with Rome.

In 1483 when King Casimir returned to Poland, he sent the capable St. Casimir to act as his representative to Lithuania. We can only surmise what he accomplished there. Little remains on records. Repelled by the luxuries and hypocracies of court life, he was free in Lithuania to pursue his predilection



A guardian angel hovers over the young saint as he deenens in prayer, his books at his knees. (Stančikaitė-Abraitienė painting)

St. Casimir hovers over the shoulder of his teacher Dlugosz who is giving a Latin lesson to the princes of the castle. (Cynk painting)

for spiritual solitude and shun public life.

His first biographer, the Papal legate Zacharius Ferreri who investigated his life with the assistance of the Bishops of Vilnius, Kijev and Kafa, recorded that, under his sumptuous royal robes, St. Casimir wore a hair shirt; he slept on hard floors, and meditated daily on the Sacred Passion of Christ. Meditation was not infrequently translated into action. His encounters with the poor have been recorded, as well as his sense of justice, wisdom and personal spiritual courage.

After his death at twenty five, many a miracle was reported and investigated. The basic miracle was the spiritual life which the young St. Casimir, at so early an age, chose for himself.

Domicelė Blazis



Strength and wisdom emanate from the visage of St. Casimir by Aleksandras Marčiulionis

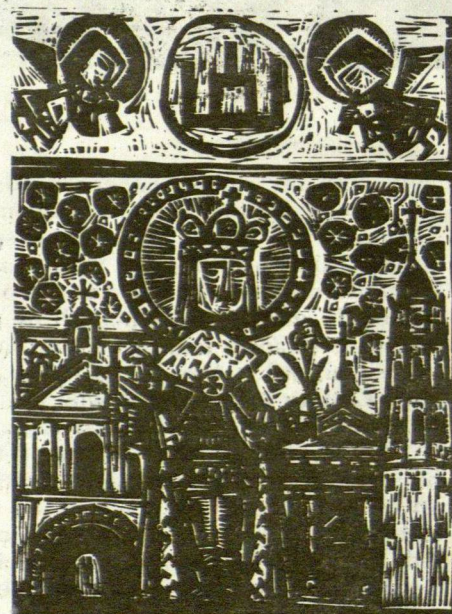
Tomašaitis photos

(Right) A troubled, sensitive St. Casimir shown on the title page of the oldest biography of the saint, written by Zacharias Ferreri, 1521



(Right) A stylized portrait by V. Ignas links St. Casimir with starry skies and angels and the history of Vilnius.

(Left) A dreamy innocence marks the countenance of St. Casimir by A. Valėška, identifying him with Youth.



THE MANY IMAGES

THE PHYSICAL IMAGE

Through centuries, artists painting images of their admired heroes have reflected in their paintings the images of themselves and their own culture. Think of the multiple different visages of Christ we have through the ages. St. Casimir, in the hands of the Italian painter Carlo Dolci (1616 - 1686) looks like a refreshingly charming and pious Italian, very different from the Lithuanian folk art representations of St. Casimir which reflect the stolid self-images peasants had of themselves. Very different, too, are the St. Casimirs with Lithuanian faces and those whose countenances are stylized by modern artists.

Would you like to be judged merely from pictures of you depicted by individuals with imperfect vision and even more imperfect understanding? Now let us examine the symbolic and spiritual images of St. Casimir, presented by other artists.

OF SAINT CASIMIR

THE SPIRITUAL IMAGE

THE SYMBOLIC IMAGE

Having studied some portraits of St. Casimir in which he is shown having three hands (see page 10), we asked: why three hands? We dug up five basic theories for your consideration:

1. Perhaps the three hands represent the Trinity? (Too complex for those days, protests a knowledgeable priest.)
2. Perhaps, a perceptive seminarian suggests, the artist chose to give St. Casimir an extra hand because he himself had suffered the possible loss of his own hand and then his hand healed. Thereupon, he "gave" St. Casimir his hand, the way people whose health has been restored have left innumerable crutches on the walls of European churches, a tribute of gratitude, known as *ex voto*.
3. Perhaps, suggests a practical minded writer, the artist painted a right hand and, disliking the position, painted over it and created another hand. In time, with the deterioration and flaking of the paint, the first hand came out again into existence. Perhaps, adds a romantic minded individual, the recurrent upsurge of the unwanted hand from layers of paint is a miracle in itself.
4. The third hand may represent his concern for Poland, because it extends to the right, holding a lily, under the Polish coat of arms.
5. Or the third hand may be symbolic of spiritual forces giving him assistance in his work. Read Paulius Jurkus' story "Three Hands" which appears on page ten.

The best image of St. Casimir that we can hope for is his spiritual image which is engendered in the image of Christ, the essence of loving and forgiving humanity. This is not like the image of a "do-gooder" such as the woman who donates thousands of dollars to the church and sits in the pew, fuming because she loathes the hat in front of her and the woman under the hat. Nor does it apply to the man who dedicates his time and effort to organizations fighting for the cause of freedom, but invariably betrays himself with the malice he has for his neighbor, and even his co-workers. St. Casimir did not belong to this ilk of human beings. He belonged to that rare, highly spiritualized part of humanity that, transformed in Christ, composes the Body of Christ and conducts its life uttering no word and performing no act that are un-Christ-like. Pope John Paul II is such a man; his spiritual image was clear when he recently visited and forgave his would-be assassin. And the Venerable Jurgis Matulaitis, who was proclaimed in 1959 Servant of God (*Servus Dei*), was such a man; when the hostility of the Poles made his life intolerable and impeded his work as the Archbishop of Vilnius, he wrote: "Love is the greatest good God asks of us. Love can not be unforgiving. One must learn, when seeing — not to see, and when hearing — not to hear. We must learn not to gnaw our hearts for what others do to us . . ." It was on this level of humanity that St. Casimir lived and died.

Demie Jonaitis

St. Casimir by Carlo Dolci glows with rich, other-world, transcendent piety.



Folk sculpture of a stolid and benevolent St. Casimir





SAINT CASIMIR in Lithuania

Vincentas Liulevičius

King Casimir, who was occupied with the duties of his kingdom, rarely visited Lithuania. In addition, he was afraid Lithuania might choose to separate from Poland. He was cautious about letting his sons travel there lest the Lithuanians spontaneously proclaim a son of his the Grand Duke of Lithuania.

In 1474, however, the King took the 17 year old Prince Casimir to Lithuania, the land of his ancestors, for the first time. How long he remained and what he did there is not known. During Lent of 1477 they were at Trakai, together with another son, John Albrecht. A courier visiting from Venice describes how the two sons, sitting next to their father were clothed in dark red satin robes, and looked so young and beautiful, like a pair of angels.

In 1479 Prince Casimir arrived in Vilnius where, with his father, he remained for a longer time. It was here that in 1481 an assassination attempt against the King took place.

St. Casimir lived in the latter

part of the Middle Ages (1458 - 1484) when the religious fervor in Europe was cooling off, while in Lithuania it was only kindled and had had little time to ignite. The humanists and the Renaissance man were already speaking the language of the proud self-centered man, fascinated with the "emancipation - from the dogmas" movement.

We find St. Casimir in the center of this stormy movement. He became the beacon, in a restless sea, pointing to eternity and to God. The earthly life did not attract him, even though his four brothers, one after another, sat on the thrones of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Lithuania and the fifth became the bishop of Crocow, archbishop of Gniezn and cardinal. His five sisters married German Dukes: Bavaria (Landshut), Brandenburg, Silezia (Lignitz), Saxony and Pomerania.

The humanist and Renaissance movements were followed by the Reformation which took many people away from the Catholic Church. In Lithuania, the Jesuits with the help of St. Casimir de-

St. Casimir's miracle at Dauguva:
in the Chapel of Holy Warriors,
Sts. Peter and Paul Church, Antakalnis

fended the Catholic Church from destruction.

It is interesting that Martin Luther was born in 1483; St. Casimir died in 1484. In death and through sainthood, he was to destroy Luther's teachings in Lithuania. Luther fell away from the Church in 1520; St. Casimir achieved sainthood in 1521 showing the true road toward God.

St. Casimir also rose to the defense of Lithuania and the Catholic Church, against the orthodox Muscovites. His sword shines brightly, lifted up in his hand, as he leads in battle on a brave steed. Here we have in mind the appearance of St. Casimir at Dauguva (1518) to the Lithuanian troops. He showed them the way through a swollen river and helped them win a decisive battle against a much stronger foe. Reports of this event were greatly embroidered and spread like fire through the countryside. A report can be found in the canonization documents of St. Casimir. This miracle implies that St. Casimir was concerned with his nation's battles with the eastern giant, for it is said that he appeared on the battlefield with the Lithuanian national emblem the *Vytis* (Knight). This battle was not won through physical power. It was spirituality that took over.

In 1655 St. Casimir's city Vilnius was occupied for the first time. When the leader of the Russian forces Šermetjevas was standing near Polock where he had turned a Catholic church into a stall for horses, a handsome youth appeared before him and advised him not to anger God: "You are the punishment that my nation has to undergo because of its sins. But my nation will atone and it will be heard. God will punish you with such force that even beyond the Urals

(Volga) you will find no salvation.” This prophetic accusation is recorded in *Bolandista Acta Sanctorum* according to the interrogation of the Vilnius curia. It is added that the young man could have been no other than St. Casimir. We can accept or reject these episodes, but the report indicates how much Lithuania relied on St. Casimir during her most difficult times. His name became synonymous with patriotism, battles with the foe, and the longing for an independent existence.

After the 1795 division of Lithuania, the celebration of St. Casimir's Feast Day was forbidden. The Church of St. Casimir in Vilnius became an orthodox house of worship and the cupola in the shape of a crown was removed. Imperial Russia hated the St. Casimir cult and his very name, the name which awoke in the Lithuanian people nationalistic and religious feelings. However, as soon as we regained Vilnius, the Russian symbols were torn down from the church and a tower in the form of a princely crown was installed, symbolically signifying: — “Rule in our land and our hearts!”

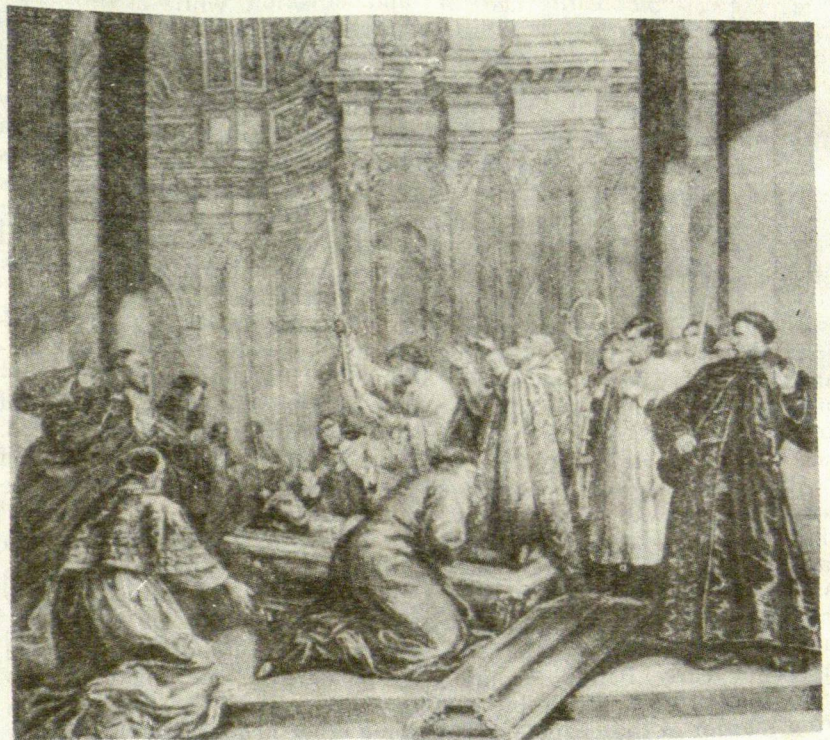
Through the years, the enemy kept attempting to destroy Lithuania; even the remains of St. Casimir could not rest in peace. Before the Russian occupation of Vilnius in 1655, the coffin of St. Casimir was hidden for 8 years. During the great war of the North (1703), it was taken away for protection. There was no peace for St. Casimir's relics even when the Russians for the third time (1944) occupied Vilnius. The Vilnius cathedral was converted into a museum, and St. Casimir's relics were moved in 1953 to Sts. Peter and Paul Church in the suburb of Vilnius at Antakalnis.

St. Casimir always resurfaces during Lithuania's tragic periods. Today, Lithuania is going through a most difficult time and we pray for St. Casimir's intervention and help, recalling the warning to Russia: “God will punish you so that even beyond the Urals there will be no salvation for you”.

(From *Laiškai Lietuviams*)



A girl is cured at St. Casimir's tomb.



The opening of St. Casimir's tomb. Del Bene mural, St. Casimir's Chapel.

WHERE

HAVE THEY TAKEN HIM?

Rev. Timothy Burkauskas, O.S.P.

The windblown clouds of March will not be able to darken the bright spirits of Lithuanians this year. Commemorating the 500th anniversary of the death of Saint Casimir, their beloved patron saint, Lithuanians throughout the world will be directing their prayerful attention to Vilnius — the city blessed to enshrine the saint's mortal remains.

Dying at the early age of twenty-five, this virtuous prince rejected the prestige and glamour of his noble birth and was concerned rather with holiness of life. His earthly sojourn ended at Gardinas, Lithuania, when complications from tuberculosis snuffed out his youthful vigor. Following his death on March 4, 1484, the body of Saint Casimir was brought to the cathedral in Vilnius and laid to rest in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin. Since that time the gifted hands of artists and sculptors have competed to decorate the earthly shrine of Saint Casimir's resting place with exquisite beauty.

Between the years 1623-36 a special chapel was added to the Vilnius cathedral to honor the remains and memory of Saint Casimir. This magnificent chapel, which can still be visited today, is among the most outstanding examples of early Baroque monuments in all of Vilnius. The breathtaking interior of the chapel, made of imported marble from Italy and the Carpathians, was designed in

Saint Mary Magdalene wept at the empty tomb of Christ asking, "Where have they taken Him?" Today Lithuanians might be asking the same question about Saint Casimir....

the Italian Baroque tradition. Stucco sculptural ornamentations were added to enrich the chapel in 1692. It is obvious that no expense was spared to honor this beloved patron saint of Lithuania in his cathedral chapel.

According to the artist's conception, the beautiful silver coffin of Saint Casimir was held aloft above an elaborate altar by three angel figures. The delicate facial features of the angels surrounding the coffin express the tender warmth and devotion which the faithful had for their heavenly patron saint. Other angels surrounding the coffin express reverential awe, some deep meditation, while others simply contemplate the glorious scene. An angel carrying a lily and a cross is shown emerging from the clouds above. Closest to the coffin is the Virgin Mary with the Christ-child shown smiling gently as she gazes upon the coffin.

Preparing to occupy the cathedral and convert it into an art gallery, the Soviet government removed the cherished remains of Saint from his holy chapel in 1953. The chapel is now an attraction for sightseeing rather than a place for pious devotion.

Thus, a tourist arriving in Vilnius today might experience some difficulty in locating the body of this dear saint of Lithuania. Seeing the cathedral desecrated by secular use, one might imagine that his remains are venerated in some other nearby church, such as — in the oldest and largest Baroque church in the capital city — a



Young and old join in their devotion to St. Casimir.

St. Casimir's statue and banner are borne in a procession on the solemn Feast Day of Sts. Peter and Paul Church, June 1983, at Antakalnis in Lithuania.

church, in fact, dedicated to Saint Casimir. Construction on this architectural trophy of Lithuanian Christian faith was begun on May 12, 1604 to commemorate the day of the Canonization of Saint Casimir, and was completed eleven years later. But the venerated body of Lithuania's patron is not to be found in this church either. The Soviet authorities have converted it into a Museum of Atheism. So, one may ask in frustration, where is the body of Saint Casimir to be found in Vilnius?

To locate the remains of this saint, one must travel outside the city area of Vilnius to the north-eastern suburb of Antakalnis. It is there that one will discover the church of Saints Peter and Paul

which has one of the most beautiful interiors of any Lithuanian church.

Construction on this Baroque masterpiece was started in 1668. The interior artwork and design is credited to the Italian masters of stucco work, Pietro Peretti and Giovanni Galli. The walls, ceiling and niches are an artistic symphony of sculptured angels, saints, and expressive faces. The number of human faces alone is estimated to about 2,000! In 1803 Giovanni Berretti and Niccolo Piano did some renovation work in the church, and extensive restorations and painting of the interior were begun last year.

It is in this magnificent church of Saints Peter and Paul that one will now find the silver coffin

containing the remains of the patron saint of Lithuania. It is to Antakalnis that the clergy and faithful will flock in this Jubilee Year of Saint Casimir's death. And though Lithuania has been rightly described as a land "asperged with blood and tears," so too is Lithuania a land richly blessed to possess the memory and relics of St. Casimir.

As distinguished church prelates lead the throngs of prayerful Lithuanians in colorful procession and holy celebrations at Antakalnis, the smiling Madonna and sculptured cherubs will continue their vigilant gaze on an empty place in the lonely cathedral chapel in Vilnius — awaiting the return of their dear Saint Casimir.



Paulius Jurkus

THREE HANDS

Entering the cathedral, you'll find roomy spaces which echo the faintest whisper, the softest step. Listen well to the murmur of the vaults. It seems as if they're calling, as if warning you. Then, muffling your steps, you'll go cautiously so as not to touch anything and so that nothing will touch you.

Here you'll find the gates to the chapel of St. Casimir. When coolness pervades the cathedral, the sun plays here. It cascades down from the dome and pours forth like rain on everyone who enters. And many do come from the bustling streets. It's peaceful here for everyone in this sunlight, peaceful by the tomb of the saint.

There are statues upon statues, paintings, marble laid down centuries ago, and gold and silver. Everything's so holy and simple, understandable.

Your gaze will halt above the altar. The picture of St. Casimir is there. The saint is portrayed with three hands. In one is a rosary. The others hold two blooming lilies.

But why?

As I was standing there, not understanding and surprised, I was approached by an old beggar who, like the pigeons, lived by the cathedral. We soon understood each other as he began explaining. "It was long ago, in those days when Vilnius beheld Prince Casimir. The ruler's estate was huge and elegant; his entourage was incomparable. Nevertheless, Casimir, the prince, was simple, as if he were a servant. In his hands he carried a rosary even when he walked this square and met my brother beggars. He handed offerings to all of them.

"The beggars were many, and his right hand began to tire. The prince raised his eyes to the cathedral and prayed, 'O my Lord, why have I hands too few to praise You?'

"Then, next to his right hand appeared another hand — a royal, holy hand. It gave alms to the beggars.

"There were many beggars. The prince's one hand held the rosary, while the other two hands consoled the unfortunate. My brother beggars fell on their knees and honored the great prince.

"When they withdrew, having received gifts and consolation, they witnessed how the angels of heaven descended in multitudes upon this square. Greeting the prince, they

bowed before him and placed lilies into his two right hands, as if into two holy vases.

"Even now I, a beggar, and all of my brother beggars receive out of his good hands. Even now the angels take care of the purity of these lilies."

As I was leaving the cathedral, the beggars, those brothers of mine, were singing:

"Oh, holy, holy, your hands!"

And I proclaimed: "Oh, holy, holy, your hands!"

And I gave to my brothers the beggars, and I received from the one who has three hands, since I, too, am a beggar.

Translated by Jurgis Bradūnas



The celebrated painting of St. Casimir with three hands

JONAS MEKAS

THE WOLF



They caught him, they closed in on him, they made a circle around him, and then they told him to dance. They laughed, and this was their revenge. They did not care that he could not dance. "Dance, wolf!" they shouted, and he looked around and he was frightened, and he only looked at them. He did not have any choice, he was their prisoner and he had to obey them. They continued shouting, and he sat there and looked at them stubbornly, with hatred in his eyes.

"Who can force me to dance?" he thought. But then their fists began falling on his back, and they beat him with sticks; with sticks they beat the wolf. And though he knew he didn't want it, he felt, in his hopelessness, his legs beginning to move and leap and move in the circle round and round. It was his hopelessness, and it was the beginning of the dance, though he didn't want to do it and hated them. "No, it's not me, no, it's not me, it's only my legs that are leaping," he said. But who will hear, who will understand a wolf! And all that he wanted now was to stare at them, with hate, but he felt that his legs did not obey him, and he jumped and ran round in the circle. "I will not, I will not," he groaned. But his legs already leaped, his legs did not obey any more. The fists and the sticks were like a heavy rain, and he leaped, his legs leaped. He ran in the round, and he jumped, and then he saw, he suddenly saw that he was already dancing. "The wolf is dancing!" they roared, and they all wanted to see how the wolf danced. This was their revenge, the wolf knew it, and all that he wanted was to stay there and stare at them with hate, but he was dancing, his legs danced, and he was not able any longer to stop them, he had to obey them, and he jumped and leaped. He was their prisoner, he did not have any other choice, he, the wolf! They caught him, one day, a free beast of the forest, they caught the wolf, and now he belonged to them. He could hear their voices

around him, they had brought their wives and their children, they trampled and trumpeted and shouted around him, and colorful balloons were floating over the square. They made a feast of the wolf's dance, they celebrated the catching of the wolf, the imprisonment of the wolf; they feasted their revenge, they sang and they shouted, and he leaped and leaped, and the sticks hit him and the fists, once more and once more, — and when he already thought that they had forgotten him, he felt another one and another, and he leaped to the side, and there they waited all ready for him, and to the left and to the right, and left and right, he leaped. He did not want it, all that he wanted was to lie down and let himself be beaten. He was a courageous wolf, but his legs were weak, he knew. He knew the legs were weak and that they would obey them. He knew that his liberty was endless and unlimited, but that his legs were weak, he knew that his legs were limited. Why force a wolf to dance, why, as if he were a dancer. . . . Look at his legs! — And he leaped and leaped, and he did not see, he only leaped miserably, silently, moaning. Who would understand if he would say that it is hard for a wolf, that it can be hard for a wolf. He is a wolf, a killer, a beast from the forest. So they laughed in their contentment. He could hear, through the dizziness, their laughing and the rhythm of the music, and they trampled and roared, and a cloud of dust was eating his throat; he leaped and leaped, and he felt now how his legs were bending and tired. "Oh, jump, wolf, jump!" — they shouted, and he did not feel any more, he only jumped round and round, kneeling and falling; it was a poor and miserable dance, and all he could hear was their shouting as they roared around him — they howled around him, he could clearly hear them howling now. In the beginning they sounded only like a large waterfall, but now they were like an innumerable rut of wolves; they

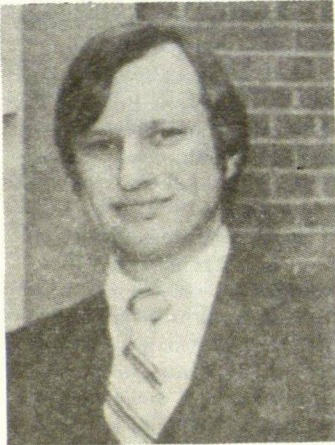
howled and roared around him, and from his dark circle he could see the sharp light in their eyes. "Leap, wolf, leap, dance the dance of thy liberty!" — and he jumped and fell and leaped again and again. You are a poor dancer, wolf, you are a bad dancer. You did not learn to dance in the woods, no, you didn't learn to dance in the woods, nor in the snow, and thy legs are not beautiful, you who were born in the forests! — leap wolf, leap! And he jumped and leaped, and the howling around him grew louder and louder, they roared like a huge rut, and he knew he had no other choice now. Who are they, who are they, what is a wolf, where is the essence of a wolf, what is a wolf and what is not. — They howled and they jumped and they leaped. They will kill you, they will kill you, if you don't dance, they will kill you. But he no longer cared, he could not feel any more, he could not feel nor think any more, he only groaned and fell and leaped again, and the howling around him grew and grew, and the dust, and heat, and their eyes burned in the dark. They were a rut, they were wolves, and who was he, who was he he did not know any more, now he was something that he did not know any more. But he felt that he would never find out, that this was his last question, a question which he knew was his last question: Who am I, who are they, who are I and who am they? — And they roared and the sticks and fists fell on his back, but he did not have any strength to obey, he did not have any strength. Ha, ha, he laughed, and they roared and howled, but he did not hear them any more. He lay there, a free wolf, and the dance was ended, and he was free, he didn't have any strength left, his legs did not have any strength to obey: he was free not to leap.

They were still dancing around him, shouting and howling — "Jump, wolf, jump!" — but the wolf lay there in the circle, and they will never know that the wolf was always free, that only his legs were leaping and jumping and dancing, that these were only his legs that were jumping, not the wolf, the free beast of the forests, that the legs were not the wolf — the wolf was much deeper, the wolf was very deep, though he didn't know what a wolf is and who are they, who are they and what is a wolf.

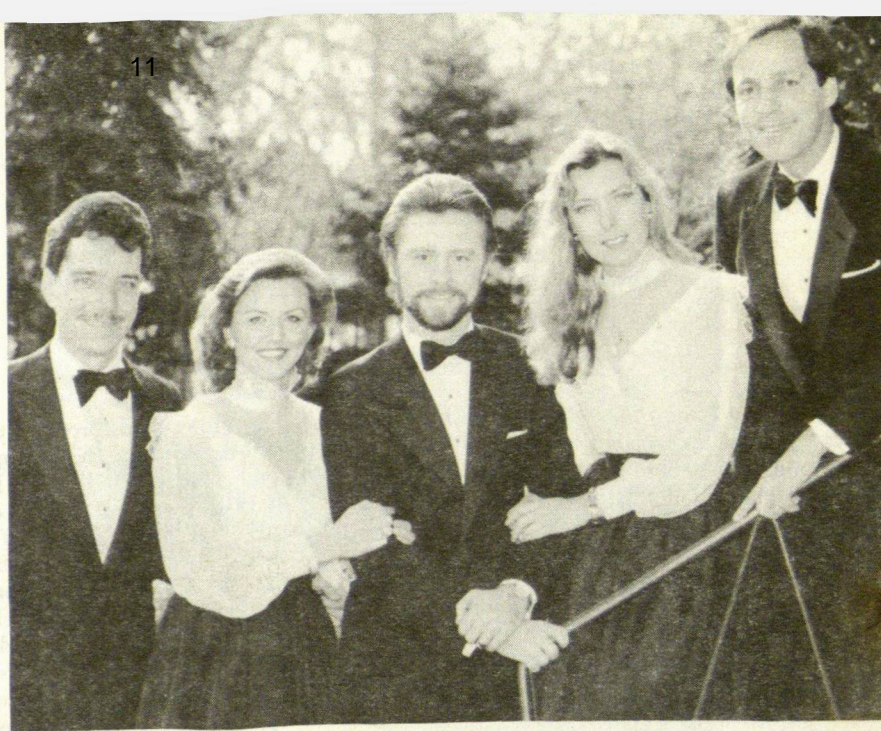
Gintė Damušis



John Galenski



Vyto Ruginis



Maestro Victor Ralys (center) of popular Harmonija with Matthew Yatkauskas, Birutė Ralys Malinauskas, Astra Vilija Butkus, Petras Tutinas.

HARMONIJA STAR-BOUND

Since its founding in 1980 the quartet *Harmonija* has grown by leaps and bounds in popularity. It has sung in almost all Lithuanian communities and has a long calendar of future engagements. Last December the group participated at a concert in New York's St. Patrick's cathedral and received glowing reviews. At present it is scheduled to harmonize at St. Petersburg, Florida; Detroit, Michigan; New York City (a repeat performance at St. Pat's Cathedral); at the Youth Center in Chicago and at an outdoor concert in Damrosch Park at Lincoln Center in New York City.

The harmonizers are: Astra Vilija Butkus (soprano); Birutė Ralys-Malinauskas, (alto); Victor Ralys (baritone and leader); Petras J. Tutinas (bass); Matthew Yatkauskas (accompanist).

WINNER GINTĖ DAMUŠIS

Gintė Damušis who is associated with the Lithuanian Information Center in Brooklyn, N.Y. is this year's recipient of the Eugenius Kriaučeliūnas Youth Award. Miss Damušis won the award of \$1000 for her deep involvement in promulgating to the Free World the

tragic plight of Lithuania. On various occasions she writes articles for publication and gives speeches at functions. She is involved in publicizing the *Chronicle of the Captive Church in Lithuania* and its prisoners of conscience. An award of \$500 was also given to Violeta Abariūtė of Detroit who organized and presided over the Fifth Youth Congress last year.

WINNER JOHN GALENSKI

In the recent United States Department of Agriculture ceremonies, John S. Galenski received an Honor Award for outstanding achievement. He is deputy director, technical services division, agency coordinator with the Agricultural Marketing Service.

VYTO RUGINIS ON BROADWAY

Graduate of Yale University School of Drama, Chicago-born Vyto Ruginis, who has acted in a number of plays throughout the United States, is now acting at the Plymouth Theater in New York, in a performance of "The Real Thing." This is his first appearance in a Broadway production.

Youth Enjoying Action and Freedom IN USA

Without Enjoying Their Youth

Young People under Pressure in USSR

A. Raudenis

Unable to tolerate the spreading national and religious movement, especially among youth, Soviet government organs are venting their fury against innocent young people.

The brutality of the Soviet militia was known earlier. In May 1972, the militia and the security police acted brutally with young people participating in peaceful demonstrations. And now, reports are occasionally heard of young people, who fall into the hands of militia, being viciously beaten and even crippled.

In addition to the physical terror applied by the militia, young people are also experiencing other infringements of their rights. Lately, various means of coercion have been used to force boys attending middle schools to enroll in trade schools with bad reputations. After barely completing eight grades, boys (poor and good students alike) are often not allowed to continue attending middle school. Their eighth-grade diplomas are confiscated, and they receive recommendations directing them to this or that vocational school with orders to study there.

Their parents, not knowing how to resist, most often comply and consent to have their under-age sons enroll in the trade schools which are so despised. Of course, there is no written directive regarding this compulsory tracking of students in trade schools. When the bolder parents appeal to the ministry regarding the crude coercion of their sons, they are given no concrete answers and are simply told that the directive issued to school principals and teachers to compel 15-year-olds to enroll in trade school is merely a verbal one.

The purpose of government organs in coercing minor children is unclear. Perhaps they think they are thus implementing a new type of Party-instigated addiction: the Food Supply Program to the year 1990. It is probably just one more method of decreasing the number of Lithuanian intellectuals, and furthermore trade school graduates can more

easily be transferred to perform various assignments in "fertile" Kazakhstan or other places in the Russian empire.

Not without reason has the enrollment of young people in institutions of higher learning fallen off very much recently, especially among males. In 1982, the minimum enrollment was barely met at the Kaunas Polytechnic Institute; consequently young men applying are actually admitted without any entrance examinations. In other words, in the absence of a selection process, the caliber of the technical employees being trained, which is already low, will decline even further. The number of young men who enrolled in the Kaunas Medical Institute was identical to that of 1981, although this Institute is "privileged" this year: students are exempt from the draft, just as they are at the Agricultural Academy. These are the only two Lithuanian schools of higher education whose male students will be able to graduate exempt from compulsory military service.

Military training departments have been eliminated at all other Lithuanian schools of higher learning (under the new directives of the occupation government) and male students are forcibly taken into the armed forces in their second year of study. This will be an additional blow to the already backward system of Soviet higher education. When male students are drafted into the armed forces in their second year of study, most classes in schools of higher learning will be cut by half or more.

When these same students are integrated into other classes two years later, the educational process will be interrupted not only for the students who return from the military but for those who stayed behind as well. Such a drastic change in direction in the educational process will waste much time, energy and additional expense. Interrupting education for two years will cause great damage to the students and to education as a whole. But this is of no concern to the

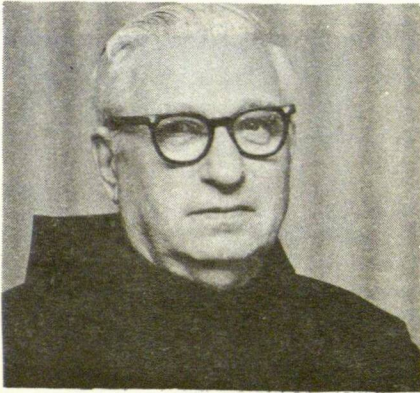
generals of a militarized state and gives the occupation government a certain satisfaction because young men removed from their nation are more easily bent in a direction favorable to the occupant.

By government directive, students forcibly drafted into the armed forces must be given public send-offs. Of course, under current conditions, the administrators of Lithuania's schools, especially in higher education, organize such send-offs grudgingly, even though they are reliable government supports. So, such send-offs often seem as mournful as funerals or the draft under the Czar.

Identical in appearance are the farewell ceremonies given construction students when they leave for Communist Youth "intensive construction sites". Varied congratulatory messages, reports, "patriotic" speeches, and Vilnius Radio programs dedicated to students leaving for Russia fail to rouse in the students the patriotism the government wants.

Isn't this how "volunteers" were forcibly shipped out in 1941 and 35,000 Lithuanians were settled on uninhabited Arctic Ocean islands and found their graves there? Thus, neither solemn sendoffs of young men to compulsory service in the army of occupation, nor "patriotic" greetings to students leaving to work in Russia will dupe our young people, regardless of government organ efforts. These are but means of pressuring our young people.

This is a chapter from the newly published 1982 Report: VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOVIET OCCUPIED LITHUANIA, published by the Lithuanian American Community of the USA, Inc., edited by Rev. Casimir Pugevičius, Gintė Damušis, and Marian Skabeikis. The book has been sent to congressmen, diplomats and key individuals throughout the USA, Canada, England and Australia. For a copy, write to Aušra Zerr at 708 Custis Rd. Glenside, Pa. 19038 or phone 215-886-5849.



Rev. Viktoras Gidžiūnas, O.F.M.

A True Follower

"Aš savo dalį atlikau"

Finally the heart that beat so many years for the love of Lithuania gave out. Rev. Viktoras Gidžiūnas, O.F.M., a Lithuanian Franciscan friar, historian and editor passed away on January 30, 1984, in Kearny, N.J.

Born September 5, 1912 in the Dzūkija region of Lithuania, Father Viktoras entered the Franciscan Order in 1934 and in 1940 was ordained a priest. He received his doctorate in Italy. The thesis was: The Franciscans in Lithuania.

Father Viktoras held many titles: provincial, superior, preacher, missionary and historian. But foremost he was a true follower of St. Francis — his most humble son. We seldom saw him sitting in places of honor. Only when specifically asked would he reluctantly accept. No task was too menial for him. He gave of himself to all.

We will miss him. BRIDGES will miss him. He wrote us a beautiful article on the Dzūkija Christmas and had promised one on St. Casimir. His beloved "child", the magazine *Šv. Pranciškaus Varpelis* ("The Little Bell of St. Francis"), will miss him. He edited it for 22 years. The Lithuanian publications *Aidai*, *Darbininkas*, *Draugas*, *Karys* and many others have lost a most prolific contributor.

But perhaps the greatest loss will be the History of the Lithuanian Franciscans which he left unfinished.

We, his co-workers, will miss this sincere and sensitive man.

Dalia Bulvičius

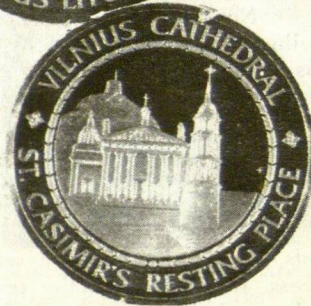
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SOCCER

Soccer is hot in Lithuania, especially versus Russian teams. One of the Žalgiris soccer teams in Lithuania who won the silver medal, lost the finals in the last few seconds of the game by two points. The players left the hall with lowered heads, feeling as if they had disappointed Lithuania, not at all pleased with the handsome silver medal.

The other Žalgiris team also lost in the finals by a difference of 1 : 0. They did not dream about a medal because they finished the season in the 5th place. Almost 15,000 spectators gave them a rousing ovation. All of Vilnius congratulated them; all Lithuania was joyful. After the game, there was a party attended by many titled guests. They praised Žalgiris' season, congratulated the players, their fighting spirit, discipline, technique and enthusiasm.

How could they do anything else but rejoice? Lithuania has never had such a successful soccer season. Last summer at the meet, the youth group team (younger than 20 years) won first prize and the gold medal. Also, the Panevėžys Saturn children's team won the tournament against all the Soviet Union teams and received the title of champion. And, finally, it took 200 years for the Vilnius Žalgiris team to get into the highest Soviet Union league. Žalgiris with its very first game, proved to be a sensation and began to reap victory after victory, until it finally won the finals and achieved first place. At the second tournament, only because of their youthful lack of experience, they won some games and lost others, and Žalgiris was in the still very respectable 5th position, out of 18 teams. They won 15, tied 9 and lost 10 games.

An impressive number of 12 young Lithuanian soccer players were invited to join the Soviet Union children's, teenagers' and olympic teams, and the Žalgiris team had an opportunity of a whole month to compete in Vietnam where they showed off their magnificent style.

At an art exhibition in Lithuania, one exhibit was a huge success — a painting of a loaf of bread and two sausages. Everyone wanted to know the artist's name and address.

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**HERRING WITH MUSHROOMS
SILKĖS ALYVOJE SU GRYBAIS**

2 herrings
2 onions
10 dried mushrooms
4 tablespoons oil
Dash pepper

Soak, clean, skin and bone herrings, cut into pieces and place in a dish.

Cook mushrooms in salted water, cut into julienne strips. Saute sliced onion and mushroom strips in oil. When cool, pour over herring.

**HERRING WITH OIL AND ONIONS
SILKĖS ALYVOJE SU SVOGŪNAIS**

2 herrings
2 large onions
4 tablespoons oil
Vinegar, sugar

Soak, skin, and bone herrings, cut into pieces and arrange in rows on a serving dish.

Slice onions, saute in oil until golden, add a little sugar, vinegar. Cool and pour over herring pieces.

LETTERS

Keep up the tremendous work, for we are *tik saujelė* (just a handful) and the younger generation has to be inspired.

*Liudas Stukas
New Jersey*

It is a pleasure to receive your most interesting and heart-warming magazine. It keeps my Lithuanian heritage proudly in mind. Many of your stories are echoes of my parents' tales of their Lithuanian memories. Thank you so

much for keeping those memories alive.

*Eleanor T. Clemons
Reno, Nevada*

I love BRIDGES. I read it from cover to cover. I derive such pleasure from reading about my mother's and father's homeland.

*Ellinora Bernatonis Vinson
McMinnville, TN*

Your skill and eloquence are written all over BRIDGES.

*Milda and Anthony Vaivada
McLean, VA*

MAR

LITHUANIAN HISTORY

- 1 1285 — Grand Duke of Lithuania Traidenis dies.
- 3 1311 — Grand Duke of Lithuania Vitenis captures Varnija from the Germans.
- 4 1484 — St. Casimir dies at Gardinas, Lithuania.
- 4 1863 — Serfdom is abolished in Lithuania.
- 7 1906 — The Lithuanian language is used in the girls' high school in Vilnius for the first time.
- 8 1861 — One of the founders of *Aušra* Dr. Jonas Šliupas dies.
- 14 1386 — Lithuania accepts baptism.
- 16 1360 — The Teutonic Knights defeat the Žemaičiai
- 20 1514 — The Russians capture Smolensk from the Lithuanians.
- 21 1906 — The Lithuanian language first used at the Seminary in Vilnius
- 22 1565 — The Lithuanians capture the fortress of Krasnaja.
- 27 1363 — The Grand Duke of Lithuania Kęstutis is captured by the Teutonic Knights.

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