



CHRONICLE OF THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH  
IN LITHUANIA  
No. 24

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A Translation of the Complete Lithuanian Original,  
LIETUVOS KATALIKŲ BAŽNYČIOS KRONIKA No. 24  
Documenting the Struggle for Human Rights  
In Soviet-Occupied Lithuania Today

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## INTRODUCTION

Since 1972, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* has scrupulously documented the struggle for human rights in that Soviet-occupied country, on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea.

Laboriously typed in carbon copies, and passed secretly from hand to hand, the *Chronicle* is ultimately smuggled out to the western world, where it has caused a sensation.

The *Chronicle* describes the heroic efforts of some 3 million Lithuanians, 85.5% Roman Catholics of the western rite when the country was forcibly annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940, to preserve the faith of their forebears.

It is a story of six dioceses with no resident bishop and no normal contacts with the outside world, trying to maintain traditional ecclesiastical forms of administration. In reality, all decisions are made by the state-appointed Deputy for Religious Affairs—an atheist.

It is the story of the struggle between clergy who have decided for one reason or another to cooperate with the regime, and stubborn dissident priests and faithful insisting on their rights under the Soviet Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Natural Law.

It is the record of heroic parents of children, who insist on rearing their offspring in the Catholic Faith, against all efforts by teachers and government youth leaders to dragoon youngsters into various Communist youth organizations.

The *Chronicle* is the record of mere school children risking the wrath of atheistic teachers and even of Security police, to go\* to church or sing in a choir.

Constantly harassed in one way or another, the religious believers of Lithuania find themselves in the position of second-class citizens.

Denied access to mass media to tell their story, or to religious literature to nourish their faith, the Catholics of Lithuania find it necessary to photo-copy such religious literature as they can lay their hands on.

Ironically, the Soviet Constitution, under which the people of Lithuania are forced to live, contains glowing guarantees of freedom of conscience, of assembly, of press, and of speech.

In practice, such constitutional guarantees are over-ridden by unwritten administrative decrees, verbal interpretations, and galling bureaucratic high-handedness, giving atheism the position of the established religion of the Soviet Union and its subject territories.

The message of the *Chronicle*, loud and clear, is that the atheistic government is slowly strangling the Church in Lithuania, while doing its best to make it look like the Church is dying a natural death. The people of Lithuania are risking imprisonment, labor camp, and torture to make sure that we are not deceived.

In this translation, every effort has been made to remain faithful to the original in every respect, even at the expense of style in some instances. When absolutely necessary, a brief Translator's Note provides background within the text itself.

*Rev. Casimir Pugevičius*  
Translation Editor

THE CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
IN LITHUANIA No. 24

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October 1, 1976

MYTH AND REALITY

*Interview with Kaunas Seminary Rector Viktoras Rutkus granted in the Moscow French-language weekly Les Nouvelles de Moscou (7/31/76, No. 31) and the English-language Moscow News (6/12/76).*

The Roman Catholic Church in the Soviet Union

In the Soviet Union, there are Roman Catholic religious communities which function freely, as do other religious communities. The legal status of the Roman Catholic Church is no different from that of the Protestants, Orthodox, Moslems, Buddhists, Lutherans and others. Ten out of fifteen Soviet Union republics have Catholic communities. The largest numbers of Roman Catholic Church believers live in Lithuania, Latvia, Western Ukraine and the Belorussian Republic.

Here is an interview which Viktoras Butkus, Doctor of Theology and Hector of the Kaunas Roman Catholic Seminary, was kind enough to grant us:

*Hostile propaganda abroad is spreading all kinds of fabrications about the situation of the Church in Soviet Lithuania. Would you kindly tell us what the situation really is?*

The inhabitants of Lithuania, as throughout the Soviet Union, enjoy freedom of conscience, which is granted them by the Constitution (art. 96). Every citizen can freely attend church or pray at home, decorate his home with crosses and other religious pictures; purchase prayerbooks, Bibles and other religious works. Soviet laws guarantee believers respect of all their rights.

*Has the number of parishes and dioceses, Catholic churches and priests declined in Lithuania under the Soviet government?*

The number of parishes and dioceses remains the same. And as for Catholic priests, today there are slightly fewer of them, especially since a certain number of ministers of cult left Lithuania during the war.

The Catholic Church in Lithuania has the right to form its own administration. The present-day Lithuanian Archdioceses of Vilnius and Kaunas, and the Dioceses of Kaišiadorys, Panevėžys, Telšiai and Vilkaviškis were founded under the bourgeois government. The Soviet Lithuanian government does not hinder the administrators of these dioceses in the performance of their duties in the dioceses, as throughout the republic. They have the right to meet and decide church matters. Thus, in compliance with the regulations of the Second Vatican Council, the diocesan Ordinaries met in Telšiai to form a Council of Ordinaries whose president today is Juozapas Labukas, the Apostolic Administrator of the Kaunas Archdiocese and the Vilkaviškis Diocese. The Council has issued several letters for the priests and believers of Lithuania and other documents.

After the Second Vatican Council, the Liturgical Commission, issued a Latin-Lithuanian Ritual Book for priests and organists, which the appropriate Vatican congregation had decreed obligatory for the Catholic Church in Lithuania and abroad. In 1968 a complete translation of the Decrees of the Second Vatican Council was published in Lithuania. That same year, Missals, and later a Psalm Book and the New Testament were published.

*How were war-scarred churches rebuilt and repaired?*

World War II turned cities and villages into ruins: Entire towns were wiped out. The war did not spare churches. Among the churches destroyed we can list the Church of SS Peter and Paul in Šiauliai, the churches of Raseiniai, Kudirkos Naumiestis, Kuršėnai and others: perhaps forty in all. Although the war-shattered socialist economy was in great need of building material, the leaders of the republic still felt it was possible to allot some to rebuild churches.

In this manner, in the Telšiai Diocese alone, the churches of Kretinga, Tauragė, Kuršėnai, Papilė, Kruopiai, Kvėdarna, Leskava and Mažeikiai were rebuilt. In five towns of the diocese, churches destroyed by fire were replaced with chapels. Churches are maintained very scrupulously; they are rebuilt and restored. In the entire diocese, as throughout the republic, you will not find a single neglected church.

*Can the Catholic Church in Lithuania train priests?*

There is a Seminary in Kaunas to train priests. Its administration and professors are appointed by the country's Ordinaries. This is a tuition-free, five-year institution.

The curriculum conforms with the regulations set by the Vatican Congregation of Dogma. As it stands today, it is practically no different from the curricula of Catholic universities in Rome."

*Can the Catholic Church in Lithuania maintain contact with persons of the same religion abroad?*

Our Catholic Church representatives maintain contact with the Vatican and with Catholic churches abroad. They participated actively in the work of the Second Vatican Council, later attended and continue to attend the Synods of Bishops called by Pope Paul VI; they regularly participate in the Vatican Commission on Canon Law and the European Catholic Conference; they travel as pilgrims and visit the Catholic churches of various countries. Moreover, the Catholics of Lithuania maintain contact with their brothers in the Faith living abroad, inviting them to visit the Soviet Union.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that everything discussed here shatters the fabrications of the reactionary press abroad, which pictures the situation of the Catholic Church in Lithuania and other Soviet republics in the wrong light.

As you can see, the situation of the Catholic Church in Lithuania and other Soviet republics is completely different from that portrayed in some Western press.

THE "TRUTH" ABOUT THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH  
IN LITHUANIA IN FRENCH AND ENGLISH

*The Moscow French-language weekly Les Nouvelies de  
Moscou (7131176, No. 31) and the English-language Moscow  
News (6112176) published the interview with Kaunas Seminary  
Rector Dr. V. Rutkus on "The Roman Catholic Church in the  
Soviet Union."*

This is not the first such interview with Dr. Butkus in the atheist press. In America, *Laisvė (Freedom)* (12/31/65) printed a rather modest version with appropriate omissions. The Moscow-based newspapers are bolder, containing many pearls of "truth." We feel that (as is usual here) this is a collaboration of two authors: the statements of Dr. V. Butkus were, probably, somewhat "amended" by the newspaper editor. In the interest of truth the article should be added to and clarified.

1. We read: "Every citizen can freely attend church . . ." He can, but afterwards will he not be "re-educated" in appropriate agencies? If he holds a responsible position, will this not affect his employment, will he not be labeled "anti-Soviet?" Why do most people ask for religious ministrations secretly, at night? Why do they ask that their marriages or baptisms not be recorded in church record books? Why were some priests ordered (in the Vaëna "*Rayon*", Vice-Chairman J. Visockas ordered all priests) to bring church record books to the Executive Committee. Even prosecutors have demanded this (in Varena).

2. We read: ". . .can decorate his home with crosses and other religious pictures." He can decorate his home thus, but this can have unpleasant consequences. Why do most keep their prayerbooks, religious books and crosses hidden from outside view? During searches of lay persons' apartments, why do security agents hurl insults after finding religious articles? Why is religious literature confiscated during searches? Why are questions asked regarding where religious pictures were acquired?

On September 30, 1974 (Miss) V. Vertelkaitė, head teacher of the Vilnius 32nd Nursery School, was summoned to the Education Department. The purpose was to discharge her for active religious practice: she was urged to write a statement that she was resigning of her own will. She refused to do this, saying: "If my work

is not satisfactory, please prove it; if it is satisfactory, why are you forcing me to leave?"

"We have no complaints about your work," affirmed J. Kazlauskas, head of the Education Department. One of the officials noted, "She has set up an altar in her room." Three women (Čakatauskienė, Kepalienė and V. Nugarienė) were named to go without her consent to Miss Vertelkaitė's apartment and "investigate". They confirmed that there were religious symbols there.

3. We read: "... can purchase prayerbooks, Bibles and other religious works." Let Dr. Butkus state where, in over thirty years of the Soviet system, the believer in Lithuania has been able to purchase a prayerbook, Bible or other religious work, for instance, a catechism? In what bookstores are they sold? Some people have them, it is true, but they acquire them illegally. Most prayerbooks are printed illegally and those who print them are punished. Though the *New Testament* was published in Lithuania—a great rarity—under Soviet rule, it was shown believers only on television . . . Only Dr. Butkus knows what "other religious works" can be purchased. Why are vendors of religious articles arrested in churchyards and driven away in militia vehicles, as recently occurred in Nemenčinė, when the administrator of Vilnius was administering the Sacrament of Confirmation(7/18/78)?

4. We read: "Soviet laws guarantee believers respect of all their rights." Do religiously believing parents have the right to protect their children when they are forcibly turned into atheists, when the religious practice of their children is ridiculed? Does a believer have the right to place on the grave of a loved one a headstone with a religious symbol? Workshops are forbidden to make such headstones, nor can architects give permission for such headstones to be erected. Do believers have the right to defend themselves against slanderous articles which distort the facts and Church teaching? In what newspaper can the faithful explain and defend themselves?

Does a believer artist have the right to create a religious work of art? Why do artists create religious works of art and not sign them? Why are those who attempt to create something religious ousted from the Artists' Union, as happened to the talented artist A. Chmieliauskas, who received honorable mention at the 1975 International Ex Libris Exhibit in Italy?

Does a singer who is a believer have the right to sing in church? Why are music students as well as professionals forbidden to play in church? Why are students who try to sing in church expelled

from the conservatory, as happened to J. Matulionis?

Does a teacher have the right to go to church? Countless teachers have had to write explanations for such daring! Why was (Miss) A. Kezytė, an instructor at the Tallat-Kelpša Music School in Vilnius and holder of a commendation, discharged from her position in 1975? She could not plead the protection of the law which forbids dismissing an individual from work for his religious beliefs. But such dismissals are numerous today.

5. To the question, "Has the number of priests in Lithuania declined under the Soviet government?" we read the reply: "Today, there are slightly fewer, especially since a certain number of cult servants left Lithuania during the war. After over thirty years, there remain very few priests who left Lithuania. Actually, there are other reasons, which Dr. V. Butkus failed to mention. Among them: a) A sizeable portion of priests along with the entire nation, contributed to the "Gulag Archipelago". b) The atheist government does not allow the necessary number of priests to be trained, by limiting the number of applicants and making it difficult for those who wish to enter the seminary. Despite "the guarantee of Soviet law", believers do not have the right to a sufficient number of priests, just as young men who feel the call to the priesthood do not have the right to freely enter the seminary: They are forced to wait several years, if they are not rejected outright.

Why did Dr. Butkus not mention the way of sorrow which must be traveled by those who enter the seminary? They are all forced by state security police officials to pledge to work for the security police, that is, to build the Church with one hand, and to destroy it with the other. Is the rector of the seminary unaware of this? Does he, a teacher of moral theology, not know that he is consciously misleading the world by telling only part of an essential truth and concealing painful facts?

6. We read: "The Soviet government does not hinder diocesan administrators in the performance of their duties."

What are Bishops Julijus Steponavičius and Vincentas Sladkevičius allowed to do? They have been exiled. And can the active administrators freely visit parishes (this right has been forbidden them for 32 years), can they use their judgment in appointing priests and seminary instructors, can they freely administer the sacrament of Confirmation? But those are their duties, under Canon Law. It is true that they receive permission several times a year to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation in parishes, but that is not

enough; the crowds are huge, people are exhausted.

7. We read: "Missals, then a Psalm Book and the New Testament were published."

There is a slight error here: not a "Missal" but a prayerbook. They were published, but did many people see those published books?

8. Dr. Butkus mentioned "many rebuilt and repaired churches," but did not mention how many have not been rebuilt, have been closed down, desecrated. The parishioners of Kučiūnai (*Lazdijai Rayon*) wanted to finish their church; they were not granted permission. The faithful of Ignalina wanted the return of their church, which had been converted into a club; they were not successful. And those which were rebuilt, were rebuilt with the hindrance rather than the cooperation of government officials.

9. To the question "Can the Catholic Church train priests," we find the reply that the Seminary administration and faculty are appointed by the country's Ordinaries, but there is no mention that the atheists confirm them. It is not explained that the seminary rector does not have the right freely to accept applicants—that depends on the good graces of the atheists (security police officials, Religious Affairs Commission and others). It is not mentioned either that seminary instructors are appointed not at the discretion of the Ordinaries, but at the discretion of the security police. Why are instructors at the seminary changed so often? Why are seminary instructors who fulfill the requirements stated by Dr. Butkus in his letter to "Laisvė" (Freedom) (12/31/65), "noted for their high moral and educational standards," fired? Apparently Ordinaries do not have any rights, and also the Catholic Church in Lithuania does not have the possibility to train priests in the quantity and of the quality it wishes.

Many Lithuanian priests who were sent in 1966 to the Berlin Peace Conference clearly remember Dr. Butkus' reply to a Leipzig church rector. To the question, "How many theology students do you have"? — Twenty six". "If there are six dioceses, why so few?" "We have enough." When the German heard this, he turned away and thus ended his conversation with the Lithuanian priests.

There arises a serious doubt whether Dr. Butkus fits the requirements according to which, in his own words, seminary officials are chosen for "high moral and educational standards." Lying is not a sign of high moral standard. It would not appear that Dr. Butkus was chosen by the Ordinaries.

10. We read: "Our Catholic Church representatives . . . travel as pilgrims, visit the Catholic churches of various countries."

It is not mentioned, that only those who are approved by the atheists travel . . . Why are the faithful not permitted to freely visit churches in Lithuania itself, are not allowed to use public transport to Šiluva and Žemaičių Kalvarija? [Two popular pilgrimage shrines.— Translation Editor] Why are drivers warned not to take pilgrims to such places? Why was a driver detained on June 15, 1976, after bringing people to the Vidiškiai Church (Ignalina "Rayon") for the celebration of a priest's first Mass? Why do priests not have the right to a normal funeral, as do other Soviet citizens: vehicles are not allocated to take their remains to the cemetery? This is what happened with Rev. E. Basys in Dūkštas in 1975 and Rev. Z. Neciunskas in Kalviai in 1976.

In concluding these remarks it is fitting to quote the "master-piece of truth" at the end of the interview, which former students of Dr. Butkus and believers in general cannot read without feeling heartsick:

"In concluding, I would like to stress that everything discussed here shatters the fabrications of the reactionary press abroad which pictures the situation of the Catholic Church in Lithuania and other Soviet republics in the wrong light.

"As you can see, the situation of the Catholic Church in Lithuania and other Soviet republics is completely different from that portrayed in some Western press."

#### DEATH AND FUNERAL OF REV. Z. NECIUNSKAS

The pastor of Kalviai, the Rev. Zigmas Neciunskas, well known throughout Lithuania for his goodness and noble life, died on June 21, 1976. With great sorrow, the decedent's friends and parishioners gathered to attend the beloved priest's funeral. And who had not been touched by the good heart of Father Zigmas? The post-war partisans had; the faithful of several parishes had; long-term labor camp friends had and his brother priests had. However, there were people who detested Rev. Neciunskas. The atheists of Kaišiadorys planned to disrupt the funeral. On the eve of the funeral, the Kalviai district chairman issued an order that the priests not be allowed to park their cars near the church and organize demonstrations. The funeral services on June 23rd were conducted in Kalviai by Kaišiado-

rys Diocesan Administrator Msgr. J. Andrikonis. Everything had been arranged so the funeral would take place as unobtrusively as possible. Rev. Valatka gave a bland sermon without even once mentioning the late Father Zigmąs personally. The priests and the faithful were offended and insulted: how far things had gone in catering to the atheists and the government! The Kaišiadorys curia did not inform Bishop Vincentas Sladkevičius of Rev. Neciunskas' death, though the bishop respected the decedent and the decedent sincerely loved the bishop.

The relatives of Rev. Z. Neciunskas decided to bury him in his native town: in the Santaika Cemetery. When the casket was carried into the churchyard, it became clear that there were no trucks to take the casket and the people to Dzūkija (southern part of Lithuania). It seems that the Kaišiadorys *Rayon* executive committee vice-chairman, with the assistance of the Kaišiadorys motor vehicle department, diverted the vehicles to Kaišiadorys, explaining that state farm vehicles should not be used for a priest's funeral, although he knew quite well that the *Rayon* does not have special vehicles for funerals and everyone uses government transportation. The situation was saved by Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas, Father Zigmąs' labor camp friend. The casket of Rev. Neciunskas was placed in the trunk of Father Svarinskas' "Zhiguli" car, it was tied with ropes because part of it dangled in the air, wreaths were placed on the casket and, accompanied by a caravan of passenger cars, it left for Santaika. The people asked that the cars drive slowly, and, for over a kilometer, the tired and weeping people followed their pastor to his place of eternal rest. Unfortunately, because of the arbitrary actions of the Kaišiadorys atheists, most could not go to Santaika.

A huge crowd of believers was waiting with flowers at the Jieznas crossroads. After a brief stop, the cars again moved on toward Santaika. People wept and strewed flowers on the road.

In Santaika, the funeral procession was met by a crowd of people and the priests of Suvalkija. Following the funeral rites, the new grave of a noble Lithuanian and zealous priest sprouted up in the sandy soil of Dzūkija. A wave of outrage at the behavior of the atheists of Kaišiadorys spread not only through Dzūkija, but throughout Lithuania. State farm workers and academic circles all unanimously repeated: "How could the atheists have done such a thing? What is the Soviet Constitution worth if people behave this way?"

The Commissioner for Religious Affairs summoned Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas to his office on August 20th and attempted to lay

the blame for this funeral on the priests who had made the arrangements for the burial.

The grave of Rev. Zigmas Neciunskas will teach the young generation about love of God and country.

Why did Soviet government officials detest Rev. Z. Neciunskas? The Rev. Zigmas Neciunskas, the pastor of Nedzingė, was arrested on December 4, 1940. A year later he was sentenced to ten years in labor camp and five years suspension of citizen rights. He was held in Lukiškis until August 3rd, and was later taken to distant Karelia, where he did exhausting forest work. There, he found 500 Lithuanian men and 300 single Lithuanian women. After a year, he was transferred to Mordovia where he worked in a case factory and was disabled for three months with heart failure. Although himself of poor health and not suited for heavy physical labor, he spent 8 years healing and nursing others as camp medic. After completing his full sentence, he was released at the end of 1955, and first of all paid a visit to his bishop, Teofilis Matulionis in a nursing home in Mordovia.

The tender heart of Father Zigmas grew restless in Lithuania: So many of his countrymen still lived in the Siberian vastness! After spending several months in his native land, Father Zigmas voluntarily went to his countrymen in Maklakov, in the District of Krasnoyarsk. There, he served the faithful for two and a half years within a 300-500 kilometer radius. When he later returned to Lithuania he was denied the right to work as a priest.

While still in Siberia, he visited in March, 1957, the chapel which Father J. Gustas erected in Krasnoyarsk. Father Gustas soon died in Krasnoyarsk and Father Šeškevičius buried him there.

Father Neciunskas was a man who had developed to the utmost all the best qualities of a native son of Dzūkija. He was enchanted by every individual he met, because he was capable of immediately noting some good trait. Endowed with a lively and warm heart, he deeply empathized with the cares, misfortunes and hardships of others. He knew how to console one, encourage one and cheer one. Following the Redeemer's example, he first helped and consoled one, and later ministered to one's spiritual needs.

The deceased was a zealot and conscientious priest, he respected Church officials, was on very good terms with his brother priests and had deep bonds of friendship with many; thus, there were close to a hundred priests at his funeral.

We reprint below a complaint Father Zigmas Neciunskas had drafted to the Prosecutor of the Lithuanians SSR, but which he had not yet mailed, on the advice of friends.

### Letter of Complaint

*Regarding the Actions of the LSSR Council of Ministers' State Television and Radio Committee, which Brutally Violated Basic Standards of Truth and Justice as They Relate to Human Dignity and Religious Rituals.*

Officials of the State Television and Radio Committee of the LSSR Council of Ministers, by means of covert and tricky deceit, without my knowledge or consent, arranged to have me filmed at the Kaišiadorys *Rayon* Executive Committee, and while offering Mass in the Church at Kalviai. This film, entitled *And for Ever and Ever*, was aired on television to the believers and the public of Lithuania with occasionally slanderous comments about me.

I was officially summoned to come to the Kaišiadorys *Rayon* Executive Committee. There, I was sent from office to office, and asked meaningless questions about the attendance of tourists at the Church of Kalviai and the like. It appears that a television crew filmed me there with equipment set up in advance.

Later, as I was offering Holy Mass on Sunday at the Church in Kalviai, with numerous parishioners ardently praying, men noisily barged into the church with television equipment and without my permission began to film, taking over the church as though it were their private studio.

Article 143 of the LSSR Criminal Code provides up to one year of imprisonment for violating the law regarding the separation of Church and state, and thus the separation of state and Church also.

The above-mentioned forced entry rudely interrupted the believers' holiest rite, namely, the solemnity of the Holy Mass, and the religious sensitivities of those praying were deeply offended.

The moment when I distribute Holy Communion is accompanied in the film by the narrator's commentary stating: "With these same hands he blessed the weapons and torture implements of bandits."

These insinuations and assertions regarding my person and activity during postwar years, employing the most effective means of propaganda—repeated television broadcasts—is an unforgivable, deliberate and lasting insult against me, with the intention of discrediting me as a priest, a representative of the Catholic Church,

in the eyes of the entire community of believers and unbelievers in Lithuania.

This film, produced in such a dishonorable, illegal and slanderous fashion, is an abominable fabrication and a crime punishable under LSSR law.

The fact that I was once sentenced by a Soviet court to ten years of imprisonment at hard labor as a political prisoner, does not give anyone the right to abuse and terrorize me again twenty years later.

Besides, documents of my trial show why I was sentenced to ten years. During the postwar years I often provided food for the partisans of Lithuania, who did not recognize as legal the incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR; I provided them with material support and officiated at the marriage of a couple of them. The allegations made by the film's producers that I blessed the weapons and torture implements of bandits are not documented facts, but malicious slander.

In this open letter of complaint, I address the LSSR Prosecutor and demand the following:

Stop the campaign of terror and abuse against me, a legal Soviet citizen and priest residing in the Soviet Union.

Prevent derision of the dignity of the Holy Mass.

Warn the offenders on the following points:

1. Delete the frames dealing with me from the television film *And for Ever and Ever*.

2. Indict the above-mentioned television and radio program editors and technicians and those who directed them to take this course of action, along with their co-conspirators from the Kaišiadorys *Rayon* Executive Committee, under art. 18 of the LSSR Criminal Code (deliberate joint participation of two or more individuals in a crime) and under art. 132 and 133 of the Criminal Code (for slander and insult in a publicly circulated format, slander in connection with accusation of a serious crime).

3. Rectify the moral injury done me before Lithuanian society by way of the same format used to make public this program which slandered me.

With the purpose of educating Soviet society in the spirit of Communist morality, the Television and Radio Committee should see to it that its programs dealt not with fantasy but with revealing genuine documentary information about the sadism of such tragedies and their perpetrators, as for instance:

1. The elimination of such popular defenders of the Soviet people,

such creators of Soviet society, as Putna, Urborevičius and others.

2. The elimination of such revolutionaries as Z. Angariečius, the wife of K. Požėla and others.

3. The brutal torture and murder 34 years ago of an innocent priest in the Orija woods of the Vilkaviškis *Rayon*.

4. The coincident torture of a group of Panevėžys doctors and intellectuals.

5. Simultaneously, in the Rainiai woods of the Telšiai "Rayon", the equally brutal torture and murder of completely innocent intellectuals, students and workers.

6. The mass murder, during that same period, of inmates and their Soviet guards at the Kaišiadorys *Rayon* Pravieniškiai political prisoner camp.

Acts of sadism were committed at that time, in certain other parts of Lithuania which, even today, still live in society's memory.

Explain who blessed the weapons of those executioners and prepared the torture implements; explain, in such a way that the documented facts brought to light will serve to prosecute, in a trial similar to the Nuremberg trials, the perpetrators of this sadism which the world does not even begin to imagine. Such documentation broadcast on television from time to time would be invaluable in educating today's young generation, as well as the Lithuanian public, in fostering hatred of injustice and bestial barbarism.

Rev. Z. Neciunskas

## FROM NIJOLĖ SADUNAITĖ'S TRIP TO THE LABOR CAMP

On June 20, 1975, immediately following her trial, Nijolė's brother took warm clothing to his sister, but Warden Petrauskas, of the Vilnius KGB isolation prison refused to accept them. That same evening, Nijolė Sadūnaitė was taken away to Mordovia.

(Miss) Sadūnaitė was kept seven days in a Pskov prison cell. The cell where she spent an entire week is in the basement, damp, cold, filthy and airless. A filthy pallet was thrown down, she was not given a pillow, sheet or blanket. Nijolė caught a cold in this icy and damp cellar. When she asked the cell guard for cough medicine, the latter angrily replied, "Well, cough yourself back to health!" After this reply, Nijolė Sadūnaitė no longer asked for any medical help, although she needed it badly.

In Yaroslavl, Nijolė was kept one and a half days in a cell with a female criminal.

In Gorki, Nijolė was kept seven days in a semi-basement cell with female criminals.

(Miss) Sadūnaitė was kept one night in the Ruzayevk prison.

In Potma, she was kept five days in a cell with female criminals. She slept every night on the floor. The cell was infested with bedbugs as unmerciful as the guards themselves. Nijolė spent two days in Potma in an isolation cell.

The trip from Vilnius to Mordovia took from June 20 to July 18. On the trains, Nijolė was transported mostly with criminals, enclosed in metal cages. The food provided was bread, very salty fish and water. Nijolė did not take any bread or fish and only drank the water.

At the Pskov, Yaroslavl, Gorki, Ruzayevsk and Potma prisons Nijolė ate the very meager prison food which was provided.

In the fall of 1975, four security agents from Vilnius came to the Mordovian prison camp. They questioned Miss Sadūnaitė about whether she had given anyone her speech and final trial statement from the Vilnius security police isolation facility, during the trip to Mordovia or from the Mordovian prison camp. (Miss) Sadūnaitė replied: "Are you still not convinced that, if I did not answer your questions during nine and a half months of preliminary interrogations at the Vilnius KGB isolation facility, I will not answer them now?"

The security agents explained that they were not asking to whom (Miss) Sadūnaitė gave her speech, but merely from where she gave it. Nijolė did not answer this question either. When they saw they were not accomplishing anything, the security agents claimed that they had just dropped in to see her since they were there on other business. After inquiring after her frame of mind, whether she was bored, and how she liked the colony, they left.

During her entire prison term, (Miss) Sadūnaitė did not receive a single letter from the U.S., although relatives and other people wrote her from there. Nor did she receive any letters from England or other countries. Nijolė does not receive all of her letters from Lithuania, either.

From Norway, Nijolė was sent food (chocolate) which she was not given. She learned of this package only after eight rubles were deducted from her meager prisoner's pay for this package. Three months later, camp authorities gave this package to (Miss) Sadūnaitė's brother.

In July 1975, the Ukrainian poet Vasily Stus was brutally beaten at the Mordovian camp. When she learned of this, Nijolė and four other political prisoner women went on a hunger strike August 1-5 to protest the arbitrariness and cruelty of camp authorities.

## NEWS FROM THE DIOCESES

### Kaunas

In 1976, the Soviet government allowed nineteen young men to enter the Kaunas Seminary. There were about thirty applicants. One of the applicants confirmed by the government never arrived, but the government did not allow another to take his place.

This year, the men who entered the seminary were especially zealously recruited to work as undercover security police agents. It is regrettable that this year certain applicants, who should not have been admitted, were admitted to the seminary, and quite a few truly serious applicants were not allowed to enter. Some were told not to attempt entering the seminary even in the future, because they would not be accepted.

And so, this year the Soviet government made a concession by agreeing to increase the number of entries to the seminary, but as a result did everything in its power to lower the quality of the applicants.

### Vilnius

In June 1976 the customs duties on packages from the U.S. were increased 800%. Nowadays, Lithuanians are able to manage without material support from relatives living abroad; therefore, the funds previously allotted to material support can now be used for the most vital type of aid—the fight for national and religious freedom.

*The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* has obtained the first two issues of the underground publication *Dievas ir Tėvy-nė (God and Country)*. Many readers are disappointed at the tone of this magazine, which is no credit to a religious publication. *The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, hopes the new publication will truly live up to its name in the future.

The second and third issues of *Aušra (The Dawn)* have also been published in Lithuania.

## Vilnius

On their return from Rome, Bishops L. Povilonis and R. Krikščiūnas were searched by customs officials in Moscow. All religious articles were confiscated. During the search, even Bishop Povilonis' tie was ripped apart. Female custom employees derisively hung rosaries around their necks, thus deeply offending the high Church officials.

This search has received various interpretations in Lithuania. Some feel that the bishops did not carry out the mission the government had assigned them. Others, that the search is connected to intrigues by certain priests who attended the Eucharistic Congress. A third group suspects that this was a clever move by the security police to increase the authority of the bishops in the eyes of the Vatican.

## Kaunas

In August, 1976, the Rector of the Kaunas Seminary, accompanied by the Dean of Šakiai, the Rev. J. Žemaitis, travelled to the Berlin Peace Conference. The Soviet government tries to give Dr. Butkus serious priests as companions in order to increase his authority. The Rev. J. Žemaitis did not go to Berlin of his own will, and intellectuals who are believers and many priests did not approve of this trip. The Berlin Peace Conferences are viewed in Lithuania as huge bubbles of lies which serious priests should not be blowing.

To: The State Prosecutor of the Lithuanian SSR

A Complaint from: Citizen Virgilijus Jaugelis, son of Vincas, residing in Kaunas, Markso 40-1.

On Wednesday June 23, 1976, as I was travelling to Kaunas, a "Moskvich" automobile stopped next to me in Raseiniai and two men stepped from it (one wearing a militia uniform, the other in civilian dress, obviously a security policeman whom I could easily recognize) demanding that I enter their car. I refused. Then, they demanded my personal documents and I gave them my papers.

They asked where I was coming from and where I was going; they demanded to see what my suitcase contained. I replied that I could not allow them to search either the suitcase or myself until they showed me the required document. They then forcibly sat me in their car, but did not drive to militia headquarters, merely staying in one spot and smoking. Later, they drove to a gas pump, again stayed there

a long time, and finally we drove to the militia station. They were joined by another "colleague" who urged them "not to waste time on the sniveler" but "beat him up and take care of him." They agreed with him, for they threatened to do as much, uttering the foulest Russian curses used by the lowest criminals. All the while, they demanded that I allow the suitcase to be searched.

When we drove up to the militia station and stopped, they did not have me get out, but drove toward the woods. After driving quite a distance, they had me get out and the security agent tried to take the suitcase from me by force and also to search me, threatening to beat me, and cursing. When I refused to submit to a search, they again sat me in their car and drove farther toward the woods. Stopping again, they demanded with curses and threats that I submit to a search and forcibly tried to take my suitcase.

Because they did not have me get out at the militia headquarters to which they said they were taking me, but drove me toward the woods on an unknown road, I had no doubt that these "officials" were not militia and security employees, but criminals who wanted to rob and perhaps even murder me. Their aforementioned actions and appearance raised no doubts in my mind, and I was astonished that they refrained from carrying it out.

Then with the security agent stating: "You can be sure I will search him to the skin and arrest him", they turned the car around and took me to militia headquarters where they again demanded that I submit to a search. When I replied that I would submit only after they produced the necessary document, one man dressed in civilian clothes ordered the suitcase taken from me and searched to see what it contained, which they did by force.

During the search, two books were taken from me, one of which was returned, but the other, *Krikščionis Pasaulyje (A Christian in the World)* by Maceina, was not returned. I was arrested about 4:00 P.M. and released after 10:00 P.M. After the forcible search, the report (on a plain sheet of paper) was worded thus:

"I, First Lieutenant Zubrickas, on duty at the Raseiniai *Rayon* VRS militia, in the presence of witnesses: 1. Venckus, Zigmas, son of Pranas, residing in Aiškainiai in the Raseiniai *Rayon*, 2. Shelkiniew, Nikolai, son of Michailovich, residing in Raseiniai, Taigos g. 29, drafted this report to record that, as ordered by the Raseiniai *Rayon* security committee chairman, the book *Krikščionis Pasaulyje* by Antanas Maceina, published in 1974 in the U.S., was taken from citizen

Jaugelis, Virgilijus, son of Vincas, residing in Kaunas, K. Markso prosp. No. 40., apt. 1." The signature of the report's author does not appear at the end of the report.

I demand that this incident be investigated and the guilty parties punished. I also demand the return of the book *Krikšėionis Pasaulyje*.

Kaunas, 6/24/1976

V. Jaugelis

Two months later, V. Jaugelis still had not received any reply from the State Prosecutor's Office. The facts speak for themselves: *Rayon* and city militia and security officials can act as arbitrarily as they please, because they are shielded by the State Prosecutor's Office.

Kaunas

On May 25, 1976, the Rev. Bernardas Baliukonis, Chancellor of the Diocese of Vilkaviškis, was buried on May 25, 1976 in the Petrašiūnai Cemetery. The funeral services for the deceased were attended by all diocesan administrators, and the Bishops of Kaunas and Panevėžys. Just before the services, Seminary Rector Rev. V. Butkus brought in Religious Affairs Commissioner K. Tumėnas and seated him in the Monsignors' section. Older priests remember that during the years of independence not even the President of the Republic sat in this section. The faithful feel that priests should respect their houses of worship and a chair for uninvited atheists should be placed in an inconspicuous spot in order that they not interfere with prayer.

The Motor Vehicle Department directed traffic and allowed cars accompanying the casket to pass without delay. Tumėnas walked through the cemetery in procession with the bishops. Even the luncheon for priests and bishops could not be held without him. The entire funeral was arranged in such a way that it spoke without words—whoever is with the atheists has everything, dignitaries, traffic control and the government's favor. Let us compare this funeral to that of the Rev. Z. Neciunskas. Those who go to so-called Berlin Peace Conferences are accorded one kind of burial, and those who are sent to Mordovia another kind.

Kaunas

On May 28, 1976 the Kaunas Seminary ended its scholastic year.

The Seminary Rector, Dr. V. Butkus, addressed the seminarians in the dining hall, advising them to avoid during their vacation the friendship of reactionary priests (the labels "reactionary" and šisnarverbas) are coined by security agents and attached to more active priests). After a brief introduction, the Rector led Tumėnas into the seminarians' dining hall. The commissioner reiterated the rector's thoughts and ordered the seminarians to shun two priests in particular: Juozas Zdebskis and Alfonsas Svarinskas. According to the commissioner, these priests have suffered much and therefore they detest the Soviet government.

Priests are wondering by what right the seminary rector brought the commissioner into the seminarians' dining hall and allowed him to abuse priests faithful to the Church?

Vilnius

When a group of priests was leaving for the Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia, it was seen off at the Vilnius Airport by the Religious Affairs Commissioner. People noted with disgust how some of the priests made their farewells by kissing K. Tumėnas, who is a Trojan Horse being used to destroy the Church in Lithuania.

The former commissioner, J. Rugienis, used to be vulgar; he used to berate priests loudly and humiliate them. Because such behavior by the commissioner did not produce the desired results, the government replaced the former security agent with a polite and soft-spoken political officer. Tumėnas tries to be tactful, constantly stressing that he is a historian and the duties of commissioner were pressed upon him. He sometimes tries to allegedly help priests, but complains that he is powerless. Tumėnas gladly visits rectories gathering information the government needs.

It is time for certain priests to understand that friendship with the Religious Affairs Commissioner outrages the faithful, brings harm to the Church and allows atheists to divide priests.

Vilnius

The faithful are telling with sorrow of the hospitals of Vilnius: A believer dies, but the radio speaker above the bed continues to play popular music.

Priests usually visit the sick as ordinary visitors, they hear confessions in secret and give Communion.

## Šiluva

At the beginning of August 1976, crowds of people streamed toward Šiluva to celebrate the feast of the Virgin Mary's Birth, during which devotions are held an entire week from the 8th to the 15th. There was an especially large number of people on the 11th and 12th. The town was overflowing with motor vehicle inspectors, militiamen and auxiliary police. Auxiliary police tried to catch religious article vendors, even searching private homes where they suspected religious articles were kept. Women sold rosaries at the church door, but even here the brazen security agents tried to arrest them. On August 8th, one priest drove from the church three auxiliary police who were chasing religious article vendors.

The militia chased photographers who attempted to photograph or film the praying crowds of people, and took them to the Raseiniai *Rayon* security police chief who had set up headquarters near the Šiluva church. The security agents removed film from cameras and exposed it. After removing a film, one official taunted the owner by saying that he already had a boxful of such film. Officials would not allow photographers to film the praying people and suggested they film people at the song festival, or come to Šiluva after the recollections and take their pictures then.

The Rev. Antanas Lukošaitis was among the persons detained. He was also advised to photograph song festival participants. The priest explained that he was a Catholic priest and more interested in photographing people praying. The Raseiniai security police chief asked Father Lukošaitis why he had come here, demanded to see his papers, copied information from them and said, "Everything will be looked into."

Soviet officials fear lest, after thirty years of atheist propaganda, the world would see crowds gathered to pray and, swarming among them, militiamen and security agents, and especially lest the action of security agents and militiamen trying to catch religious article vendors be recorded on film.

## Kaltinėnai

To: The Lithuanian SSR Religious Affairs Commissioner of the USSR Council of Ministers

Copy to: The Telšiai Diocesan Chancery

A statement from: Rev. Bernardas Talaišis, son of Jonas,  
residing in Kaltinėnai, Šilalė *Rayon*

The Kretinga *Rayon* newspaper, *Švyturys (Reacon)*, printed on page 3 of its January 15, 1976 issue, news about the *rayon* atheist convention. The article "Convention Participants Speak Out" contains remarks by Bronius Mažonis, Principal of the Darbėnai Middle School.

"Why are the numbers of priests not decreasing?"

"Bernardas Talaišis, the pastor of Laukuva, is a good friend of mine. He is an atheist. Why doesn't he leave the priesthood? He claims he lacks the willpower. And what about money? He has no complaints. So he plays the hypocrite."

The very question, "Why are the numbers of priests not diminishing?" is erroneous. Your office must know precisely how much, at least over the past ten years, the number of priests have decreased in Lithuania and also that Father Talaišis has been the pastor of Kaltinėnai, and not of Laukuva, for the past nine years.

I must admit that I am not a bad friend, for I have never abused this title and respect all school chums as well as other friends, regardless of philosophy or belief. I was a classmate of Bronius Mažonis for a time and we participated in sports together. After becoming a priest, I met Mažonis only once, accidentally, around 1958 at a concert, where we did not discuss any philosophical questions. Since our school days, we have not paid one another a single visit nor have we exchanged a single letter. Then how can he possibly know anything in particular about my personal life? And now it appears that, at a loss for an effective argument for atheism, Mažonis remembered me, and, calling me "a good friend," proceeded to slander me, labeling me an atheist and deceitfully concluded that I play the hypocrite.

I officially state that I, the Rev. Bernardas Talaišis, have always believed and still believe in God, and have never intended to leave the priesthood. Hundreds of priests who know me, and thousands of believers are aware of this.

But as a Soviet Union citizen, I must state that a "friend" like Mažonis, who considers neither truth nor friendship important, is a disgrace; it would appear he does consider important any "argument" for atheism, even be it fabricated.

I wonder whether he thinks it important that, by presenting deceitful arguments, he debases himself as a man, a teacher, a school official, that he misleads all convention participants, the state and the party?

And is it important to the state? I believe it is very important.

And especially since the press has treated me not as a private individual, but as one performing the duties of a minister of cult.

I sincerely ask you, Mr. Commissioner, to see to it that Bronius Mažonis publicly retracts the lie which was spread so publicly.

Kaltinėnai, 1/28/1976

B. Talaišis

*"The Chronicle of the C.C.L." has not heard anything about a retraction of this slander. The Soviet press can slander a priest, but never vindicate him.*

Salos

In May, 1976 the Bishop of Panevėžys, Romualdas Krikščiuonas visited the parish of Salos.

In honor of their bishop, Salos parishioners erected a portal of honor near the entrance to the churchyard and decorated the church with wreaths. Salos state farm driver Šutas had to write the farm director an explanation for bringing branches from the woods. For this "offense", his vehicle was taken from him and he was assigned to repair tractors.

Even pensioners are terrorized in Salos. Farm officials made the following statement regarding Kazimieras Trumpickas: "He should be assigned grazing land far from home so he won't have time to go to church."

Kaišiadorys

In 1937, the faithful of Kaišiadorys, in commemoration of the 550th anniversary of the conversion of Lithuania, erected in the cathedral yard a cross artistically decorated with folk ornaments.

Ten years ago, the Kaišiadorys *Rayon* government ordered the fence removed and the churchyard made smaller; the splendid Gothic style churchyard portal and part of the fence were demolished. Several years ago, an order was again issued to demolish another part of the fence, and move the cross elsewhere. The pastor moved the commemorative cross to the cathedral vestibule.

On August 18, 1976 unknown evildoers ripped the figure of Christ from this cross. This is not the first time that those who remove images of Christ have struck. In 1975, figures of Christ disappeared from many headstones in the Kaišiadorys cemetery.

Šventybrastis

In the summer of 1976, the Rev. L. Jagminas, Pastor of the

parish of Šventybrastis, was helping a group of children prepare for first confession and Holy Communion. The atheists, of course, did not like this.

On August 19th, the pastor was summoned to the Tiškūnai District Executive Committee. District Chairman Smigelskas demanded that the pastor name the children, but he refused. The chairman then stated that he knew the names of some of the children, and drafted a report on the religious instruction of children.

On September 9th, Father Jagminas was summoned to see Kėdainiai *Rayon* Executive Committee Vice-Chairman Juškevičius, who, in the presence of the members of the *Rayon* Administrative Committee, read this committee's decision to warn Šventybrastis pastor, Father Jagminas, about the religious instruction of children. Vice-Chairman Juškevičius added that if a similar incident recurs in the future, the pastor will be prosecuted.

From 1959 to 1961, Father Jagminas taught a course in Sacred Scriptures at the Interdiocesan Seminary in Kaunas. He was removed from his position as seminary instructor at the demand of the Religious Affairs Commissioner. Rugienis accused Father Jagminas of spreading anti-Soviet sentiments in his lectures. Actually, the Religious Affairs Commissioner did not like the serious and conscientious instructor. Every so often, the Religious Affairs Commission "purges" the seminary of such instructors with the purpose of training priests who are unprincipled and who are little imbued with the spirit of the Church.

#### Pociūnėliai

For a long time the priests of this parish privately rented an apartment because the rectory had been converted into a dormitory, and the church custodial building is state farm property.

In May 1975, the pastor, Father A. Jokūbauskas, bought a house as a dwelling for the parish priest. When the bill of sale drawn up at the notary office, a certificate is required from the state farm in whose territory the house is located, stating that the purchaser is being granted a subdivision of 15 ares (approximately 6,500 sq. ft.) and permission to buy the house.

After purchasing the house, Father Jokūbauskas went to see Pociūnėliai state farm Chairman A. Stumbra to ask for the necessary certificate. The chairman did not issue the certificate on the pretext that it is forbidden by the *Rayon* government.

A halfyear later, the pastor again went to see the chairman on the same matter, but the reply was again negative.

On July 23, 1976 Father Jokūbauskas wrote a statement to the Radviliškis *Rayon* Executive Committee chairman asking him to urge the Pociūnėliai state farm chairman and council not to obstruct the drawing up of the purchase documents.

When he received no reply, the pastor wrote a second statement to the *Rayon* government on August 10th.

On August 13th, the pastor received a reply from *Rayon* Vice-Chairman A. Krikštanas, stating that drawing up purchase documents was within the jurisdiction of the state farm council.

On August 18th, Father Jokūbauskas again addressed the Pociūnėliai state farm council. When no reply was forthcoming, the pastor asked the state farm chairman on September 2nd when a council meeting would be held and when he would receive a reply. The chairman sternly replied that he would not issue any certificate and would not allow the house to be purchased. Moreover, he threatened angrily: "I will take care of you! Of course, not with my own hands!"

The pastor agreed that the chairman was capable of committing such a villainy. In concluding the conversation, the chairman ordered the pastor to keep silent about this meeting and promised to reply to the pastor's statement in writing.

On September 15th, Jokūbauskas received a reply that "The state farm intends to keep for itself the option to purchase the house being sold by Č. Mickevičius." When he worded this reply, the state farm chairman knew that Mickevičius' house had already been bought by the pastor, that Soviet laws do not forbid a priest to purchase a house and that priority is given the individual who lives in the house being sold.

Is this not a deliberate effort to harass a zealous priest so he might have less time and energy for direct pastoral work?

On July 10, 1975 Pociūnėliai Middle School Principal Taučius and Pociūnėliai State Farm Party Secretary (Mrs) Bžeskienė came to see the pastor, Father A. Jokūbauskas and recorded the names of the children who had come to the priest to be examined for first confession. Afterwards, these children were ridiculed and persecuted for an entire year in all kinds of ways, by their teachers in school. The children were afraid to attend church. Party Secretary (Mrs.) Bžeskienė and State Farm Chairman Stumbrą intimidated the children's parents by insisting they keep them away from church,

threatened to deny them the use of grazing land and so on. On Sundays, the parents would take their children to other churches.

Pociūnėliai Middle School Principal Taučius is trying, with the assistance of atheist teachers, to educate the students as atheists. Seeing that Father Jokūbauskas has great influence on youth, they resort to all types of means to paralyze the priest's work or to have him transferred from Pociūnėliai.

On August 12, 1976, Father Jokūbauskas was summoned before the Religious Affairs Commission in Vilnius. An employee of this office Murnikov, reminded the pastor the pastor that he must observe Soviet laws.

On August 15, 1976, Kazimieras Vainauskas, a resident of Noreikai village in the Pociūnėliai parish, and his family attended the Feast of Assumption services at Krekenava, and did not report for work because it was Sunday. On Monday, when Vainauskas came to work he was berated and punished by group leader Šapkus and the "Tiesa" state farm authorities. They confiscated about two wagon-loads of straw which he had brought back from the communal barley field. This is a great loss for a state farm worker. He could have possibly recovered his property by suit, but everyone knows from experience that afterwards there would be no living at the state farm. "Tiesa" state farm chairman Meilus keeps the farm workers under tremendous pressure, especially those who attend church.

#### Pociūnėliai

On July 2, 1976 Pociūnėliai Middle School Principal Taučius and teachers (Mrs) Buračienė, (Mrs) Sirtautienė and (Mrs) Rutkauskienė, having learned that the pastor, Father A. Jokūbauskas, was examining children for first confession, wanted to enter the church, take down the names of the children and later draw them away from the church through intimidation and persuasion. Father Jokūbauskas stood at the church door and would not allow the teachers to enter the church. Teacher Buračienė took this opportunity to lie that she wished to see the church at this time, entered, counted about 30 children, wrote down the names of those she knew and left. Father Jokūbauskas demanded that the principal show her permit to terrorize the children. Teacher Sirtautienė replied that the Party Secretary had telephoned, from the *Rayon* and ordered them to investigate the priests's work with the children.



**Rev. Alfonsas Svarinskas**  
**the Pastor of Vidukle parish**

It later became clear that the teachers went on their own initiative to "take care" of the children and the pastor.

On July 5th, Jokūbauskas was "educated" by the Skėmiai District Chairman, Pociūnėliai Party Secretary (Mrs; Bžeškienė and the teacher, (Mrs) Sirtautienė. In their opinion, the priest did not have the right to bar the teachers from church not to examine children in groups. The pastor calmly explained that it was his duty to protect the right of believers to the freedom of conscience, and therefore he had barred the teachers.

Teacher (Mrs) Buračienė, assisted by the principal, summoned the parents of the children seen in church and demanded written explanations, whether they themselves allow their children to attend church or the pastor orders them to do so. The parents wrote that they personally prepare their children for confession and then take them to the pastor to check their instruction.

Later, Teacher (Mrs) Buračienė went from village to village intimidating parents and demanding written explanations from both parents and children.

On July 19th, Father Jokūbauskas was summoned to the *Rayon* to see Executive Committee Vice-Chairman Krikštanas. The vice-chairman and party secretary (Mrs) Januševičienė explained, on the basis of the complaints filed by the teachers, that teachers have the right to investigate the priest's work with children, that the priest may examine a child brought by either a father or mother, but not alone. Vice-Chairman Krikštanas berated the priest on his sermons and funerals because he allegedly does not observe the rules they have set down: He buries some and not others. The vice-chairman pointed to art. 143 of the criminal code and demanded obedience.

The pastor did not consent to the demands of the vice-chairman and secretary and asserted that he had not violated any laws and would continue to observe them in the future but would not carry out the arbitrary demands of the vice-chairman because they are contrary to the Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Helsinki agreements.

When he returned from the *Rayon*, Father Jokūbauskas related to the faithful, at the end of his sermon at a funeral, the teachers' attempt to enter the church, the complaint lodged against him and vice-chairman Krikštanas' demands. He reminded the parents of their rights and duty to raise their children according to their beliefs and urged them conscientiously to prepare their children for first confession. The pastor explained that the teachers do not have the right to persecute children for attending church.

The faithful rejoice at their pastor's zeal and courage, but many fear that the priest might seriously suffer for his courage.

### Kretinga

On May 27, 1976, atheists carted away an entire truckload of statues, pictures and crosses from the Kretinga cemetery chapel. When asked what they intended to do with these statues and crosses, they replied that a museum of atheism is being set up at the former Franciscan Monastery, and these exhibits will be displayed there.

The Kretinga cemetery is also a sorry sight: broken crosses and shattered figures of Christ.

### Telšiai

In July 1976, the Telšiai militia detained Kretinga resident

(Mrs) Šauklienė for taking a church banner and crosses purchased with the funds of believers to the Plikiai church. (Mrs) Šauklienė spent two days at the militia. She was interrogated, intimidated and threatened with prosecution. The banner was confiscated.

#### Naujoji Uta

A statue of the Virgin Mary stood for many years in the Village of Skuigė. When the statue deteriorated, the residents erected a beautiful stone cross in its place. One night, the people noticed Žemaitkiemis State Farm Vice-Chairman Pijus Danilevičius striking the cross. The men chased the vandal away, but several days later the cross was stolen (1975).

#### Pagėgiai

On June 16, 1976, just before services, the Pagėgiai church sacristy was forcibly entered by Pagėgiai Town Chairwoman (Mrs) R. Dzedulionienė and two unknown individuals. Noticing a boy dressed in altar boy robes, they began to interrogate him: Who was he, where was he from and the like. They then ordered him, "Take off the altar boy robes and leave!"

On Sunday, the Pastor of Pagėgiai, Father A. Baškys, explained Soviet laws to the faithful in church, saying that no one may be persecuted for his faith. And once again, as they did before, children are serving at Holy Mass.

#### Rūkai

This year, the custodian of the Rūkai cemetery, a 73-year-old woman, was preparing a group of children for First Communion. Each year she has been preparing the children well for the occasion.

On June 18, 1976, she was assailed by a committee from the *Rayon*. They interrogated her, the parents and children.

This year government officials were content with merely scolding the "offenders" who instruct children in the truths of the faith.

#### Raguva

On June 10, 1975 the Rev. A. Petrauskas, pastor of the church in Raguva, was in the church checking the religious instruction of children preparing for first confession. Raguva District Chairwoman (Mrs) Buinauskienė, accompanied by an unknown woman, entered the church at that time and asked the pastor to step outside. Raguva Middle School Principal Nerečionis was waiting near the

churchyard gate. He berated the pastor for not obeying the law and instructing children. The officials drafted a report stating that the pastor was instructing children.

On the basis of this report the Panevėžys *Rayon* administrative committee, composed of Chairman Indriūnas, Secretary Morozova and Members Skorochoodov, Kryževičius and (Miss) Tifovaitė, imposed a 30-ruble fine on the Raguva pastor on July 5, 1975.

"Well, pastor, will this information reach the *Chronicle*?" asked the officials.

"I cannot answer this question, because I have told many people of this incident," replied the pastor. "If the *Chronicle* does write about this incident, you will not be able to deny that it is reporting the facts accurately, or say that it is slandering the Soviet system."

### Jurbarkas

In the summer of 1976, the graves of four priests were desecrated in the Jurbarkas churchyard: Fences were knocked down,



**Jurbarkas. The vandalized statue of the Good Shepherd**



**Head broken from the statue of the Good Shepherd by vandals  
in Jurbarkas, 1976**

flowers were trampled, cement blocks were scattered throughout the churchyard. The right hand and the head of the beautiful statue of the Good Shepherd were broken off.

#### Klaipėda

On June 29, 1976, three militiamen set upon religious article vendors near the Klaipėda church. The women fled, but the militiamen confiscated all the candles, rosaries and missals.

Klaipėda residents ask: "Where can the faithful buy rosaries and missals?" Each year hundreds of children prepare for first confession in the huge Klaipėda parish. What should they use to pray? Why aren't militiamen as zealous when hoodlums throw rocks at church windows, even during services?

#### Chernyakhovsk

East Prussia, which lost its local inhabitants when they fled the Red Army, were driven out or died from starvation, has been annexed to the Russian Federated Republic. Abandoned fields, overgrown with bushes and grass, attest to the fact that there is no owner's

touch here. Most of the inhabitants are Russian, but there are quite a few Lithuanians, Poles and other nationalities.

Neither in Kaliningrad (formerly Karaliaučius, Königsberg) nor other large towns of the area, for instance, in Chernyakhovsk (Isrute-Instengurb), is there a single active Catholic or Orthodox church. One Kaliningrad church which had been damaged during the war was demolished this summer.

In 1975, at the request of the faithful, the pastor of the Vištytis parish, the Rev. Kazys Montvila, began at the request of the faithful to minister to the sick, hear Easter confessions and baptize in the town of Chemyakhovsk.

Father Montvila baptized several Catholic and Orthodox children in the tiny apartment of (Miss) Jane Morkūnaitė. The Birštonas family on Kirov Street offered the use of a larger room for prayer. Father Montvila occasionally said Mass there and gave sermons that even Russians came to hear. He heard confessions there and distributed Holy Communion. Those who had not yet received First Communion were given prayerbooks and all learned prayers and catechism.

After making several visits to Chemyakhovsk, Father Montvila began to be followed. Sometimes the surveillance lost its quarry, but at others, it was necessary to skip services. On Kirov street, the Russians began to say that the priest would be arrested, but he was not very concerned.

On February 20, 1975, several cars came to a stop in front of the Birštonas family home, at 10 Kirov street. Only (Mrs) Birštonienė was at home. The security agents asserted that the Birštonas family had ties with America; therefore, they were going to search the apartment. Some searched the barn, turning over hay, straw, firewood, looking into every box; others searched the rooms, the kitchen and the storeroom. When they spied luggage in the closet, the searchers were overjoyed: "We will find the material we need here, and maybe even a transmitter!" In the luggage they found neither a transmitter nor anti-Soviet material, but only church articles: candles, missals, surplice, a Bible and the like. The security agents threw everything on the floor. They turned every page, scrutinized every little thing over and over. The religious woman was distressed at the disrespectful way holy vessels and books were thrown to the floor

(Mrs.) Birštonienė was questioned about why the priest had turned their home into a church, why he performed baptisms, heard

confessions and distributed catechisms. The agents gave orders that the priest no longer come here and no longer mislead people. people.

After the search was completed, they drafted a report. This was done to frighten everyone thoroughly so that the thought would not enter their minds in the future to invite the priest to their home. Believers who wish to pray sometimes have to travel over 100 kilometers (60 miles) to Pagėniai or Kybartai.

## IN THE SOVIET SCHOOL

### Arminai

Arminai Middle School Principal (Mrs) J. Berentienė went to the 10th grade class on April 20, 1976 and asked: "Who among you attended church on Easter?" There was complete silence. Then the principal said: "Stand up on your own, because I already know very well who was in church!" The tenth-grade students stood up. It seems that many Communist Youth League members and the school communist league secretary had gone to church. There began lectures against religion, the church was ridiculed, and afterwards a Communist Youth League meeting was held during which members were harassed for going to church. Communist Youth members were even summoned to the Vilkaviškis *Rayon*. There, *Rayon* Communist Youth League Secretary A. Lengvinas took membership cards away and ruled on whether or not to allow believer students to remain in the Communist Youth League. 11th grade student B. Ramanauskaitė was promised the return of her membership card only if she promised not to attend church.

### Šilalė

On January 13, 1976, Šilalė Middle School Teacher (Mrs) Vasiliauskienė was conducting an atheistic discussion with two grades of children, attended by about sixty students. Communist Youth members read reports which insulted priests, slandered the church and degraded believers. Then the students were told to state their views, but remained silent. Then (Mrs.) Vasiliauskienė asked one student:

"Then you still believe in God and do not renounce the Church? Don't you remember how many books I've given you to read?"

"It is your atheistic books which opened my eyes. I saw that everything is distorted in them."

"I did not expect an intelligent girl like you to speak such nonsense. And who do you obey when you go to church?" asked the agitated teacher.

"I obey the voice of my conscience," calmly replied the student.

"Well, go ahead and obey!" retorted the teacher angrily.

"Well, I will obey!" the girl did not back down. "All great scholars believed and believe, then why do you call believers ignorant, and the truths of faith, old wives' tales?"

The teacher did not reply, but merely repeated: "I did not expect this from you!"

Teacher Vasiliauskienė addressed another girl:

"Well, and what do you think? Have you decided to join the Communist Youth League yet?"

"I will not change my beliefs and will not join the Communist Youth League. Your efforts are useless, teacher. Leave us alone."

Then the teacher addressed a third girl:

"What do you think, are those girls behaving properly?"

"The Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience. They have their views, they can either believe or not believe . . ."

After dismissing the rest of the students, and intending to thoroughly frightening the girls, (Mrs) Vasiliauskienė berated them for a long time, "educated" them, called them stubborn and fanatical.

## Buckūnai

Stasys, the son of Vincas Klimavičius, attends the Daugai Mechanical Trade School. He has been a good student for three years and has had a scholarship the entire time. In 1975 Stasys missed six classes at Christmas time. Home Room Teacher Žižiūnas wasted no time in punishing him; his scholarship was taken away, although there is hardly any better student than Stasys and many students who hold scholarships miss classes. The classroom teacher explained to the father that his son had also missed classes earlier and always during church holidays. Moreover, the teacher said, our class has inaugurated a point system in which points are awarded for membership in an atheist club and attendance at meetings; Stasys does not attend those meetings, therefore, his point total is below that of other students and therefore his scholarship is being withheld. (Mr.) Klimavičius then stated:

"If my son attempted to belong to such an unworthy club and would thus cater to you in an attempt to get a scholarship, he would not be worthy of receiving food and clothing from his parents."

And so, for missing six classes, Stasys lost his scholarship for four months, 120 rubles in all .. .

### **Šiauliai**

On November 27, 1975, at the Fifth Middle School, first year classroom teacher (Miss) Jasiutė warned the students not to attend church and threatened to take anyone she happened to see doing so to the principal. Even if parents do take them to church, the children are not to pray.

One day, the classroom teacher took all first year students to the auditorium, ordered them to read an oath and pinned a "Little Atheist" star on each. If any student came to class without the star, the teacher would immediately pin on a new one. The children are warned that if they do not wear the pin, they will receive failing grades.

### **Palanga**

In the Spring of 1976, Palanga Middle School students were ordered to fill out an atheist questionnaire: Do you believe in God, do you attend church and so on?

The students of grade 6a all replied that they believe in God and will never be atheists. Classroom teacher Kusas ordered them to fill out the questionnaire again. And again the students wrote the same thing. The enraged classroom teacher told the pioneer group leader that grade 6a should be written up and posted on the bulletin board for everyone to deride them; perhaps they will then renounce "religious superstition." The students joked that they will at least this once appear on the honor roll.

### **Gižai**

At the beginning of August 1976, Gižai Middle School Teacher Sigitas Brazaitis began to follow students who were preparing for first confession and were going to the church to see the priest. One day while drunk, Teacher S. Brazaitis stopped two children walking in the direction of the church and threatened their mothers that once

the school year begins their children would receive lower department grades.

### **Letter to the Editors**

We picked up the first issue of *Dievas ir Tėvynė* (*God and Country*) with great joy. This is already the third publication being printed here. We would like to make a few remarks:

*The Chronicle of the C.C.L.* should publish material dealing with the affairs of the Church and the faithful.

*Aušra* (*Dawn*) is a national magazine. It should refresh and stimulate our Lithuanian consciousness, it should indicate against what and for what we should be fighting.

*Dievas ir Tėvynė* does not clearly state its purpose. It could be more educational, provide doctrinal information; for instance, the short article "Miracle in Lourdes" is good. It is, however, unfortunate that this publication's tone is too harsh, offensive to those who think otherwise and, as such, unsuitable for wide distribution. Such outbursts as: "Today we are governed by the lowest dregs: Communist-opportunists," "Atheism does not contain a single grain of truth, is pure absurdity, fanatical stubbornness, the worse sect" and so on, merely repel people. These are not arguments, but name-calling. We believers must not use such terms; the atheist press is replete with them.

Let us respect others, if we wish others to respect us. We must not try to turn hatred of error or corruption into hatred of the individual. Regardless of the faults of Professor Daukša, an intellectual should not resort to such epithets as "ignorant professor," "two-faced professor" and the like.

—From the letter of a reader of the *Chronicle of the C.C.L.*

### **Remarks by the Chronicle of the C. C. L.**

Since all three publications are published underground and their editors do not always know one another, readers should not be surprised if some of the publications' articles seem "out of place." *The Chronicle of the C.C.L.* will in the future limit itself more to news of concern to the Church and the faithful.

### **The Chronicle of the C. C.L. Makes a Clarification:**

In its 23rd issue, the *Chronicle of the C.C.L.* printed an item

which was not quite accurate about Antanas Patackas, instructor at the Agricultural School. He was dismissed from work and denied the right to work in education when he was accused of nationalism (He helped Lithuanians in Belorussia revive the Lithuanian language) and unsuitable ideology (He did not teach students in the proper Communist spirit).

A request from the publishers of the Chronicle of the C.C.L.

We ask our readers not only to send material to the *Chronicle of the C.C.L.* but also to photograph the individuals, places and events discussed in the articles or news they submit. It is very important to save all this for posterity. A caption, stating what is pictured, must be included with the photograph.

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