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# Bridges

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YEAR OF LIVING FAITH



Playing the role  
of Mindaugas in the State  
Theater in Vilnius

Playing with Morta  
in the State Theater  
in Riga, Latvia

From "Fire and Night", see page 2

## KING MINDAUGAS IN MODERN DRAMA

A pagan, he accepted baptism in 1251,  
then was crowned King of Lithuania





# Mindaugas and the Worlds He Tried to Unite

*FIRE AND NIGHT, Five Baltic Plays edited by Alfreds Straumanis, Waveland Press, Inc., 386 pp. Available at Bridges \$20.*

For Christmas, we are giving several friends copies of *Fire and Night*. It can be a rewarding experience for a small group of interested people to read a selected book and then meet for a round table discussion. For our initial meeting, we will read the two dramas about King Mindaugas, one of which is by a Lithuanian playwright, the other by a Latvian. A discussion party will follow. All we will need is to select a leader who will conduct the discussion, draw out the more reticent members of the group, and withhold his own opinions until the general summary in the end.

The story of Mindaugas has special interest for us today. The motivating force in the life of Mindaugas, a pagan, was the unification of Lithuania into a strong powerful state. In 1251 he accepted baptism, then was crowned by Rome as King of Lithuania. That was 735 years ago. Our discussion group will try to determine from the two texts why the year 1987 has been designated as the 600th Anniversary of the Christianization of Lithuania. What happened to Mindaugas?

The dissimilar, contrasting backgrounds of the playwrights present another challenge to thought. Justinas Marcinkevičius, one of the foremost poets in Lithuania today, was awarded the Soviet State Literary Prize in 1969 for his tragedy about Mindaugas. On the other hand, the Latvian dramatist Martins Ziverts was forced to flee from his homeland in 1940 when the advancing Soviet armies occupied his native Latvia. The different way each dramatist handles Lithuania's Mindaugas is a revealing study in itself.

Both playwrights are excellent craftsmen of the theater. Ziverts, in presenting Mindaugas, is dramatically more direct and less prone to digressions, with the result that his drama is technically the more powerful.

Both writers bring compassion and insight into their characterization of Mindaugas, a man consumed by his need for power. The dramatists diverge, however, when they create the character of Morta, Mindaugas' illicit love. Mindaugas appropriated another man's wife. Whether she was worth appropriating is a moot question.

Marcinkevičius' Morta is a simple love-hungry Ophelia

of a woman (Shakespeare's Ophelia was none too bright) who complains that Mindaugas is more interested in caressing his horse than in caressing her. She succumbs to Catholicism and ultimately to insanity. It is not clear whether the insanity is the chemical disaster set off by psychological problems or her acquired Christian faith. But it gives the playwright a chance to entertain his audience and at the same time satisfy the watchful Kremlin authorities with a scene in which a monk makes himself ludicrous like Shakespeare's authoritarian, bumbling, know-it-all Polonius.

On the other hand, Martins Ziverts' Morta is a sharp cool Portia of a woman who rejects what she does not like about Mindaugas. She defies him fearlessly. In turn, he relishes her strength, made confident by her honesty in the face of the fawning followers whom he can not trust. In the end, she joins him and she dies a glorious pagan death, stalking headlong into the flames of his funeral pyre. Had Mindaugas had such a woman as a friend, it might have changed history.

These two complex plays are presented on several levels of human experience. Each is introduced by an essayist who helps the reader understand the tragedy in depth. Introducing Latvian Ziverts' drama, Juris Silenieks points out:

"Mindaugas' tragedy is replayed in many variants today, and the dark vision that shades the outcome of the past events is projected on the contemporary scene. When Mindaugas' brutal might ceases to exert itself, we see order reverting to chaos. His realm becomes a disorderly underworld where innumerable forces constantly interfere with each other, engaging in fortuitous destruction of past patterns. A parable can be seen today in many modern settings where the processes of decolonization or revolution fail to resolve the conflict between justice and freedom..."

Rimvydas Šilbajoris introduces Marcinkevičius' drama with this observation: "Lithuania is a small nation with a rather broad and deep historical consciousness that comes from its past achievements as a powerful Grand Duchy built upon the foundation begun by Mindaugas. For this reason, it does benefit us now, as we stand outside of history, somewhere between oppression at home and exile abroad, to summon up the memory of this troubled king who also unites, in his own way and even now, both our sufferings and aspirations."

Whether you read the plays on your own or with a group, *Bridges* would appreciate hearing about your reaction.

**Demie Jonaitis**

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# Living in Two Different Worlds Today

## Wormwood, U.S.S.R.

*A startling discovery, following the Chernobyl disaster, has sent Soviets running to the Bible.*

Experts first claimed that the immediate effects of the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl would be minor compared to the long-term effects. Now it appears that those effects are not only physical, but spiritual as well.

According to the *London Daily Telegraph*, a delayed-reaction wave of anxiety is spreading through the Soviet Union, forcing the Communist party to ask for help in combating rumors that the accident portends the Biblical Apocalypse. And who are they asking for this help? Believe it or not, the Russian Orthodox Church!

It seems that the Ukrainian word "chernobyl" means "wormwood", a bitter herb common to the area and traditionally used in rural Russia and Ukraine as a tonic. What Ukrainians and Russians alike have discovered, is that "chernobyl" (wormwood) plays a major role in Revelations, chapter 8, verses 10 and 11, which read:

"And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the waters. And the name of the star is called wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter."

As a result, atheists and believers alike are pouring over both Ukrainian dictionaries and the Bible in order to confirm the uncanny connection between the disaster in the town of Wormwood (Chernobyl) and the Apocalypse.

The Archbishop of Kiev, acting under orders for Soviet authorities, has tried to play down this coincidence, stating, "Man cannot know when the Apocalypse is due. We are sorry that many Christians have fallen prey to lies aimed at shaking trust in the policies of the Soviet Union."

The Archbishop's statement in itself suggests the seriousness of rumors spreading through the Soviet Union - rumors strengthened by reports that field mice in Chernobyl are dying by the thousands. Even the *New York Times* Moscow correspondent has remarked on the uncanny speed with which this discovery has "spread across the Soviet land, contributing to the swelling body of lore that has shaped the public consciousness of the disaster . . ."

Chicago Latvian Newsletter

## The Problem of Parents and Grandparents

I live in America. I have many American friends. I am involved in American life. I am an American... and a Lithuanian. I regard myself as a person "from Lithuania." I have deep respect for that country. But my life is full of American concerns.

My grandparents and parents are different. They have been involved only with Lithuanians. True - they've lived in America, but their neighbors have been generally Lithuanians. They did not have to concern themselves about whom to socialize with. Their friends were all Lithuanians. My mother tells me that in the school she attended to perfect her English, there were only two students who were not Lithuanians. She did not have to worry what to do with weekends - to attend a Lithuanian or an American affair. Everything was clear. Today our young people have decisions to make: the pluses and the minuses of attending one affair or the other. They must decide whether to go off with Lithuanians or Americans.

I am so proud of my Lithuanian heritage. My friends and acquaintances want to know about that heritage. My heart pounds as I wish to tell them about the Soviet occupation of Lithuania, and the glorious past history of Lithuania....Lithuanians are very interesting people.

Another plus for us: we Lithuanians meet and make many friends. In summer we attend camps and congresses. We can take a plane to other countries and visit with Lithuanians. They live, scattered over the globe. They are involved, they are interested in the future. We converse.

At the same time it is not easy to be a Lithuanian in a foreign country. It is a tremendous responsibility. Yet one is overloaded with studies and obligations. My grandmother has often complained, pointing out that we have forgotten our homeland - that being a Lithuanian no longer has any meaning for us.

A very serious problem for our young people is the attitude of our parents. Parents seem to think it is very easy for us to live in two different worlds. In school we speak English all day long; we return home to the



Andryté Giedraitytė

language of Lithuania. Our friends are important to us but too often they are American. Our parents look at them askance. Once I invited a few friends into my home. My grandmother, studying their mode of dress, said to me sarcastically: "I didn't know that tonight you young people are having a masquerade ball. I must go out shopping and buy you all some candies."

And I had thought that my friends looked quite normal. And so - to us, friends look normal. But to our grandparents and parents, they do not look like human beings. The way we dress and the way we think is so different from what our parents expect from us and our friends.

Even worse - our parents worry about whom we will marry. Oh, it must be a Lithuanian! We hear that again and again. Not, "What kind of person is he? Is he good, is he kind...?" The prime question is: Is he Lithuanian?

It is hard to be a Lithuanian and live in America. We often ask which is more important - a marriageable young man who is Lithuanian? Or a young man who grows up in two worlds, seeking ways to keep ties with both Lithuanians and Americans, and, in doing this, feels fortunate...

Andryté Giedraitytė

(Courtesy of *Laiškai Lietuviams*)





by Albert Cizauskas

## The Politics of Religion

PART FOUR

### The Blood of Martyrs and Patriots



St. Ann's Church in Vilnius by Arunas Tarabilda

Christianity has been both a spiritual boon and a political trial for Lithuania during much of its history. Neither the "fire and sword" of the Germans nor the chauvinism of the Poles was able to uproot the Lithuanians' deep sense of nationalism. Associated with these antagonistic forces was a foreign and politicized Christianity which hindered a genuine spiritual development. It was not until the 19th century that the rebirth of a distinctly Lithuanian national spirit and the appearance of a Christianity with Lithuanian roots nurtured each other as they opposed the harsh oppression of the Czars.

In the third installment of this series, we saw how the leaders of the Lithuanian renaissance during the 19th century—Bishops Valančius and Baranauskas, and the nationalist, Jonas Basanavičius, among others—called upon the Lithuanian people to spurn Russification. And they did.

Today, however, the Lithuanian communist party has become the trustee of the jailer, doing his dirty work. No longer are all Lithuanians united against the common enemy; a small minority is attempting to eradicate both Christianity and a Lithuanian national identity separate from that of the Soviets. Like the Czars, the Soviets appreciate that Latin Christianity and Lithuanian nationalism are

their enemies. The Soviets have therefore waged, for more than forty years, a relentless campaign of attrition against both. The Lithuanian communists have been their agents, puppets manipulated on the Soviet's political strings.

#### Terror and the Masses

The terror began in June, 1940, when the Soviet army marched into Lithuania. Approximately 34,000 inhabitants were packed off in cattle-cars to Siberia and other penal destinations in the Soviet Union. The enormity of this tragedy becomes comprehensible when we realize its equivalent would mean the shipment of two and one half million Americans to the Arctic. With the return of the Soviets in 1944, the atrocity of genocide was resumed, but on a scale greatly increased in numbers and savagery. Mass deportations continued into 1953. Close to 200,000 deaths are attributable to Soviet actions during the first two years alone. To this can be added about 160,000 Lithuanians (the majority of them Jews) who died at the hands of the Nazis. Thus, more than a tenth of the Lithuanian population was decimated in that period by two of the most vicious dictatorships in history. This number would be equivalent to roughly 25 million Americans.



Stalin's heavy hand also fell on religion. History repeated itself as many of the repressive measures adopted by Soviet authorities resembled those imposed by the Czar's agents during the previous century. Parish lands were confiscated, churches were deprived of financial support, the religious press was banned, religious instruction was forbidden, seminaries were closed and the clergy and laity harassed.

But the Soviets went much further than their Czarist predecessors. The Marxist regime sought to destroy the leaders and the visible marks of the Lithuanian Church. Two Bishops and one Archbishop were exiled to Siberia, one Archbishop perished in prison and one Bishop was executed outright, leaving but one Bishop in a country of over two million Catholics. Father Pugevičius, translator of the underground *Chronicles of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, reported that, at the same time, all convents and monasteries were closed and their communities dispersed.

After Stalin's death in 1953, Krushev seemingly relaxed his predecessor's brutality but in fact retained its substance. In an act of supreme irony, the exiled Lithuanian Bishops were freed but were forbidden to exercise their ecclesiastical functions, prisoners in all but name.

### Through a Reporter's Eyes

American reporters are noted for their ability to probe beneath the surface of appearances. Such a reporter is Andrew Nagorski, *Newsweek's* Moscow correspondent and author of the recently published *Reluctant Farewell*. He visited Lithuania in an attempt to see for himself the reality of life among non-Russian peoples under Soviet domination. His journalistic training and his disdain for official propaganda helped him to produce a compelling eye-witness account.

Nagorski spoke to a variety of Lithuanians, some of whom he met while walking the streets of Vilnius. At one point, he went into the church of St. Theresa in the city's old quarter. There he saw "Worshippers of all ages streaming in for virtually non-stop masses throughout the morning and early afternoon." The masses were alternately in Lithuanian and Polish, since Vilnius has a sizeable Polish-speaking minority. Taking pictures of the crowded church, he heard a woman hissing at him, "Get out!" She had mistaken him for a Soviet agent getting evidence against church-goers. After he had identified himself as an American journalist, the woman apologized, saying that the authorities were always trying to intimidate the faithful.

Later, another Lithuanian woman, in "tough, determined words," declared that every time an individual is apprehended for religious or patriotic activity, he is quickly replaced. She bitterly deplored, however, the more subtle Soviet tactics to de-nationalize her country. Russian, for example, is now taught to Lithuanian children from the first grade, instead of the fifth as previously. "To destroy a country," she said, "the most important thing is to destroy the language."

Nagorski's most revealing interview was with an unnamed priest who described the present situation as extremely serious for the Lithuanian church. Because of Soviet policy, religion in Lithuania was "inextricably bound up with nationalism." Even merely going to church was an act of political significance. The Soviets understood this and thus

one of the most harmful things they had done was to cut back sharply on the number of churches in an effort to weaken people's ties to religion. In Vilnius, for example, only ten churches were permitted to serve a population of 500,000 whereas in 1939, thirty-three churches accommodated a population of 200,000.

Nevertheless, the priest maintained that the "Faith remains alive in Lithuania." A hopeful sign for the future was "the movement back to religion among the youth." He also admitted that ways had been found to circumvent government restrictions. Even some communist party members secretly had church weddings, baptized their children and sent them to first communion.

The priest concluded the interview on a somber note, however. Physical pressure had intensified, especially on priests. He himself was willing to take a chance on being frank with a stranger because he believed the outside world should know what is happening in Lithuania. "If we make some noise when they try to repress us, then they will think twice before trying again."

### Official Confirmation

The 1986 annual report of the State Department to the Congress on the violation of human rights summarizes, in frightening detail, the Soviet's campaign against religion. Perhaps its most important point is that the Soviet Union is continuing its stepped-up assault on religion, whose prime target appears to be priests and religious dissidents. For instance, brutal measures against the influential Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights has forced the group underground. Two priests on the Committee had been imprisoned in 1983; a third was sentenced in early 1985, and then subjected to a not-uncommon variant of Soviet justice, designed to produce maximum psychiatric damage: released from prison without explanation, he was re-arrested a week later, again without explanation. Also in 1985, a fourth priest on the Committee was "violently attacked by unknown assailants."

A fifth member of the Committee, Father Zdebskis, was killed in a suspicious car accident in February of this year. Although concrete evidence is lacking, it is widely believed that Soviet agents were involved, especially since some time earlier he had been injured in another suspicious car accident while under KGB surveillance. Like the Apostle Paul, Father Zdebskis had been, for over twenty years, subjected to numerous beatings, imprisonment and other forms of cruel harassment.

### Prisoners of Conscience

A recent list of Lithuanian prisoners of conscience, drawn up by the Lithuanian Information Center in Brooklyn, New York, reveals that 42 Lithuanians are currently imprisoned, some for as long as 40 years. Many have been re-arrested several times and some even consigned to psychiatric hospitals. One of the dissidents is an American citizen, Prof. Vytautas Skuodis, suffering from heart disease. Another is Viktoras Petkus, a founder of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, set up to monitor the Soviet's compliance with internationally-accepted standards on human rights. Suffering from cancer, Mr. Petkus was nominated last year by U.S. Congressmen for the Nobel Peace Prize. A third is

*(Continued on page 12)*



# So Close and Yet So Far...

Rev. Timothy Burkauskas, O.S.P.

The road sign reading "Puńsk" in the countryside of Poland does not indicate that a vibrant Lithuanian community lives there. It is a town, however, almost entirely Lithuanian and nestled so close to the border of Lithuania that one can almost feel the breezes from Lithuania tickling one's face there. Puńsk, unlike any other Lithuanian community in the world, deserves our special attention because of its fascinating characteristics, unique geographical location and ethnic strength. The residents of this community have succeeded in preserving their rich culture, language and identity as proud Lithuanians in an environment that has not always made this so easy to accomplish.

As a rule, I try to avoid telling travel stories to others. But my visit to Puńsk in the summer of 1986 invites me to make an exception. I feel a need to share with others the unique features and beauty of this Lithuanian community that I was fortunate enough to visit.

First, let me tell you that Puńsk (known to Lithuanians as Punkskas) is not easy to reach by public transportation. Undeterred by the frustrating schedules of trains and buses, I was determined to reach this Lithuanian community where I had heard the spirit of Lithuania is lived with vigor and pride on Polish soil. Because of my time limitations I knew I would have to find an alternative to trains and buses.

Unlike the supervision of tourists in Lithuania, visitors in Poland enjoy the luxury of unrestricted travel. A friend of mine, therefore, requested the help of another friend who drives a taxi in Poland to bring us to Puńsk. He agreed to drive us there. I was delighted with the prospect of avoiding the hassle of public transportation. This arrangement had an additional advantage. Since "martial law" has been declared in Poland, gasoline is carefully rationed through the use of coupons. Thus, even those individuals fortunate enough to own their own car find difficulty in traveling very far with their meager monthly allotment of gas. Taxi drivers, however, are exempt from this crippling system and our driver was willing to drive us to Puńsk in the northeastern corner of Poland.

The drive from Warsaw to that area known as "Suwalki" was very pleasant. The brightness of the afternoon summer sun seemed to be caressing the Polish countryside as we passed picturesque fields, quaint towns, meadows and forests. The beauty of the landscape was strikingly similar to that of Lithuania. As I enjoyed the scenery from the car window, I reminisced about the charm and simplicity of bygone days, conspicuously absent from life in the U. S. A., but still evident and enjoyed in this corner of the world. Horse-drawn carts, children delighting their youthful energy at the lakes and meadows, fields being harvested, church steeples majestically towering over the roofs of small villages — all this and more made the three hour drive a pleasant one.

Our driver, like the other Polish people I spoke to about

Puńsk, was unaware that such a Lithuanian community exists in Poland. I admired our driver, not only for his willingness to get us to Puńsk, but also for his patient skill in finding the roads that would get us there. With the steering wheel in one hand, and a map in the other, he retraced his tracks at least once until we finally came to a road sign reading "Puńsk" to head us in the right direction.

Growing more anxious now by the minute to reach the Lithuanian community I stared intently from the car window searching for some evidence that Lithuanians, rather than Poles, had made this their own area of habitation. I was not disappointed. Just before we reached the little town of "Puńsk", we passed a bus stop along the way. Typical in construction with all the other bus stops in Poland, the ingenuity and pride of Lithuanian craftsmen singled this one out. The exterior stone wall had the Gediminas' Columns (Lith. "Gedimino stulpai") artistically incorporated into the wall for all to see. I smiled knowing that the embrace of the Lithuanian town was now nearing.

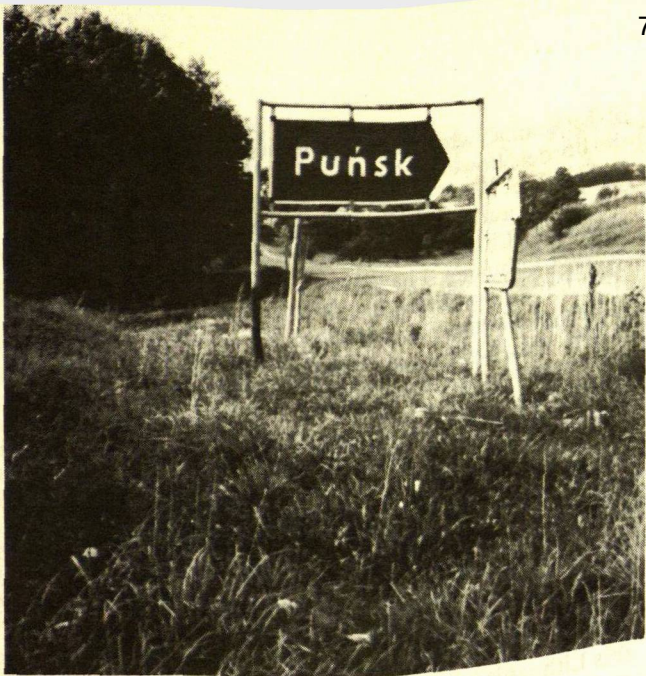
I had heard and read much about Punkskas. It is little more than two miles south of the present Lithuanian-Polish border and has been known to Lithuanians since the 13th century. It was at that time that early settlers, arriving mostly from the town of "Punia" in southern Lithuania (located on the right bank of the Nemunas River and just north of Alytus) began developing a community around the lake area they found there. By the 16th century they had named their new settlement "Punkskas" after the town of their origins. A parish church had already been built there by 1598 and was dedicated to the Mother of God. It is interesting to note that in the charter of the parish's foundation, which is still respected today, it is stated that the pastor of the church must be Lithuanian, or at least speak the Lithuanian language.

Sympathy and admiration stirred in my heart for the residents of this little Lithuanian community as it came into view. Over the centuries the town had been bounced back-and-forth like a ping-pong ball in boundary shifts and disputes. In 1795 it belonged to Prussia; in 1807 it was assigned to the Duchy of Warsaw; in 1815 it became a Russian protectorate; from 1867 Punkskas belonged to the province of "Suwalkija" or "Užnemunė", which included the entire southern region of Lithuania; and by the time of World War I it was under Russian rule.

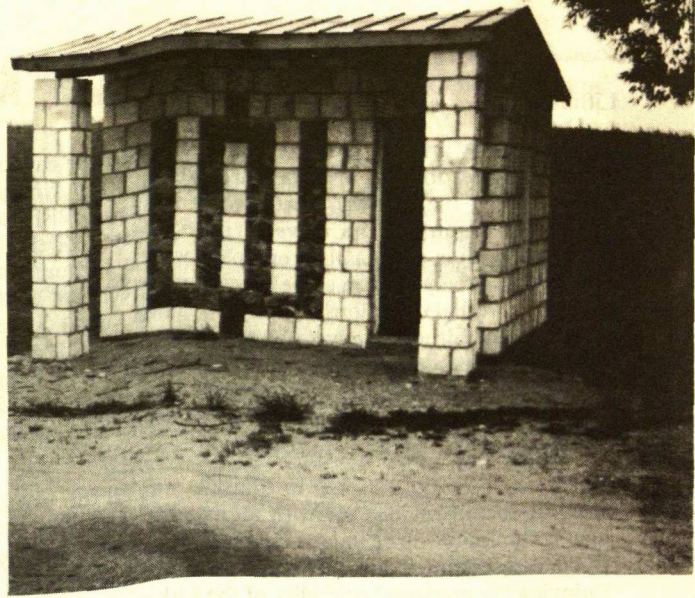
When Lithuania regained its independence, Punkskas was made the township seat of that area. Between 1919-1920, however, the control of the town shifted from Polish to Lithuanian control and back. In 1920 the official border finally situated Punkskas on the Polish side of the border, and after World War II the Soviet Union left it within the borders of the Polish People's Republic. This was done despite the fact that the majority of the inhabitants were

(Continued on page 8)

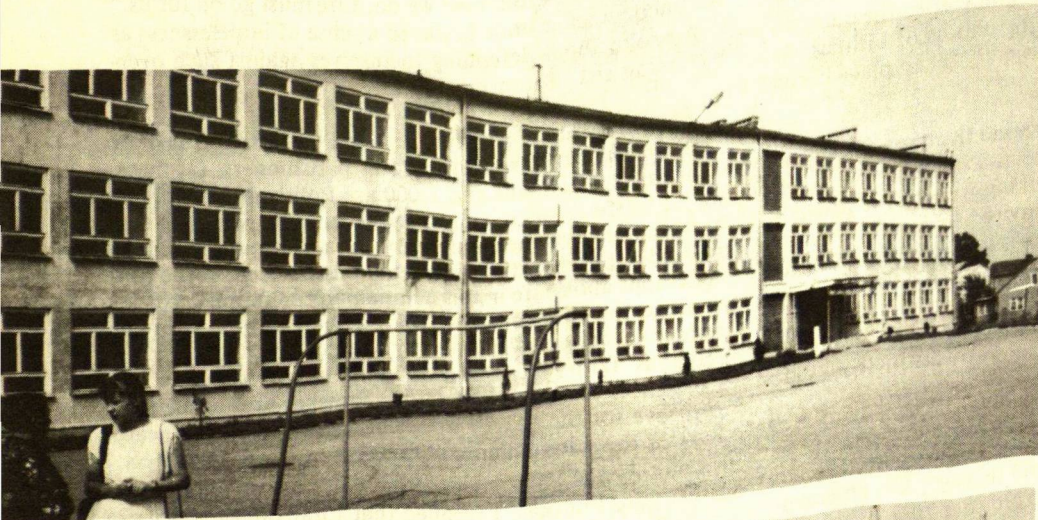




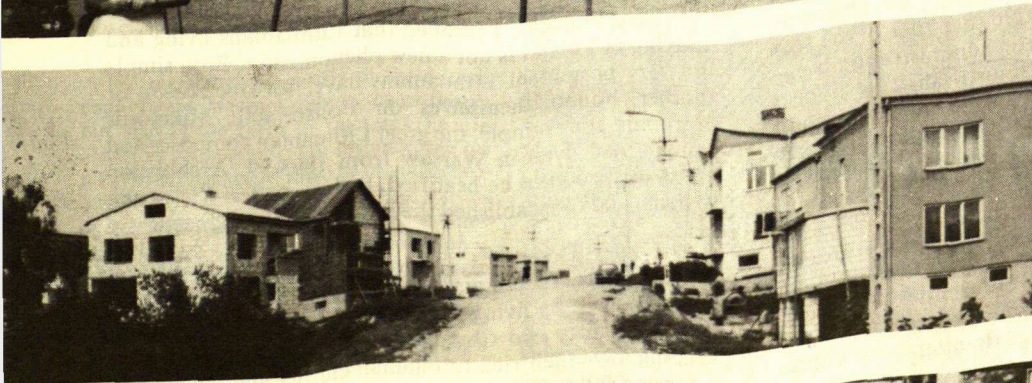
Arrow pointing to a hidden world



A bus shelter in Punskas stands symbolic with the historic patriotic columns of Gediminas which, in Lithuania, are outlawed.



By coincidence (or intention?) the columns of Gediminas seem to be repeated in the windows of the beautiful modern school where subjects are taught in Lithuanian



Life flows on with the construction of new homes in a town where the main restaurant is called "Rūta"



A bulletin board dramatizes the cultural local events of Punsk. Lithuanians



(Continued from page 6)

### Lithuanian and not Polish.

After finally arriving in the town, we stopped the car to ask some directions to a particular address. Two kindly women along the roadway struggled in broken Polish to answer the inquiry of our driver. The expression of their faces changed as soon as I interrupted with a Lithuanian greeting. Suddenly a warm smile of welcome greeted us, and the simple verbal directions no longer seemed an adequate expression of Lithuanian hospitality to their guests. Knowing that now it was someone from America of Lithuanian descent seeking the directions, and not just a Polish taxi driver, one of the women hopped in the car to personally deliver us to the address we sought.

Although the time I spent in Punkskas was all too brief, my visit there provided me with an insight into a Lithuanian community whose unique character is distinguished by fascinating circumstances, situations and living conditions. Enjoying the gracious hospitality of the Lithuanians in their town, I tried to absorb as much information as I could from the people I met and from what I could observe. The town was definitely Lithuanian in spirit. I heard Lithuanian greetings being exchanged along the street as we walked, saw the town's restaurant named "Rūta" and viewed the outdoor community bulletin board displaying photos of Lithuanian events and celebrations that had recently taken place in the town.

A wealth of information came to me from the three particular individuals I visited while in Punkskas - a retired schoolteacher, who gave me a walking tour of the town; a teacher in the local school, who invited us into her apartment for a delightful chat over coffee and cake; and the pastor of the parish, Father Ignas Dzermeika. Lithuanian weavings and artwork decorated the dwellings of all I visited. I could see that none had compromised, nor attempted to hide their heritage, but displayed it with distinctive pride in this unique setting.

I was most impressed with the large secondary school in Punkskas which uses Lithuanian as the language of instruction. The school, which was opened in 1957, has an enrolment of about 500 students. I was told that 70% of the student body is Lithuanian and that the administration is entrusted to the Lithuanians. The Polish language is also used to accommodate the 30% of Polish students living in Punkskas and attending the school. The school appears spacious and wellkept. A large addition of a sports area and gym was recently completed at the school.

The majority of graduating students, wishing to further their education after high school, must leave the community and filter into the colleges and universities in Poland. Some, however, wishing to specialize in academic pursuits of Lithuanian subjects and language do attend the Vilnius University in Lithuania.

Having seen the tremendous flow of tourists from abroad who daily pour into the hotel lobbies in Vilnius, I was amazed to speak to Lithuanians in Punkskas, living at the doorstep

of Lithuania, who had never been to Lithuania. Crossing the border, however, is not easy for those now living on the Polish side. Strict regulations for the issuance of a visa by the Soviet authorities require that an official invitation be sent from Lithuania by a relative before they are allowed to enter Lithuania. I have heard the tearful accounts of many describing how difficult it is for individuals in Poland to get into Lithuania. Relatives, anxious to visit, perhaps for a last time their aged and infirmed family members in Lithuania, are unable to obtain the required papers and are refused permission to cross the border. For these people, in their heartache, Lithuania is so very close, and yet so very far!

I was interested to learn about the effects the Chernobyl catastrophe had on Punkskas. The people living in Poland were better informed about the accident than individuals in Lithuania and were advised how to protect themselves against the radiation. Punkskas was in the line of the fallout pattern. Aware of their plight, residents of this Lithuanian community seemed to shrug their shoulders and, with a tone of trust in God say, "What can we do. We must live our lives. For a while we ate no fruit or vegetables from our gardens. But now we do. Life must go on for us." An unconvincing smile betrayed a sense of hopelessness as they spoke about defending themselves against such overwhelming circumstances of life.

The pastor of the parish church in Punkskas informed me that 4,000 people are registered as parishioners. Of these, 3,000 are Lithuanians and 1,000 are Polish. No one spoke to me of feelings of animosity existing between the two groups in this unique community. As a matter of fact, there seemed to be an attitude of contentment evident in the conversations about life in this Lithuanian community. An advantage for Lithuanians living on the Polish side of the border is being able to enjoy greater freedom of their religious faith and tradition without governmental interference. The town officials in Punkskas are Lithuanian; and love for the nearby homeland seems to be the heartbeat of this Lithuanian community.

Visiting Punkskas, I recalled that Lithuanians living and studying in Poland is not a new phenomenon. Both simple and very prominent Lithuanians have, for one reason or another, found themselves on Polish soil. Mikalojus Čiurlionis, for example, the great Lithuanian composer and painter, had lived in Warsaw from 1893-99. Archbishop Matulaitis, soon to be beatified, had studied in Kielce and Warsaw and re-established the Polish Marian monastery in 1915.

The talents, virtues and spirit of these two great Lithuanians seem to be living in this Lithuanian community today. Tolerance and Christian faith unite the residents in keeping alive their rich Lithuanian culture and language in a foreign land. This is an admirable trait of Lithuanians wherever they have settled - even where gentle breezes from Lithuania can be felt and remind them of how close they still are to the homeland.

*(A future article will describe the parish church in Punkskas)*



# LITHUANIAN FOLK MEDICINE

Albinas Azukas

Folk medicine was widely practised in rural Lithuania as late as the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, because that was the only medical help within easy reach of the people. The licensed physician might be far away, but some knowledge of folk medicine was acquired by everyone, child and adult alike, in the simple process of living. And in complicated cases, when one's own knowledge was too limited, there was in every village to be called upon for help either a *žolininkė* or *žolininkas*, i.e., a female or male herbalist, or both. The female herbalist was most often the village midwife. Modern medical investigations of Lithuanian folk medicine reveal that these herbalists had in their never-published pharmacopoeias upwards of two hundred items of mineral, three hundred of animal and two thousand of plant origin for use in helping the ill and injured.

Tea-with-honey brewed from raspberry twigs or linden-tree blossoms was the first and most effective medicine for grippe, colds and pneumonia. Epilepsy was treated with poppyseed milk. As a soporific or tranquilizer there was this same poppyseed milk or tea brewed from poppy seedpods or from dill or fennel. Camomile was used for a wide variety of ailments: in a tea for diarrhea, jaundice, colds, kidney and bladder infections; in an infusion for washing festering eyes and mangy heads. Onions and garlic were used to heal bleeding gums and to expel worms. Other items of plant origin in frequent use were peppermint, wormwood and caraway; cherry, apple and red peony blossoms; oak and birdcherry bark; the berries, bark and blossoms of the mountain ash; birch leaves, spruce twigs, turnip seed, white clover, primrose and silverwood.

The medicinal properties of these items could be ingested not only in tea or tisane, but also in the form of tinctures, i.e., in alcoholic concoctions. For instance, the rue plant when steeped in whiskey or vodka produces a tincture for use in relieving spasms or as a stimulant and tonic. But the all-time most popular Lithuanian herbal creation is that called *Trejos Devynerios*, or "Three Nines." Since three nines are twenty-seven, the product can be presumed to contain some twenty-seven different herbs. In passing, it

might be noted that the numbers seven and nine are the lucky numbers in Lithuanian lore, which may account for the preparation's efficacy and popularity.

Indicative of how contemporary this ancient mixture remains is the fact it is obtainable from Baltic Associates in Boston. Its catalog lists *Trejos Devynerios* as item LT 550 F in their "Lithuanian Survival Kit." It is described as follows: "Just in case you may have eaten or embibed too much, we've the best of cures for you — *Trejos Devynerios*. These wonderfully bitter herbs will calm your stomach and restore your appetite the morning after . . . just add the contents of one bottle to a quart of vodka, spoon

in some honey and lemon juice, and let stand for 2 or 3 days . . . then take a glassful and you'll be a new man, or woman, again. The time-proven Lithuanian cure for queasy insides, we swear!"

In Lithuania, *Trejos Devynerios* is stocked in the Vilnius "Dolerinė", the Dollar-Store, in which only dollars or other hard-currency are accepted as legal tender. In that store, on the second floor, amidst the incongruity labeled "Souvenirs", you will find *Trejos Devynerios* resting on a shelf along with native mead, imported scotch, articles of amber and linen, barbecue and steak seasonings and Danish butter cookies!

(To be continued)

Kapočius photo



Students at the Kaunas Institute of Medicine gather medicinal herbs for experimental purposes



# Ablinga COLLECTIVE GRIEF

“Beautiful was our village of Ablinga; quiet and industrious were its people. We tilled the land, raised horses, sang songs and weeded rue gardens. And then, on the twenty-third of June, 1941, our village was raided by raptorial fascist hords, and all men and women, boys and girls, little children and grey-haired people were massacred, our lovely houses burnt to ashes. People, keep vigilant guard!” — says the inscription hewn out on a sculpture of the Ablinga memorial ensemble. The monument has been erected on the slope of Žvaginiai castle

hill, Klaipėda District. It is as unique in character as is the story of its appearance.

The memorial complex was created by twenty-nine folk sculptors from ten Lithuanian cities and towns who volunteered to work without pay. The ensemble consists of thirty sculptures five to eight metres high. Each of them is dedicated to a particular person or a whole family, so the names of all those who perished are engraved there. Each of the authors tried to find his own solution; therefore the sculptures represent a great variety of moods, plasticity and composition. The ensemble was completed during an unheard of short period of time. The sculptors gathered at the Ablinga camp on the 3rd of July, 1972, and on the 29th of July, the same year, the memorial's opening ceremony took place. This fact can be accounted for by the great enthusiasm of the sculptors, their selfless, even fanatic, industry and the traditional method of work used by our folk masters. The authors of Ablinga sculptures worked, like their predecessors in the past, without any preliminary sketches. The primary idea of the sculpture was being realised in the very process of creation, the sculptor's artistic intuition and the material playing not an unimportant part in it. Similarly, by improvising, the whole composition of the ensemble took shape: not a single sculpture or group had had its predestined place. When completed, the sculptures were combined according to their mood and plastic peculiarities, with an eye to the surrounding nature.

The tragedy of Ablinga marks the second day of World War II when the Ablinga village was burnt down to its very foundations and its forty-two inhabitants shot to death. By a lucky chance a few people survived. However, the name of Ablinga had not been widely known until the summer of 1972, when, on the initiative of Žemaitija (Samogitia) Department, Lithuanian Folk Art Society, as well as the folk sculptors themselves, there came into a most impressive ensemble of wooden sculptures.

The Ablinga sculptures represent a wide scale of moods and experiences — from the horror of death to silent reproof, from deep sorrow to unshakable conviction, wrathful condemnation. Yet they are linked by their common feature — sincerity and immediacy of expression. The monuments are devoid of any unnatural pathos, pomposity — they tell us stories of ordinary people, with their everyday life, experiences and earthly feelings. It is namely this particular spirit that represents the link with the deep-rooted tradition of Lithuanian folk art.



A Lithuanian father shielding his wife and child

The tears of a father... like the tears of Lithuania

By A. Kunčius and A. Patašius





(From page 5)

Balys Gajauskas, who had served 25 years in prison for resisting the Soviet occupation of his country. Shortly after his release, he was resented for fifteen years, allegedly for translating the "Gulag Archipelago" and giving aid to other prisoners of conscience.

### Once More, the "Word" Goes Out

As in the old days under the Czars, when clandestine journals like *Aušra* proclaimed the gospel of political freedom, a group of publications today are defying the Soviet ban on the press in order to keep alive the faith and Lithuanian nationalism. These publications are also smuggled out to enable the Free World to recognize the true face of communism.

The State Department lists five such journals appearing regularly, among which are the *Chronicle* and a reincarnated *Aušra*. The most renowned of all, the *Chronicle* has been providing, for the past 14 years, a historical record of the Soviet persecution of the Lithuanian Church. As one of Nagorski's contacts told him, the underground publications continue to circulate widely, despite "sustained efforts by the authorities to stamp them out."

During the past year, the Soviets have vented their ire against a lay worker on the *Chronicle* who had only recently completed a prison sentence. They quickly re-sentenced the 79-year-old man, Vladas Lapienis, to four more years in prison camp and two years of "exile" for writing his "memoirs." Such is the childish, yet terrible, nature of Soviet "justice."

### U.S. Bishops Speak Out

In a welcome gesture of support last May 7, the head of the U.S. Bishops' Conference publicly criticized the Soviet Union's hampering of preparations for "celebrating Christianity's 600th anniversary in Lithuania." Citing a recent statement of the Lithuanian Bishops, U.S. Bishop James W. Malone quoted them as speaking of a war being waged by the Soviet Union against religion in occupied Lithuania.

He declared, "It is a fact that preparations of the Catholic Church for this important anniversary are being frustrated by the official anti-religious policy of the Soviet Union." Bishop Malone also reminded his audience that the Soviet government had previously "interfered with the celebration of the 500th anniversary of St. Casimir, the patron saint of Lithuania."

### "Lietuva, Tėvyne Mūsų" — "Lithuania, Our Fatherland"

The history of Lithuania is the history of its relationship to Christianity. We have travelled a long journey, in this series, starting with the glory days of a pagan medieval empire, tolerant of other faiths while resisting the hostile encroachments of Roman and Orthodox Christianity. We then witnessed the slow process of denationalization with the acceptance of a foreign faith, until the bedrock of peasant nationalism united with a native Christianity, giving birth to a new Lithuania, firm in its allegiance to Rome and to the memory of its past. Today, another tyranny, more terrible than any before, is attempting to uproot both religion and the memory of that past.

Lithuanian Christianity, despite the adversities of its political environment, bore fruit in two individuals of publicly-acknowledged virtue, St. Casimir in the Polish era, and Archbishop Jurgis Matulaitis in the era of the Lithuanian renaissance. The beatification of the Archbishop is expected next year as an extraordinary mark of honor to be bestowed by the universal church upon Lithuania during the worldwide commemoration of 600 years of Christianity in that land.

On June 14, 1987, 600 years of Christianity in Lithuania will be celebrated at a Papal Mass in Rome. There, Lithuanians from the Free World and, we hope, from the homeland itself, will be joined in spirit by St. Casimir, Archbishop Jurgis Matulaitis, and all the innumerable Lithuanian martyrs and patriots, as their voices echo, through Michelangelo's great basilica, the words, "Lietuva, Tėvyne Mūsų, Tu Didvyrių Žeme."

## down memory lane IN BROOKLYN

by Helen Kulber

After World War I, many people from Lithuania visited our home in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. It was fascinating to hear politics, personalities and "old times" discussed at our dinner table with such notables as the writer Žemaite, Emilija Vileišiė (my mother worked on Dr. Vileišis' newspaper, *Vilniaus Žinios*), Martynas Jankus, Petras Rimša — and so many others. Stasys Pilka was our guest; he came to see me as a fairy in "Iolanthe" at Bay Ridge High School.

I remember, in the spring of 1922, 15-year-old Antanina Zarskas and her mother arrived in America aboard the "Empress of India". They came from war-ravaged Lithuania. In London, Antanina had been hospitalized for a month with measles. Then at Ellis Island, it was discovered that she had glaucoma. Thanks to the efforts of friends, deportation was prevented and Antanina received medical treatment on the Island for nineteen months.

She spoke Russian and Polish as well as Lithuanian and she soon mastered English. She had a lovely voice and sang in the Operetta Chorus and St. George's Choir. Recently, if she were well, Antanina would have participated in the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island celebrations with her characteristic enthusiasm.

In 1929, she married Charles Binkins, whose parents had also emigrated from Lithuania. The couple became active in community affairs and their popularity flourished.

Kaye Brideson, columnist with *Home Reporter* and *Sunset News*, wrote on January 1, 1985:

"It was sometime in December of '64 that I found the quaintest card shop on Ninth St.,

up from Fifth Ave., the owners, Charlie Binkins and his gracious wife, Antoinette. The name of the card shop, fittingly enough, was Memory Lane. I visited this shop many times. They were fun times, happy times. Once I remarked how much easier it would be if I had someone to take photos. Antoinette said, 'Charlie is a photographer!' Thus, it began.

"Charlie wasn't just a photographer; he was the best. Put a camera into his hands, and it was magic. He did it all himself: taking the pictures, then developing them, and always perfectly, though he didn't think so. I saw him go into a smoke-filled, dimly-lit mirrored room, and come out with the best shots ever. Again, it was magic. Who can forget the pages and pages of photos by Charlie in the *Home Reporter!*"

"We covered it all, from one end of the Slope to the other, me getting the names, Charlie, the photos, and through it all, a



# The Two Horses

## BALTIC

### FOLKLORE

Once upon a time there lived a lord's horse and a peasant's horse, and the two of them were great friends. Whenever they met they would talk and never have their fill of talking. But one day, the lord's horse came out with something that badly hurt his friend's feelings.

"Unlike me, you are a horse of common breed," said he. "I am always harnessed to a coach mounted on springs, and you, to a wagon or else a harrow. I am fed on nothing but barley, and you, mostly on straw. Just you look at me! See how slender and beautiful are my legs and how spotless my hooves! Yours are all caked with mud. My neck is as arched and graceful as a swan's and yours is stiff and thick. My skin shines like silk and yours drips with sweat. I have a white star on my forehead and you have none. Which of us is handsome — you or me?"

"You, of course!" said the peasant's horse.

"There you are!" said the lord's horse, lifting his head proudly. "And when I run it's a pleasure to watch me. I move lightly and swiftly, drawing the coach after me as fast as the wind, and the earth itself seems to run from under my feet. You could never do it."

"No, of course not!" said the peasant's horse. "I'm not up to it."

"You certainly are not!" said the lord's horse. "It's no use talking about it even. You couldn't outrun a snail, now, could you?"

"No, not a snail," said the peasant's horse. "Now, you are a different matter. I could outrun you easily."

This made the lord's horse very angry indeed. He began stamping his feet and snorting and shaking his mane.

"Very well," said he, "We'll see who outruns who!"

And then and there it was agreed that they would run a race, circling the meadow and not stopping until one of them admitted that he could run no more.

The lord's horse threw back his head and started off at a gallop. He outdistanced the peasant's horse by a whole lap, and, catching up with him on the second lap, left him behind again. He gave a whinny of delight and called:

"Isn't it time for you to rest, my friend? You might get tired."

"I won't, never fear," the peasant's horse replied.

On the third lap, the lord's horse again caught up with the peasant's horse and again left him behind. He neighed in delight and called:

"Isn't it time for you to rest?" You'll get tired."

"I won't, never you fear," the peasant's horse replied.

On the fourth lap, too, the lord's horse got ahead of the peasant's horse, but he neighed less loudly now, calling out with nothing like his former confidence:

"Isn't it ... time ... for you ... to rest ... a little? ... You'll get ... tired."

"I won't, never fear," the peasant horse replied. "But you seem all out of breath."

"It's because I hurt my foot," the lord's horse lied, galloping on.

On the fifth lap he again got ahead of the

peasant's horse, but this time he neither neighed nor called out.

"Why are you groaning, friend?" the peasant's horse asked him.

"I stumbled on a root," replied the lord's horse.

On the sixth and seventh laps the lord's horse could not get far ahead of the peasant's horse, and on the eighth, the peasant's horse caught up with the lord's horse and then passed him.

"Why have you fallen behind, friend — tired?" asked he.

"No, I paused in order to think," the lord's horse replied, "I'm simply beset by thoughts."

On the ninth lap, the lord's horse stopped running altogether. He dropped down on the ground and kicked off with his legs.

"What's the matter, don't you feel well?" the peasant's horse asked him.

"No, it's just that a horse-fly is plaguing me. It's bitten me all over. I'll drive it off and then run on again, we have plenty of time."

"Yes, that we have," the peasant's horse replied and ran on without stopping.

On the tenth lap, the lord's horse got to his feet and hobbled off behind some bushes to nibble at the grass. He avoided looking at the peasant's horse.

"Is it dinnertime, then, Your Lordship?" the peasant's horse called to him.

"It's suppertime," the lord's horse replied crossly. "Don't you see that the fog is rising? You'd better take a rest, too. We've plenty of time."

"I don't need a rest," said the peasant's horse. "I'm only just starting to warm up. I'll run another ten laps and then another and after that we'll see."

And from that day on the lord's horse, so shamed that he had he been outrun by the peasant's horse, never turned up his nose at anyone anymore.

warm deep friendship growing. Charlie was ageless (though calendar-wise. If I'm correct, this February he would have been 79). A big, warm man, proud, true to himself, his country and his God. And always at his side, his Antoinette.

"We covered parades, functions of all kinds, mayors, governors, and yes, even presidents. How we laughed over that one. Here on Ninth St., President LBJ was going through; there was Charlie, camera high over his head, and there was a Secret Ser-

vice agent, hand on gun, right in front of him. He clicked away, the agent watched and waited. Charlie lowered his camera, the agent lowered his hand from his gun, each smiled, knowing each one had a job to do, had done it and respected the other's job. 'Thank God,' he said, 'no one shot off a firecracker or blew a tire!' We laughed and I thought how little people are aware of all it takes for just one picture you see in a paper. Some of the best photos of the Pope were taken by Charlie and also by Antoinette. When no one could

get near her, Charlie met and photographed Sophia Loren."

Then the day came when columnist Kaye Brideson wrote for her "Korner".

"Once again, the flickering light of the candle of life has gone out. As he slept, without any warning, Heaven called a dearest friend, the ace lensman, home. The grief is overwhelming, and since the call telling us the news, a million thoughts have filled my head and heart."





# JOIN THE PILGRIMAGE TO ROME IN 1987

The Lithuanian Christianity Jubilee committee is preparing for a pilgrimage to Rome in 1987. All Lithuanians are asked to join in the Jubilee celebration, which will include an audience with the Pope, the Holy Father's Sunday Mass at St. Peter's Basilica, Archbishop George Matulaitis' beatification ceremonies, an academic conference, a religious Lithuanian art exhibit and a banquet in the Castel Sant'Angelo.

There will be optional one-day tours available: Tivoli, Assisi, Florence and a tour of Neapolis/Pompeii/Sorrento. One-week extensions will also be available: Northern Italy, Vienna/Budapest/Munich and Lourdes/Paris. There are additional charges for the optional tours and the one-week extensions.

The committee is arranging travel and hotel accommodations at the very lowest costs. The basic plan for the trip is one week. Travellers may choose from one of three plans: Plan A – deluxe accommodations, Plan B – first class accommodations, and Plan C – a pensione.

**For more information, send your name and address to: Regina Krutulis, 2636 W. 71st St., Chicago, IL 60629. Or call (312) 436-5566 (in Illinois) weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; or call toll-free 1-800-331-3903.**

## As History Passes...

**L**ithuanians mourn the death of Anas Trakis, Evangelical Lutheran priest born in Klaipėda in 1912. He studied philosophy and theology at the Universities of Kaunas, Basel, and Zurich, and was ordained in 1940. His pastorship in Šilalė and Tauragė was interrupted by World War II, during which he continued to minister to the spiritual needs of Evangelical Lutherans in Lithuania, then in Poland and Germany.

From 1945-47 he was assistant pastor in

a German parish in Bavaria, later chaplain in prisoner of war and refugee camps. He was one of the founders of the supreme council of the Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran Church in exile and served as its vice-president.

After his arrival in the United States, he helped to found the Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran parish in Chicago where he continued to serve as pastor. The parish, named *Teviške* (Homeland), has over 600 members.

He also organized a number of other congregations in the larger Lithuanian communities of the United States and Canada. He edited the journal *Evangeliku Žodis* (The Evangelical Word). In 1957 he prepared a new edition of an Evangelical hymnal.

He was a fervent patriot and Christian, active in BALF and in the Lithuanian Community in USA, Inc. In 1984 he became Bishop of Evangelical Lutherans. His loss is inestimable.



## 12 Upcoming Projects for 1987: 600th Anniversary of Lithuania's Christianization

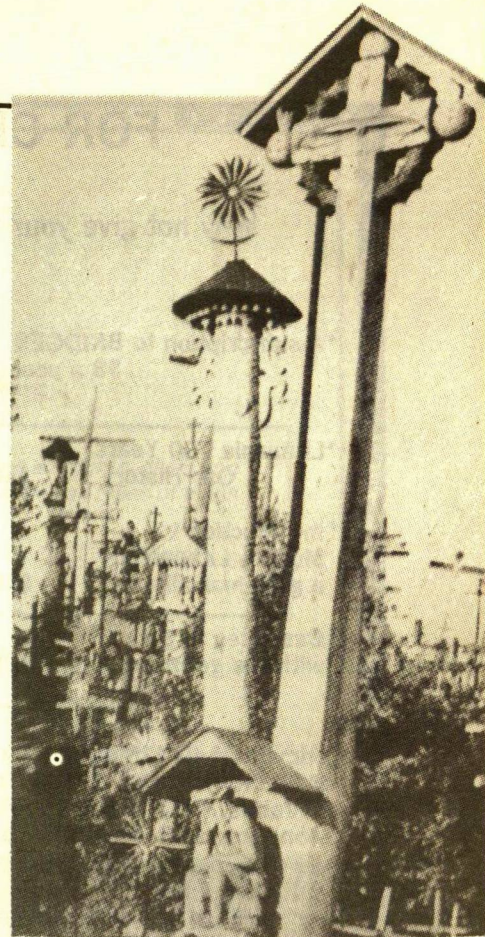
1. Organized efforts of spiritual renewal
2. A Lithuanian survey of Catholic doctrine
3. A historical study of Lithuania's Christianization, in English and Lithuanian, edited by Vytautas Vardys, Ph.D.
4. A popular history of Catholic Lithuania, in English
5. An updated Lithuanian hymnal
6. A history of Lithuanian church hymns
7. Books of religious education for children, youngsters and adults
8. Works of Lithuanian drama, poetry and novel
9. An exhibition of Lithuanian religious and representative art
10. Souvenir medals in bronze, silver-plate, gold-plate and in silver
11. Vatican commemorative stamps
12. The highlight of the Jubilee will be a **Papal Mass in Rome, June 14, 1987**. Charter arrangements are being planned.

Such ambitious preparations for this once-in-a-lifetime celebration require large financial outlays. The budget of the Central Committee is set at over **\$200,000**. We are appealing to you to help us meet this goal.

We need **100 Jubilee Sponsors** to donate **\$1,000** each.  
We need another **100 Jubilee**

**Patrons** to donate **\$500** each.  
And we need **500 Jubilee Donors** to contribute **\$100** each.

Please send donations to:  
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### "Cultural Exchange"

Carl Gustaf Ströhm, writing in *Die Welt*, Hamburg, states: "The deputy prime minister of the Soviet Republic Lithuania, Česnavičius, explains that one of the reasons why Pope John Paul II cannot come to Lithuania and the U.S.S.R., is that he has received in audience the 'anti-Communist Jewess of notorious fame', Mrs. Yelena Bonner, who is Sakharov's wife. Is a Pope who consorts with Jews intolerable for the atheist Soviet regime? Or are anti-communism and Jewishness identical for the deputy head of the Soviet-Lithuanian government?"

"The greatest violator of human rights in the world is the U.S.S.R.," Rev. Casimir Pugevičius declared before the Human Rights Committee of the City Council of New York. The hearing was in connection with a proposed bill requiring the city to disinvest in banks doing business with the Soviet Union. Chase Manhattan Bank was accused of lending the Communists millions of dollars.

After telling the listeners that one out of five Lithuanians, 90% western-rite Roman

Catholic, were herded off to Siberia during the Stalin era, Fr. Pugevičius continued: "The mass deportations have ceased. But the Soviet violation of human rights in Lithuania today is real and ruthless."

Other witnesses were members of Jewish organizations. Pianist David Bar Ilan testified that so-called "cultural exchange" programs with the Soviets are "neither cultural, nor exchange." The Soviet government, which has the last word on any Soviet artist touring the U.S. and any American artist touring the U.S.S.R., frequently refuses to approve first-rate artists for political or racial reasons. Because of this, Mr. Bar reported, pianist Vladimir Horowitz had wanted to cancel his recent concert tour to Russia. He was personally persuaded by President Reagan, however, to make the tour and show the Soviet people how an artist who fled Communist Russia sixty years ago had developed in the West. Actually, the Vladimir Horowitz recital in Moscow, which was touted by *Time* magazine as a "Triumph", is to this day known only to a handful of Russians. Supposed to be broadcast live on national television, Horowitz's recital was replaced by a pre-taped recital by a Soviet artist.

### Fomenting Prejudice

The Soviet disinformation apparatus has scored moderate gains in fomenting bigotry in the United States. In its effort to discredit Americans of East-Central European descent who oppose Moscow's oppression of their ancestral homeland, the Soviets have been peddling "information" designed to smear their opponents as "anti-semites." Some naive individuals, including members of the American press and TV, have swallowed these contaminated "appetizers" and have used the media to cast slurs on the entire community of East-Central Europeans and their descendants in the U.S. They have accepted fabrications by the chief bastion of institutionalized anti-semitism in the entire world, now posing as a "friend" and "protector" of the Jews!

The majority of American Jews refuse to accept such products of Moscow's duplicity. Because of their historic experience, Jews know the dangers of ethnic stereotyping and the label of "collective guilt." The search for genuine Nazi war criminals - a positive goal - must not be allowed to degenerate into a side-show of Soviet disinformation. *Elta*



# FOR CHRISTMAS

Why not give your friends a bit of Lithuania?

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* Cassettes to go with the grammar	\$25		

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## GIFTS FOR CHRISTMAS



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## LETTERS

### TO THE EDITOR

We now have five scholars of Lithuanian in our University. "Non Omnis Moriar." Please send us "Introduction to Modern Lithuanian" and two more dictionaries.

*Fabrizio Mazza  
Livorno, Italy*

I enjoyed your article about "Lithuanian Talent." It would be interesting if you presented a similar story about self-made Lithuanians who have become millionaires in the United States. There are quite a lot of them around. I know. I'm one of them.

*Name Withheld  
Gulfport, FL.*

Our family and our friends were elated when we read Albert Cizauskas' article "The Shoe and the Pebble" in which he put Dr. E. Vaisnys in her place for the offensive article she wrote about Lithuanians in the New York Times. She may have a doctorate, but it is obvious she knows nothing about the accomplishments of our early Lithuanian immigrants in the United States.

*Jonas Sakalas  
Chicago, IL*

I enclose a donation and would like you to send me 30 copies of the latest issue of *Bridges*. This year, my wife Genovaite is once again teaching Lithuanian at the Hudson Valley Community College in Troy, N.Y. Yesterday was her first session and so far there are 25 people enrolled for this course. We will distribute copies of *Bridges* to the students. The administrators of the school are amazed to see so many students enrolled in a non-credit college course in which the average enrollment is usually about twelve.

*Edward W. Baranauskas  
Schenectady, N.Y.*

Thanks for putting out a publication that keeps getting better and better.

*Betty Di Andriale  
(née Tomalaitis)  
Succosunna, N.J.*

We love your "News-Journal" in our family.

*Josephine Zukas  
Port Washington, N.Y.*



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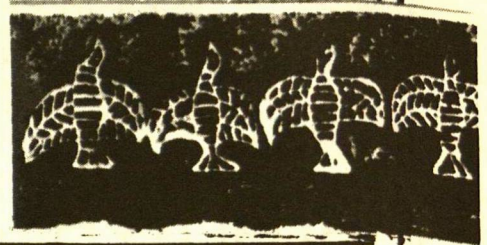
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7.00—Lt. Col. M. Grinevich, Southern Pines, SC; Mrs. Janina Meizys, Wayne, NJ; Helen Mikolaitis, Indianapolis, IN; Mrs. Mary Franco, Rego Park, NY; Mrs. Stella Matulonis, Manhasset, NY; Algis Servaitis, S. Euclid, OH; Mrs. Victoria Winnegar, Elizabeth, NJ  
5.00—Janina Milaknis, Arlington, VA; Mrs. Chas Brazinski, Linden, NJ; Matthew Sluzis, Kearny, NJ  
4.00—Filomina Galdikas, Los Angeles, CA;

Mrs. Anne Peterson, Worcester, MA; Dr. Jonas Stiklorius, Wallingford, PA; Theodora Waigauski, Carlville, IL

3.00—Ron Shatus, Jenkintown, PA; Rev. Kestutis Zemaitis, Cleveland, OH; J.K. Reilly, Laramie, WY

2.00—Albina Alekna, Palinvew, NY; Joseph Babilius, S. Pasadena, FL; Msgr. Vytautas Balciunas, Thompson, CT; Mrs. Roland Bishop, S. Boston, MA; Mrs. Fern Carrier, Laconia, NH; Marlene Aglinski, Pittsburgh, PA; Robert Douchis, Columbia, MD; Roger Galdes, Holbrook, MA; Mrs. Mary Jutt, Westfield, MA; William Olskey, W. Paterson, NJ; Aldona Barberi, Bloomfield, CT; K.A. Jackson, Ocala, FL; Anna Kulick, Newark, NJ; Henry Malinauskas, Chicago, IL; Olga Matulis, New Britain, CT; Mrs. John McGavin, Meshoppen, PA; J&M Nelson, Commack, NY; Albert Simonaitis, Melbourne, FL; A.V. Bernotas, Concord, NH; Lillian Lauzonis, Niagara Falls, NY; Mrs. Irene Maladra, Morristown, NJ; Judith Petraitis, Cleveland, OH; Mrs. H.E. Radicsh, Newark, NJ; Mary Stonis, Maplewood, NJ; Helen Stagg, LaJolla, CA; Keith Vaskellionis, Sr., Nashua, NH; JoAnn Vorozilichak, Dunmore, PA

**Clarification**

**T**he January-February issue of *Bridges* ran a picture story of the work of folk sculptor Lionginas Šepka. We also ran a summary of his life in English as reported in a book written by Zita Žemaityte and published in Lithuania. We regret that some politically motivated people chose to believe that she authored the whole story in *Bridges*. That very interesting story remains to be written. Zita Žemaityte did not write the English summary. She did not select the photographs we used. She did not write the captions. We are sorry, Zita Žemaityte. We think your work as an art historian is outstanding.





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# Is Your Hobby Stamps?

**P.O. Cancels in Lithuania** by Vitas Fugalevich. Published in Germany for the Lithuanian Philatelic Society of New York. 332 pages, copiously illustrated. Available from Charles Matuzas, 107-33 117 St., Richmond Hill, N.Y. 11419, \$20 plus \$2 for packing and postage.

No matter how many fine books are read each year by a philatelic bibliophile, there always seems to be an exceptional one to enrich our reference literature. The "P.O. Cancels of Lithuania" is one of these. Vitas Fugalevich has done an outstanding job in putting between two covers the results of what he has studied and learned during his entire lifetime. He also received help from 26 internationally recognized specialists living in 25 countries.

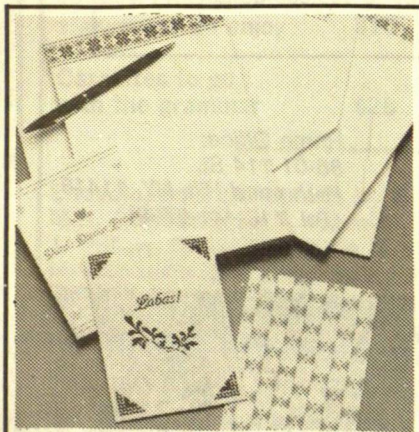
Except for Lithuania's native sons, relatively few collectors have yet discovered its vast potentials for study and research. This book is divided into sections dealing with the postal markings used during the periods when it was under Czarist Russian rule (1812-1863); as an independent nation (1918-1944); German occupation (1939-1945), and finally occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union (1945-until now).

In each case, Mr. Fugalevich lists the cities, towns and villages which had their own markings, in alphabetical order. It is the perfectly reproduced illustrations of each that makes it so valuable for the philatelist. In addition to normal postmarks, the author, with characteristic German thoroughness, includes such "back of the book" items as registration labels, censorship stickers and kindred adhesives.

As an example of how thoroughly the subject has been covered is an appendix which illustrates postal markings applied by foreign nations in honor of Lithuania. Among these we find examples from The Netherlands, Austria, France, Australia, the Vatican, Brazil, Great Britain, Canada and the United States.

We can't imagine how this volume could be improved. What is surprising is the fact that its cost is so modest — probably because it was produced in Germany, where printing and binding costs still are considerably less than they are over here.

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# Cooking

with Aldona Marcavage

## BROILED SWORDFISH OR HALIBUT WITH COLD CUCUMBER AND DILL SAUCE

- 3 lbs. fresh swordfish or halibut, cut 1 inch thick.  
6 Tbs. softened butter, salt, freshly ground black pepper.

Use fresh fish if possible. (If frozen, rub fish with lemon juice.) Preheat broiler 15 minutes. Pat fish dry with paper towels.

With a pastry brush, grease the hot broiler rack with 1 tablespoon of soft butter. Spread another tablespoon of butter on the fish, sprinkle with salt and black pepper, and broil the fish 3 inches from the heat for about 3 minutes. Brush it again with another tablespoon of butter, and broil it 2 or 3 minutes longer, or until the fish is lightly browned.

Carefully turn the fish over. Brush it with a tablespoon of butter and season with salt and pepper. Broil for 5 minutes, brush with butter again, and broil 10 minutes longer. The surface of the swordfish should be quite brown and the flesh firm to the touch. Transfer it to a hot platter, brush it with the remaining butter, and serve at once. Pass the cucumber sauce separately.

### Sauce:

- 1 cup peeled, seeded, diced cucumber  
1 pint sour cream  
3 tsp. white-wine vinegar  
1 tsp. salt, 1/8 tsp. cayenne  
2 tsp. grated onion  
3 tbs. finely chopped fresh dill

In a porcelain or stainless-steel bowl mix sour cream, vinegar, salt, cayenne, grated onion. Stir in chopped dill and diced cucumber. Taste sauce for seasoning.

## SMOKED SALMON MOUSSE

- 8 oz. cream cheese  
2 oz. smoked salmon  
1 tbs. sweet cream  
few drops lemon juice; white pepper  
2 seedless cucumbers, sliced 1/4" thick

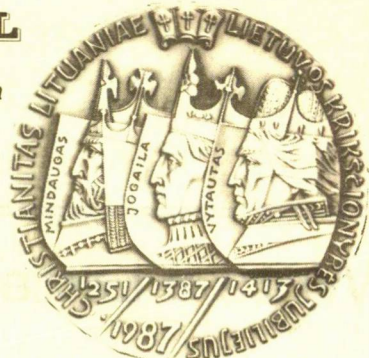
Blend ingredients in food processor until smooth. Chill 30 min. With wooden spoon, soften the mousse and put in pastry bag with leaf tip. Pipe mousse on each cuke slice. Garnish with watercress or parsley. Or, slice cuke thicker, make a hollow in center and fill in with a melon ball scoop; follow with mousse.

(Martha Stewart)

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1986, Nr. 11

## Write a Letter for Christmas

Jan. 24, 1986 marked the 25th anniversary since Lithuanian Catholic Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius was exiled by the Soviets to a remote town outside his archdiocese of Vilnius.

Bishop Steponavičius, a graduate of the University of Vilnius, was ordained in 1936 and consecrated as a bishop 19 years later. The Vatican appointed him bishop of Vilnius.

When Lithuania was occupied by the Soviets during WWII, its population of 3 million was 87% Catholic. Catholics in Lithuania have been under overt persecution since the Soviet takeover. Bishop Steponavičius refused to collaborate with the Soviet Authorities.

Without trial or conviction, the bishop has been prevented since 1961 to administer his archdiocese. All his petitions for an explanation or justification of his banishment have been ignored.

For 25 years he had been under house arrest by the Soviets in the remote village of Zagare.

Only once, in September 1980, was he allowed to visit Vilnius, to mark his 25th anniversary as a bishop. He was greeted by large crowds, despite attempts to suppress the news of his visit. Pope John Paul II sent him a congratulatory letter.

The Pope also appointed him cardinal "in pectore" or secret cardinal in 1979 in his first round of such appointments.

In 1983 the bishop was invited along with four apostolic administrators from Lithuania to visit the Pope, but permission to travel was refused.

Bishop Steponavičius is 75 years old. He has spent his best years in exile, away from the people he loves. He has been prevented from performing his humane and holy duties, languishing instead in isolation. Where is the religious freedom the Soviets claim exists?

This month we ask you to write to Bishop Steponavičius and to other Lithuanian prisoners.

By Genya Intrator  
Inter-religious Task Force

Address: BISHOP JULIJONAS  
STEPONAVIČIUS, 235647 Zagare,  
Joniskio Zdanovo 5-2, Lithuania,  
U.S.S.R.

Gintautas IEŠMANTAS, born Jan. 1, 1928. Journalist and poet. Expelled from the Communist Party for writing poems advocating the secession of Lithuania from the Soviet Union. Arrested March 4, 1980 and sentenced to 6 years strict regime camp and 5 years exile under Art. 68 with P. Peceliunas and V. Skuodis, Wife, son Rimantas. Release in March 1991.

Camp Address: 618810, Permskaya obl., Chusovskoy r-n, st. Vsesvetskaya, Uchr. VS-389/35, USSR.

Wife's Address: Maryte Iešmantienė, Svyturio g. 8-36, Vilnius, Lithuania, USSR.

Mr. Henrikas JASKUNAS. Born Feb. 4, 1927. Arrested third time on Dec. 22, 1976. Sentenced to 10 years special regime camp and 5 years exile on November 24-28, 1977 under Art. 68-2 with J. Dajotas for disseminating anti-Soviet literature and advocating unofficial peace movement. Wife and two daughters — Ina and Laima. Release in December 1991.

Camp address: 618263, Permskaya obl., Chusovskoi r-n, pos. Kuchino, uchr. VS-389/36-1, USSR.

Wife's address: Monika Jaskuniene, 30-mecio g. 25-18, Jonava, Lithuania, USSR.

Mr. Voldemaras KARALIUNAS. Born 1950. Arrested third time in 1975 under Art. 68 for organizing a factory strike and attempting to leave the country after renouncing Soviet citizenship. Sentenced to 12 years camp and exile. Sent to psychiatric hospital. Release in 1987.

Hospital address: Kuzmos g. 75, Kaunas, Lithuania, USSR.

Family address: 25-mecio 71-25, Kaunas, Lithuania, USSR.

All letters must have the words "a remettre en main propre" (to deliver to the hand of) to ensure delivery. These words should also appear on the acknowledgement of receipt pink card.

Write as you would to a family member — about your work, family, hobbies, job and travels.

A few warnings: Don't criticize the USSR or the governments of the satellite countries.

Don't indicate that you want the recipient freed or to leave the USSR.

You can send letters either by using a 68¢ stamp or by registered mail. If the letter is registered attach to it an acknowledgement of receipt card.

## Make Ourselves Heard!

A Letter to President Ronald Reagan

9/16/86

Dear Mr. President:

The Lithuanian-American Community of U.S., a national organization of Lithuanian-American descent, respectfully requests that in any prisoner exchange involving the suspected Soviet spy Zakharov, the United States Government insist on a release from a Soviet labor camp of an American prisoner of conscience Mr. Benedict Scott - Vytautas Skuodis, and that it seek permission for him and his family to come to the country of his birth - the United States.

Mr. Scott was born in Chicago, Illinois, but lived in Soviet occupied Lithuania, where he was a professor of geology at the University of Vilnius. In 1980, he was arrested for his advocacy of human rights and national rights of Lithuanian people. He was tried and sentenced to seven years of strict regime forced labor camp and five years of internal exile. His wife Irena Skuodienė, two daughters Giedrė and Daiva Skuodytė, and mother Elžbieta Skuodienė reside in Vilnius.

Lithuanian-Americans feel very strongly that any forth-coming prisoner exchange should be used to rescue this brave American from the Soviet Labor camp and have him come with his family to the United States.

Sincerely yours,

**Stanley A. Gečys**

President National Executive Committee  
Lithuanian-American Community,  
USA, Inc.