



**CHRONICLE OF THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH  
IN LITHUANIA**

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**CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
IN LITHUANIA No. 51**

**A Translation of the Complete Lithuanian Original  
LIETUVOS KATALIKŲ RAŽNYČIOS KRONIKA Nr. 51  
Documenting the Struggle for Human Rights  
In Soviet-Occupied Lithuania Today**

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**COVER: A few of the many sentenced for working with the  
CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN  
LITHUANIA: Petras Plumpa-Pluiras, Nijolė Sadū-  
naitė, Rev. Virgilijus Jaugelis, Vladas Lapienis,  
Ona Vitkauskaitė, Anastazas Janulis.**

**CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
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**Introduction**

**In 1940, when the Soviet Union occupied Lithuania by force, 85.5% of the country's more than 3 million inhabitants were Roman Catholic, 4.5% Protestant, 7.3% Jewish, 2.5% Orthodox and 0.2% of other persuasions.**

**In the two archdioceses and four dioceses were: 708 churches, 314 chapels, 73 monasteries, 85 convents, three archbishops, nine bishops, 1271 diocesan priests, 580 monks, of whom 168 were priests. Four seminaries had 470 students. There were 950 nuns.**

**Nuns cared for 35 kindergartens, 10 orphanages, 25 homes for the aged, two hospitals, a youth center, and an institute for the deaf-mute.**

**On June 15, 1940, the Red Army marched into Lithuania; the independent government was replaced by a puppet regime.**

**On July 14-15, rigged elections were staged. On July 21, with the Red Army surrounding the assembly house, the new People's Diet "unanimously" declared Lithuania a Soviet Socialist Republic.**

**On June 25, 1940, the Church was declared separate from the state, and the representative of the Holy See was expelled.**

**Parish lands were confiscated, clergy salaries and pensions were cut off, and their savings confiscated. Churches were deprived of support. Catholic printing plants were confiscated, and religious books destroyed.**

**On June 28, 1940, the teaching of religion and recitation of prayers in schools was forbidden. The University's Department of Theology and Philosophy was abolished, and all private schools were nationalized. The seminaries at Vilkaviškis and Telšiai were closed, and the seminary at Kaunas was permitted to operate on a very limited scale. The clergy were spied upon constantly.**

**On June 15, 1941, 34,260 Lithuanians were packed off in cattle-**

cars to undisclosed points in the Soviet Union. After World War II, the mass deportations resumed and continued until 1953.

Vincentas Borisevičius, Bishop of Telšiai, was arrested on February 3, 1946, and condemned to death after a secret trial. Before year's end, his auxiliary, Bishop Pranas Ramanauskas, was also arrested and deported to Siberia. Bishop Teofilus Matulionis of Kaišiadorys and Archbishop Mečislovas Reinsys of Vilnius were deported to a Siberian labor camp. Archbishop Reinsys perished in prison at Vladimir, November 8, 1953. By 1947, Lithuania was left with a single bishop, Kazimieras Paltarokas, of Panevėžys. He died in 1958.

In 1947, the last convents and monasteries were closed, their communities dispersed, and all monastic institutions were outlawed.

After Stalin's death in 1953, there was a slight improvement in the religious situation. Bishops Matulionis and Ramanauskas were allowed to return to Lithuania, but not to minister to their dioceses or to communicate with the clergy or laity.

Bishop Ramanauskas died in 1959, and Archbishop Matulionis in 1963.

In 1955, two new bishops were appointed by Rome and consecrated: Julijonas Steponavičius and Petras Maželis. Steponavičius has never been permitted to administer his diocese.

Bishop Vincentas Sladkevičius, consecrated in 1957, is also under severe government restrictions. In 1965, Monsignor Juozas Labukas-Matulaitis was consecrated in Rome to head the Archdiocese of Kaunas and the Diocese of Vilkaviškis.

Relaxation of pressure on religious believers soon revealed that the Lithuanian people were still deeply religious. It was decided in the mid-fifties to resume the attack. The principal means of attack would be unlimited moral pressure, since physical terror seemed only to strengthen and unify the faithful.

In 1972, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, clandestinely published in that country, began to reach the free world at irregular intervals. Primarily intended to keep Catholics in Lithuania informed of the situation of the Church there, these Lithuanian *samizdat* also serve as a constant appeal to the free world not to forget the plight of a people struggling against overwhelming odds to defend their religious beliefs and to regain their basic human rights.

*Rev. Casimir Pugevičius*  
Translation Editor

**Read it and pass it on!**  
**Appearing since March 19, 1972**

*We thank the Lord for this tenth anniversary!*

**CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
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**Lithuania.....**

**March 19, 1982**

## MESSAGES OF CONGRATULATIONS

**To: His Holiness Pope John-Paul 11.  
The Vatican.**

**Holy Father:**

We, the Catholics of Lithuania, follow with utmost attention over Vatican and other Western radio stations your words, teachings, works and frequent voyages to various continents to bring today's errant world Truth and Love.

We, who have suffered much during the last four decades, are moved by Your Holiness' constant concern for basic human rights, which are trampled here with particular ruthlessness, and we are moved by your amazing love for your homeland.

Because of geographic proximity and similar political circumstances, we are very familiar with the tragedy of Poland, and we understand it well. Whatever the fate of that nation, it will influence our future efforts and struggle. In Lithuania, the government atheists who fight against young believers continually repeat: "In Poland also, everything began with the rosary . . ."

Holy Father, from your actions we learn love of God and country. We now have an undisputed, prestigious example that by struggling for the rights of God, the Church and our fellow countrymen, we do not undercut our direct mission.

The priests and believers of Lithuania thank you in prayer and works for the kindness of your parental heart, your daily remembrance in prayer, for the greetings in Lithuanian on various occasions, for the Lithuanian sermon in the chapel of St. Casimir's College, for naming Bishop Paulius Marcinkus, Bishop Jonas-Vytautas Bulaitis and Msgr. Audrys Bačkis to high and responsible church positions. Thereby, Your Holiness, you draw the world's attention to the small Catholic nation on the banks of the amber-laden Baltic, which for over forty years now has been conducting a life-or-death struggle for God in people's hearts, for survival of Church and nation. This moral support is of inestimably vital importance to us.

Our nation, devastated for four decades now, has mustered all its spiritual forces and has been striding, especially during the last ten years, toward rebirth with the slogan: "Renew everything in Christ!"

The Catholics of Lithuania are constantly praying for Your Holiness, asking the Almighty to protect Your life from hired assassins,

to keep you for many years for God's honor and the good of the Church. Let us nurture the idea that in 1987 when we celebrate the venerable 600th anniversary of the advent of Christianity to Lithuania, we will be able to welcome Your Holiness fittingly at the shrine of *Aušros Vartai* (Gate of Dawn) Mother of God to whom, at your installation on St. Peter's Throne, you gave your cardinal's hat.

We, the priests and believers of Lithuania, while commemorating the tenth anniversary of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, kneel at Your Holiness' feet and ask: "Holy Father, bless the forty-year struggle of our Church and country, the suffering, the great sacrifices, all our prisoners with teacher Petras Paulaitis in the forefront (on October 30th of this year, he will complete his 35-year sentence), the bishops, especially the exiled Julijonas Steponavičius and Vincentas Sladkevičius who have spent over twenty years in exile, the priests (a third of whom trod Gulag roads of suffering), the monks and nuns, the believers and our brethren living abroad."

The Priests and Believers of Lithuania

To: His Excellency Archbishop Paulius Marcinkus,  
The Vatican.

We extend our heart-felt congratulations to Your Excellency on your assumption of the important and responsible post in the Vatican and we pray God to grant you good health and countless blessings. We have been separated from the West since 1940, and the East ends in Siberia, therefore only in prayer can we reach you in time to offer our congratulations.

We have long since become acquainted with Your Excellency from Vatican Radio. We rejoice that a Lithuanian saved Pope Paul VI's life from the assassin's hand, that you now accompany a second pope on his apostolic journeys to various continents.

Last year we were delighted to learn that you were planning to visit the yet unseen, but beloved land of your forebears. Unfortunately, the Soviet government feared this visit and the enthusiasm of fellow Lithuanians which a visit to your parents' land would have elicited. We still retain the hope that your old dream "to kiss the cherished soil of Lithuania" will come true during the two major anniversaries in 1984 and 1987.

We are grateful to the Western press for not failing to mention our exiled bishop Julijonas Steponavičius whenever they write about



**Archbishop Paul Marcinkus, Pro-President of the Pontifical  
Commission for the State of Vatican City**

**you. The fulfillment of the press' prophecy would be the greatest confirmation of our nation's sacrifices and sufferings.**

**The sermon Your Excellency preached via Vatican Radio on July 5, 1981, profoundly resounded in the hearts of every Lithuanian worthy of the name. How wonderful it would be if all of our nation's sons and daughters, regardless of where they live, could repeat your words:**

**"With all my heart I grew up with the history of Lithuania, for it is the history of my parents and grandparents. I grew up with the Lithuanian culture in my heart for it is the culture of the Lithuanian nation, of my parents and grandparents ... I am also**

grateful to those living in Lithuania for their beautiful example of love of country."

Your Excellency, bless the free voice of our Church — *The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* — which is commemorating the first decade of its existence. Please convey our most heartfelt thanks to all who have helped it overcome the obstacles of several languages and speak to the world about the hardships of Lithuania's Catholics. In this difficult hour we are in dire need of the help of public opinion.

May Your Excellency live long!

The Priests and Believers of Lithuania.

To: His Excellency Archbishop Jonas-Vytautas Bulaitis,  
Central Africa

Our heartiest congratulations on the high point of our priesthood — your consecration to bishop and appointment to high church position. We wish you countless blessings from God and long years in the service of God and Church!

On the Feast of the Three Kings our hearts were in Rome with you and all Lithuanians who came to your celebration. The respect and love of the entire fighting nation goes out to you, Your Excellency! We were delighted to hear the radio broadcast of your words, attesting to your determination to support anywhere you might be, the needs of your fellow Lithuanian Catholics. We would like to hear your words on every possible occasion.

The land of your forebears and your parents' native parish— Kučiūnai — invite Your Excellency to come for a visit. Your visit would bring us great joy and you would have an opportunity to experience not only the love of your fellow-countrymen, but also the difficult conditions under which they must practice their faith.

We thank your mother, a Lithuanian mother, who raised a large Lithuanian, Christian family. She is a wonderful example to us living in the homeland.

We extend our best to your brothers and sisters! Health and best wishes!

Your Excellency, although you will have direct responsibility for Africa's Christians, please do your utmost also to help our homeland. Make public the wrongs against our nation and Church, help the Holy See interpret the information which comes from the homeland.

**Bless our suffering, our struggle and our determination to create a brighter future for Church and country.**

**The Priests and Believers of Lithuania**

## **THE SPIRITUAL REBIRTH OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA**

### **Introduction**

At the conclusion of World War II, the helm of the government of Lithuania was assumed by militant atheists who were determined to wipe out the Catholic Church. Lithuanians who loved God and country were confronted with the question: What will happen next? The priests of Vilkaviškis turned to their old and wise shepherd, Bishop Karosas, asking advice in the new situation.

"Whatever the government says, do the opposite and all will be well," the bishop replied. It only remained to put his advice into practice. Events unfolded as follows:

1946 — the Theological Seminaries in Vilnius, Telšiai and Vilkaviškis were closed. Bishops Teofilius Matulionis and Vincentas Borisevičius were arrested.

1947 — Archbishop Mečislovas Reinys of the Archdiocese of Vilnius (later to die in Vladimir Prison) and Telšiai Auxiliary Bishop Pranciškus Ramanauskas were arrested.

A third of Lithuania's priests was sent to the Gulag. Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius was executed in 1947.

1948-49 — convents were closed, many churches were converted into warehouses or used for profane purposes. Lithuanians were deported to Siberia en masse.

At the government's initiative, committees of twenty were set up to replace church parish committees. The committees of twenty were forced into unilateral contracts which discriminated against the faithful.

Church authorities were compelled to issue uncanonical instructions and to support the Soviet government's deceitful "struggle for peace".

Thus, Msgr. Juozapas Stankevičius, administrator of the Archdiocese of Kaunas and the Dioceses of Vilkaviškis and Kaišiadorys, informed priests that it was forbidden to instruct children, visit the faithful; children could not serve at the altar. Fatal concessions to the Soviet government were called "diplomacy". When a priest

complained to the chancery that he was being attacked by the government, he was told: "You were stupid and did not know how to live!" Quite a few priests forgot Bishop Karosas' wise advice and began to adopt the chancery's new style.

During this period, national and church resistance was broken, while those who yielded to force dreamed up the slogan: "You can't knock a wall down with your forehead."

The terror continued during the rule of Nikita Khrushchev. Eleven priests again left for the Gulag. Bishop Vincentas Sladkevičius was exiled (1959) as was Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius (1961). The newly built Klaipėda church was closed in 1961 and its builders were prosecuted.

In the 70's priests who ever so slightly deviated from secret Soviet instruction were forbidden to minister as priests. The KGB conducted a secret fight against the Kaunas Theological Seminary for the purpose of drawing more seminarians into its web.

#### **The Beginning of Rebirth**

1964-65 must be considered the beginning of the rebirth of the Catholic Church in Lithuania. Priests slowly plucked up their courage and began to instruct children in groups here and there. Ever more often a courageous word resounded in sermons, urging the faithful to awaken from their sleep, fear and paralysis. The efforts of Commissar for Religious Affairs Ruginis to terrorize priests became less and less effective.

The year 1968 is very significant for the Catholic Church in Lithuania. That year, active priests vigorously discussed what methods should be used to fight against the arbitrariness of the government atheists. The outcome of these discussions: the decision individually and as a group to begin demanding a minimum of religious freedom.

In August 1968, Fathers Vladas Šlevas and Alfonsas Pridotkas of the Diocese of Telšiai each sent the USSR Council of Ministers a statement in which they raised certain instances of discrimination against the Church: the shortage of prayerbooks, interference with the theological seminary, etc. Both priests were berated by government officials and transferred to other parishes.

In the meantime, a group petition was being prepared in the diocese of Vilkauskis regarding the tragic situation of the Kaunas Seminary, which states, among other things:

"Some thirty priests die in Lithuania every year, but because of



**Fr. Juozas Zdebskis**

the small quota imposed by the government, the seminary can graduate barely five or six priests . . . When applicants are accepted, the deciding voice belongs not to the seminary authorities, but to government officials . . . The time has come to demand that the seminary quota be abolished and that Soviet government organs stop preventing young men from entering the seminary."

This petition (December 31, 1968) was signed by sixty-three priests of the Diocese of Vilkaviškis.

On January 8, 1969, two Vilkaviškis priests, Fathers Juozas Zdebskis and Petras Dumbliauskas, sent a joint statement to the Council of Ministers of the USSR regarding the restrictions placed on the Kaunas Theological Seminary. The party and the authorities long unaccustomed to such "insolence" from priests, sent chekists to in-



**Fr. Sigitas Tamkevičius**

investigate the "offenders". Following interrogations and intimidations, Father Juozas Zdebskis and Sigitas Tamkevičius were forbidden indefinitely to perform their priestly duties and ordered to find employment. Both priests worked for one year in land reclamation. Father Lionginas Kunevičius, who attempted to defend the punished priests, was also ordered to surrender his certificate of registration; and when he disobeyed, he was drafted for several months by the military.

Government repressions against priests, far from stopping the religious movement, even helped it grow.

In 1969 the priests of the Dioceses of Telšiai, Vilnius and Panevėžys continued to assail Soviet agencies, demanding freedom for the Church.

In the meantime, the young people organized in secret, held closed retreats, and deepened their religious outlook. Slowly, the convents which had been driven underground began to recover and work more actively. In 1969, the "Friends of the Eucharist" movement was formed and assumed a vital role in the spiritual rebirth of the Catholic Church in Lithuania.

In 1970, three churches — in Sangrūda, Gaurė and Bataikiai — were burned down in succession. No one doubted that this was a form of blackmail by government atheists, whose purpose was to convince all that the fight for Church rights was senseless.

On September 9, 1970, Father Antanas Šeškevičius was convicted of instructing children. Following a search, Father Juozas Zdebskis was arrested in 1971, and was convicted on November 12th of instructing children. That same day and for the same "offense", Father Prosperas Bubnys was put on trial. Three priests in labor camps were to convince eight hundred who were free that the Soviet government must be obeyed more than God, but the opposite occurred: Most priests, concurring with Father Antanas Šeškevičius' words spoken at his Molėtai trial, that "God must be obeyed rather than men" (Acts 5:29), instructed children even more zealously. Believers throughout Lithuania began to collect signatures to a memorandum which the world will later call the "Memorandum of the 17,000 believers".

#### The Tenth Anniversary of the Struggle for the Catholic Church's Freedom in Lithuania

This year marks a decade since the start of the stubborn struggle between rightless Lithuanian priests and believers, and government atheists backed by the KGB, the government's administrative apparatus and mass communications media. Here are the highlights of this fight:

On February 7, 1972, Lithuania's priests and believers sent the Soviet authorities, through the United Nations, a memorandum bearing 17,000 signatures, which described the servile situation of the Catholic Church in Lithuania and demanded that freedom be restored.

The Soviet government forced Lithuania's Ordinaries to condemn the memorandum, but failed to stop the movement for Church freedom.

On March 19, 1972, the first issue of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* was published, standing up like David against Goliath in the name of Almighty God. It assumed one of the



**Students of the Theological Seminary in Kaunas,  
on their way to services at the cathedral.**

most important roles in the rebirth of the Catholic Church in Lithuania.

The self-immolation of Romas Kalanta on May 4, 1972, and the youth demonstrations which followed for several days had no ties with the religious rebirth movement, but it undoubtedly helped the religious rebirth.

In an attempt to pacify the priests, the Soviet government replaced the chekist Religious Affairs Commissar Rugienis with the more flexible party staffer Kazimieras Tumėnas, but his mission failed.

In 1972 a correspondence seminary began to take shape in Lithuania. This was a reaction against the activities of the KGB at the Interdiocesan Kaunas Theological Seminary. The thought took shape among the clergy that a situation in which young men rejected by the KGB could continue their studies and be ordained, was intolerable. Today, the correspondence seminary has adjusted even more to conditions of persecution and causes the Soviet government great anxiety. The establishment of this seminary was one of the most positive steps in the life of the postwar Catholic Church in Lithuania. Its initiators were young men barred from the seminary by the KGB.

On November 19 and 20, 1973, the KGB struck a severe blow against the underground of the Catholic Church in Lithuania. Many successful searches and several arrests allowed the government atheists to boast: No more prayerbooks, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* is destroyed and the faithful of Lithuania will again become silent as the grave. Fortunately, this did not happen.

Lithuania's religious and national rebirth was greatly served not only by the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, but by the entire free (underground — Tr. Note) press. One after another, new publications made their appearance: *Aušra (The Dawn)*, *Dievas ir Tėvynė (God and Country)*, *Tiesos Kelias (The Way of Truth)*, *Rūpintojėlis (Suffering Christ)*, *Perspektyvos (Perspectives)*, *Alma Mater*, *Laisvės šauklis (Herald of Freedom)*, *Vytis, (The Knight)*, *Ateitis (The Future)*, etc. All the publications, although imperfect and reaching readers with difficulty, banded idealists together, opened vistas of freedom, aroused the awareness and courage of Lithuanians.

During the last ten years the nuns have done beautiful work. Some of them have actively joined the struggle for the freedom of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, others have quietly instructed children, brought young people together, others still have supported the active members with their prayers and sacrifice. It is difficult to express our gratitude to those who have done and still do the Lord's work with perseverance and sacrifice. It is with good reason that the KGB moved into action persecuting convents, spying upon them, attempting to recruit agents in convents, etc.

From 1970 to 1975 the Soviet government demanded that all Lithuanian parishes renew the unilateral "contracts", imposed on them by force in 1948, which give the faithful nothing, but only impose obligations on them. It is very unfortunate that most of the clergy lacked sufficient awareness and determination: This government campaign was almost completely successful, although currently there are several dozen parishes in Lithuania which have not renewed their "contracts". As a rule, all erroneous steps and all concessions were first made by opportunist and career-minded priests. With resistance then broken, it was easier for the Soviet government to bring other priests into line.

On August 1, 1975, the Helsinki Final Act provided the militant Catholic Church in Lithuania with a strong basis to demand basic human rights. "Give us what you have publicly pledged before the whole world!"

**In August, 1975, Lithuanian youth, mostly Friends of the Eucharist, went to Siluva in an organized group to beseech the Mother of God to pardon the nation's sins and to ask for the grace of rebirth. Over a period of five years, this youth procession so frightened the Soviet authorities that they used the military, the KGB, the militia and trials to stop it.**

**On July 28, 1976, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR adopted a decree confirming the "Regulations for Religious Associations". For several years government officials had remained completely silent about those regulations to avoid protests by priests and believers. The confirmation of the regulations proved that the Soviet government not only had not renounced its struggle against believers, but was legalizing the discrimination which had been carried out over many years.**

**In the summer of 1977 when the new Constitution of the Lithuanian SSR was being drafted, Lithuanian believers, priests and even Ordinaries submitted their suggestions in writing, but the party completely ignored them and Article 50, which discriminated against believers, was left in the Constitution: They are granted the right "to perform religious ceremonies", while atheists are granted the right "to conduct atheist propaganda".**

**On November 13, 1978, the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights was founded in Lithuania. Priests and believers greeted the Committee's founding with joy, but there were those who awaited the swift arrest of Committee members. Lithuanians in Lithuania and in the West must be thanked for understanding and appreciating the activities of the Catholic Committee.**

**The spiritual rebirth of Lithuania's believers was greatly served by the new Pope, John Paul II, who has many times shown particular attention to Lithuania. The Holy Father's example, as well as his encouraging words have inspired and still inspire Lithuania's priests and faithful to defend energetically the rights of the Catholic Church and remain faithful to Christ.**

**In 1979, 522 Lithuanian priests and two exiled bishops voiced their solidarity with Document No. 5 issued by the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights and their opposition to the "Regulations for Religious Associations". This mass protest by Lithuania's priests indicated that Lithuania's clergy had not been broken or confused, excluding a small number of KGB collaborators. Perhaps that is why the KGB began to recruit seminarians, even more**

intensively, in the hope that in the future Lithuania's priests would be divided and crushed.

In 1980, believers and priests in Lithuania began a broad campaign for national temperance. The Soviet government was not kindly disposed toward this campaign, and hindered it. The establishment of a Temperance Society was forbidden, while the Ordinaries of Lithuania, who in the beginning showed fine initiative, withdrew from this campaign, due to Soviet government pressure. (Only the Administrator of the Diocese of Telšiai did not succumb.).

A very significant event in the life of the Catholic Church in Lithuania was the establishment of Priests' Senates. The Soviet government immediately perceived the danger and began an indirect fight against Priests' Senates. It is very unfortunate that nearly all Lithuanian Ordinaries in office, excluding the Telšiai Administrator (The exiled bishops supported the Priests' Senates and blessed them.), under pressure by the KGB and the Religious Affairs Commissar, did not support the Priests' Senates; but they continue to exist. Even if Priests' Senates were formally abolished, there would still remain in every diocese nuclei of priests which would play a vital role in diocesan life and the struggle for Church rights. A vivid example is a document from the Priests' Senates of all the dioceses (May 3, 1981) against government interference in the administration of parishes and the instigation of parish committees against priests.

Aware of the continual growth of religious rebirth in Lithuania, the Soviet government has increased not only its propaganda campaign, but is engaging in direct acts of force. Recently, the news sadly resounded throughout the world of the KGB organized "pig plague" (In 1981, Soviet authorities used the pretext of quaranting a non-existent "swine fever". Translator's Note) against Lithuania's believing youth, whose purpose was to stop the procession to Siluva. The KGB, the militia and even the military were used in this campaign.

The KGB is especially afraid that more and more young people are showing an interest in the Faith and that this youth is already capable of banding together.

#### Conclusions

After a decade of struggle for freedom of the Church, it is already possible to reach certain conclusions:

In view of the extremely difficult conditions, the achievements are truly great: the Soviet government has expanded the

seminary quota, priests have begun publicly to instruct children, to allow them at the altar. The presence of young people has increased in churches, the majority of priests ignore the discriminatory "Regulations for Religious Associations", no longer fear losing their registration certificates, etc. Instead of the sad prospect that the Catholic Church in Lithuania would be reduced to the level of the Russian Orthodox Church, it has renewed itself spiritually in ten years and it has improved in quality.

Everything which has been attained was obtained not through "diplomacy" or "docility", but at the price of active struggle and sacrifice. God blessed the dedication and sacrifice of many a Lithuanian. What is clear is that those who in Lithuania consider themselves "diplomats" manage to negotiate something from the Soviet government only when that government is confronted with massive opposition from people. To sit, waiting for better times and fearing to knock one's head against the wall, has always been and will continue to be fatal for the Church.

The fight for the Church's freedom would have been highly ineffective if our brethren in the West would not have supported it via the mass communication media, organized prayer and other ways. Lithuania's Catholics are deeply grateful for this help to all radio stations, newspaper editors, information services and all who have in one way or another proclaimed to the world the hardships of the discriminated Lithuanian Catholics, or prayed for Lithuania.

One of the most painful facts in the fight for the Church's freedom was the collaboration of some Lithuanian clergymen with the KGB, whose temerity and various compromises made in the name of unchristian "wisdom" nearly touched on betrayal. This type of clergy has totally compromised itself in the eyes of Lithuania's faithful.

A very delicate future problem is the appointment of new bishops. The KGB is doing its utmost to misinform the Holy See. It must be admitted that it has been partly successful. For instance, in a letter written to Lithuania following the Pope's postponement of the consecration of three new bishops, one serious Lithuanian priest deplores that hierarchical matters have become entangled in "people's personal whims." The author of the letter calls Lithuania's active priests "destroyers" who did not permit those "who can and only want to do good" to solve the matter of bishops. The contents of the letter leads to the conclusion that someone in Lithuania is a masterful manager — misinforming even Lithuania's emigrant elite living in the West.

For a successful fight for Church freedom in the future it is vital that Lithuania's priests and believers not feel "all alone", but receive moral support from the free world. Of vital importance is the Holy See's support which would provide those fighting for the Church's freedom with the opportunity to adapt to the most complex circumstances.

#### THE CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA IS 10 YEARS OLD

Why did the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* appear?

Exactly ten years ago, i.e., on March 19, 1972, the first issue of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* made its appearance. It was a very modest publication, whose purpose was to inform the homeland and the world about discrimination against Lithuania's believers and their efforts to gain a minimum of religious freedom. Why did it appear in 1972?

Stalinist repressions against the Catholic Church created an atmosphere of passivity among the clergy for a long time. The Church's hierarchy was convinced that "you cannot blow against the wind," and obediently carried out all the demands of the Soviet government, while the party leadership planned a swift liquidation of the Church. In the 70's for the least "offense" against secret Soviet government instructions, priests were forbidden to perform their duties; the theological seminary was restricted to such a point that barely five applicants could be admitted per year. The Commissar for Religious Affairs felt he was the "Tsar and God" capable of terrorizing priests and Ordinaries.

At the same time, among priests in Lithuania, more and more the idea grew that you cannot sit with your hands folded until the Soviet government smothers everyone. What was to be done? The answer was provided by the Moscow dissidents who fearlessly seceded with their ideas, statements, books and publications. That was the first peal of the bell of rebirth which awakened many from the lethargy of fear and which shouted: "Enough darkness and sleep! You must fight, you must publicize the crimes of the Soviet government against the Church and other believers: let the whole world see the tyranny; perhaps it will be uncomfortable to commit villainy in the light. In 1968 priests began to protest against the

restrictions placed on the Kaunas Theological Seminary. The Soviet authorities reacted to the priests' petitions only with repressions: KGB interrogations, removal from pastoral work and even trials. One after another, priests who performed their pastoral duties by instructing children were punished: Father Antanas Šeškevičius, Father Juozas Zdebskis and Father Prosperas Bubnys. These trials were the last and most important impetus to begin publishing an underground publication as soon as possible.

#### The Beginning of the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania

Discussions were begun in 1971 about what kind of publication it should be, how it should be prepared, how duplicated, etc. The first version of the publication would have made it similar to *Dievas ir Tėvynė (God and Country)* which appeared later. It had the name *Vivos voco (I Call the Living)*. Its purpose was to have been to awaken the awareness of Catholics, to rouse them from somnolence, to encourage them to fight for the rights of God, the Church and believers. Finally, the conclusion was reached that facts speak the loudest. This determined the name: *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*.

There was material for the first issue. The question was raised how to continue gathering facts of persecution without the KGB destroying the publication at its very inception. At the beginning the problems were myriad but when the *Chronicle* began to spread throughout Lithuania and believers learned about it from the radio, more and more material reached the editors. The *Chronicle* was typed, duplicated by mimeograph and disseminated through the most trusted individuals, and from them more and more information flowed to the editors.

#### The Case Against the Chronicle

As soon as the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* began to spread through Lithuania, it also fell into the hands of the KGB. On July 5, 1972, Case No. 345 was started against it, which is still in progress. Many other cases dealing with the duplication and dissemination of the *Chronicle* stemmed from case No. 345. In order to liquidate the *Chronicle*, the KGB conducted many searches. In ten years, the following persons were punished for duplicating and disseminating the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*:



**Ona Pranckūnaitė**

- 1. Petras Plumpa-Pluiras: arrested in 1973, sentenced to 8 years imprisonment (strict regime).**
- 2. Juozas Gražys: arrested in 1974, sentenced to 3 years (ordinary regime).**
- 3. Virgilijus Jaugelis: arrested 1974, sentenced to 2 years (ordinary regime)**
- 4. Jonas Stašaitis: arrested 1973, sentenced to 1 year (ordinary regime)**
- 5. Povilas Petronis: arrested 1973, sentenced to 4 years (strict regime)**
- 6. Nijolė Sadūnaitė: arrested 1974, sentenced to 6 years (3 years strict regime, 3 years exile).**



**Genė Navickaitė**

**7. Sergei Kovalev: arrested 1974, sentenced to 10 years (7 years strict regime and 3 years exile)**

**8. Vladas Lapienis: arrested in 1976, sentenced to 5 years (3 yrs. strict regime and 2 yrs exile)**

**9. Jonas Kaštytis Matulionis: arrested in 1976, spent 9 months in KGB isolation and given a 2 year suspended sentence.**

**10. Ona Pranckunaitė: arrested in 1977, sentenced to 2 yrs (ordinary regime)**

**11. Ona Vitkauskaitė: arrested in 1980, sentenced to 1.5 yrs (ordinary regime)**

**12. Genė Navickaitė: arrested in 1980, sentenced to 2 yrs. (ordinary regime)**

13. Povilas Buzas: arrested 1980, sentenced to 1.5 yrs. (ordinary regime)

14. Anastazas Janulis: arrested 1980, sentenced to 3 yrs. (strict regime).

#### Collaborators in the Publication

If ten years ago the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* had a mere handful of collaborators, today it has many both in Lithuania and beyond her borders. Some of them gather facts, write articles, others send them through known channels to the *Chronicle* editors. The prepared publication is typed, duplicated and disseminated.

The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* has many first-rate gallant collaborators abroad. Some of them translate the publication into English, French, Italian and other languages; others print the material in various newspapers and magazines, others still, send it to various agencies and organizations. The *Chronicle* does not know most of their names, but feels their moral closeness. If not for hundreds of idealists in the homeland and in the West, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* would either not exist or would be weak and ineffectual. Therefore, the editors of the *Chronicle*, on behalf of all oppressed Lithuanian Catholics, sincerely thank everyone, here and abroad! Our thanks also to those who constantly pray for the *Chronicle!*

#### Who Are the Enemies?

The greatest enemy of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* is the system which aims to enslave even man's spirit. The leaders of this system plan to spiritual genocide of believers, and its primary executors are KGB staffers. The word "Chronicle" on their lips has practically become a curse.

Among secondary foes of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* we find all collaborators recruited by the KGB, including even priests; for they had to fear only the KGB before, but now the public condemnation of the world as well.

All — teachers, chairmen and vice chairmen — who have sold their birthright — the homeland, Church and their conscience — for a bowl of porridge have become foes of the *Chronicle*. They all wish for artificial peace, they want the *Chronicle* to stop disturbing their consciences and for their black deeds to remain in the dark recesses of history.

### What Is Amazing

The survival of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* for an entire decade in a system which is replete with spies, armed with the best surveillance techniques, traitors and wheedlers is nearly a miracle. At first, if successful, the editors planned under the best of circumstances to publish some dozen issues and then go to prison. As a response we would like to quote here the words of Father Karolis Garuckas S.J. spoken at a very difficult time for the *Chronicle* editors: "God blessed the beginning, he will bless the end as well."

The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* amazes people with its accuracy. In ten years it has collected a multitude of information. It would have been natural if many errors, which the editors were always prepared to correct, had found their way into the publication. It is truly amazing that even the KGB which manages to dig everything out, did not succeed in compromising the publication on the basis of facts, and during trials had to resort to falsifications or demagogical assertions that the *Chronicle* spreads slander and fabrications. The accuracy of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* is based on the deep faith of its collaborators, and their diligence and understanding that lies and tyranny can only be combatted with the weapon of truth.

### Reproaches

In ten years, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* has heard a good number of reproaches. There were people who wished to use the *Chronicle* for their purposes and divert it from its main task of defending God's honor, the rights of the Church and the freedom of conscience. There were those, mostly among priests, who demanded that the *Chronicle* write only about the fanatical actions of militant atheists—teachers, party members and similar individuals—against believers, and remain silent about the fact that certain clergymen harm the Church and believers no less, and perhaps even more, by their collaboration with the KGB. In its pages, the *Chronicle* wrote only about those priest-collaborators whose scandalous behavior had long been known to broad sections of believers, who terrorized young people and believers or who attempted at this price to climb the ladder of the church's hierarchy.

Could the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* have seen the mote in one eye and not the speck in the other?

"The *Chronicle* lacks charity!" "The *Chronicle* disrupts unity

among priests!": KGB-recruited collaborators shouted and still shout. In the name of charity toward this or that KGB collaborator, can the *Chronicle* renounce love for the Church and millions of believers who were and still are hurt and persecuted?

#### Publication Problems

There are plenty. Many, even good believers, are afraid to submit information about their persecution, because the KGB charges everyone who is mentioned in the *Chronicle* with working for it. Uncommitted believers are rather inclined to remain silent, forgetting that silence is indirect collaboration with the KGB, for it helps villainy to grow. If not for this fear among believers, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* could report more thoroughly the current situation of Lithuanian believers. We are pleased that in ten years this fear has dissipated for many.

#### The benefit of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*

If believers had not felt the positive influence of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* on the current life of Lithuania's believers, it would not have become so popular and influential. Of course, it did not perform miracles, but in many instances, force has become more cautious and has stepped back one pace. Therefore, we can state without fear of exaggeration that the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* along with other factors has helped achieve the fact that currently Lithuania's believers are more aware, good priests are more united, and collaborators no longer walk around with heads held high, as was true during the first few decades of the postwar period.

#### What Plans for the Future?

With God's blessing and the support of alert people and priests, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* will go on, remaining in essence the same as during its first decade.

With gratitude to all, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* primarily asks for prayer, courage and Christian awareness.

**LETTER TO THE EDITORS OF THE CHRONICLE OF  
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA  
AND ITS COLLABORATORS**

**Dear Editors:**

For ten years already you have been performing work which is still difficult to evaluate fully today.

At a time when everyone's lips are sealed, when human rights are trampled, freedoms declared in constitutions and international documents are violated and the victims are cynically ridiculed, during that time of total suppression of freedom of the press and freedom of speech, you dared pierce that sepulchral silence. You dared lift the curtain of deceitful propaganda and document with concrete, undeniable facts what is actually happening in our unfortunate Lithuania. This voice which at first appeared so lone and almost timid, appeared to some an outright hopeless cry for help. At the time some probably remembered the words once spoken to Dr. Vincas Kudirka: "What can you, a lowly bug, accomplish against such power? Such kings, such weapons and strength will crush you like a fly."

However his lone voice did not become silent. On the contrary, everyone soon heard it. It was also heard by those who wished, like the secret police of those times to "crush it like a fly"; it was heard by those whose wrongs it publicized, it was heard by our brethren abroad and through them by the whole world. It was heard because the words, the humble pages carried, like a terrible explosive weapon a powerful force: **TRUTH!**

Genuine documents; clear, accurate accounts of events; short, biting news items: all are unfabricated, authentic and concrete facts. To be more accurate, part of the facts, for not all is known, not all reaches the editors; finally, it is impossible to record everything that today occurs in every parish, every school, every Lithuanian city and village, to say nothing of security police offices and cellars. Here every day, every hour, someone is wronged, unjustly accused, someone is denied the most basic rights, even those guaranteed by law; someone is ridiculed, someone is persecuted or intimidated. . . The most intimate nooks of man's heart and conscience are arbitrarily invaded. Violators of innate human rights, international agreements and even their own laws perform black deeds, wishing on the one hand to remain unnoticed and on the other to maintain the myth of their strength, power and omniscience. They wish to keep everyone in servile obedience and fear. They desire that even the most

heroic victims up against their "omnipotence", remain submissive and silent. But in fact they are neither as omniscient or as omnipotent as they would appear. Moreover, when they fear something they avoid it. They fear publicity, the light of day; they fear truth. If secrecy, vagueness, darkness are their allies, then publicity, clarity and open truth are the strength of their victims. Exposing violations of rights and justice, violations of human, national and Church rights, revealing the true reasons, accurately explaining various events is a powerful weapon which can and must be used by those persecuted, by victims of violence and arbitrariness. We cannot slavishly obey and remain silent. Timid submissiveness and silence aid and abet those who violate justice and rights, tantamount to digging our own graves.

For the past ten years the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* has been exposing to the light of day the persecution of the Church, discrimination against believers, suppression of national culture, violations of human rights, restrictions of the freedom of conscience and similar facts. During this decade, much irrefutable evidence had been gathered in the pages of the *Chronicle* against those who claim to be guardians of the law. It is a solid indictment in the case of truth and humanity against arbitrariness and tyranny. But because today, in the poet's words "killers haughtily condemn the just in tribunals", it is not the culprits who are punished or those who take matters into their own hands who are checked, rather a terrible storm of persecution has overtaken the *Chronicle*. This is the tenth anniversary not only of the *Chronicle*, but of its persecution as well. How much surveillance, searches, interrogations, arrests, judicial elimination and other persecution its readers and disseminators have suffered! The names of those book smugglers who today suffer in the Soviet Union's slave camps and prisons are spoken with respect and love. The struggle for free Lithuanian speech has venerable traditions. The persecutors of Lithuanian speech and culture have equally old traditions. During the tsarist era, new Muraviev executioners came to Lithuania by well-beaten paths; for a long time today's fighters and book smugglers have been driven on well-beaten paths to the East. But the Nation always had idealists; she has them today as well. The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* is necessary, important and well-received by all, therefore it had and will continue to have supporters. It is the voice of all Lithuania, the Church, believers and all those persecuted. It cannot be silenced! It can be stifled, it can be

harmed, perhaps even temporarily crushed, but it is impossible to silence it completely. In one way or another it will break through:

*"You cannot dam the river's course,  
It will continue its relentless way.  
You cannot hold back a new uprising,  
Though you fear acknowledging it."*

There is only one means of stopping the publication of the *Chronicle*: It is to eliminate those facts, those crimes against truth and justice which it records; then the *Chronicle* will cease publication. There is no other method . . .

Today it is still difficult to evaluate sufficiently what the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* or other underground publications have accomplished. We are still too close to these events, we are still being buffeted by their tide; but we can say fearlessly that the role of the clandestine press is vast and important. First there is the very fact that the injury done a person is noticed, that someone is talking about him, takes his side, offers encouragement, urges him to defend himself and seek justice. Second, it is a restraint when facts intended to be concealed are exposed. This factor places certain restraints on violators of truth and justice; it limits the influence and results of their actions, especially since this information reaches foreign countries and becomes known to broad spectra of society. There is a modicum of accurate information which reaches the Vatican and the West. There, our fellow countrymen are also concerned with the affairs of Lithuania and her Church, there people are also working and fighting. But how difficult it is for them to assess accurately what is actually happening in our homeland, especially when the occupant and his collaborators try variously to misinform. The publication of authentic documents and reliable facts helps our brothers better to sift out truth from falsehood. Furthermore, the *Chronicle* is translated into other languages, sent to various agencies and leaders. Our thanks, our sincere thanks to those compatriots who perform this vitally necessary work. We must be grateful to Vatican and other radio stations which take the information they receive from Lithuania and transmit it back via the air waves. It is an exceedingly great, actually, an invaluable support in the enslaved nation's fight for her rights and freedom, especially in view of the conditions and projections the *Chronicle* and other underground press must disseminate in Lithuania. Via radio broadcasts (People very eagerly listen to foreign radio sta-

tions.) underground information spreads widely throughout Lithuania, reaching even those who have no access to the press itself.

Today, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* is no longer a lone voice and no longer the only free underground publication. But it was the first. It was the first to break the oppressive and dismal silence; it broke the ice. It continues to be an important forum from which the discriminated believer of Lithuania can speak.

The *Chronicle's* factual style is its trait, importance and strength. With this trait in ten years, it has written an entire page of Lithuanian history, full of heavy repression, heroic struggle and Christian sacrifice. And as long as the repression persists, as long as the wrongs continue and the fight is waged, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* will be necessary!

We are well aware how extremely difficult and dangerous is the work of its publishers and disseminators. It is a work which anticipates sacrifice. But know that we remember you with truly great respect, gratitude and love, and sincerely wish God's blessing on your difficult, but exceedingly necessary and vital work!

Lithuania, 1982

A Reader of the *Chronicle*

P.S. This is not just my opinion. These are the thoughts of many Lithuanians. If you can, please publish this letter in the *Chronicle*. May it be a humble thanks for your devoted work!

#### BELIEVERS' PROTEST

To: First Secretary P. Griškevičius of the Lithuanian SSR Communist Party

Copy to: The Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights.

#### A Statement

We, the young people and believers of Lithuania, draw the Party's attention to brutal, morally reprehensible attacks by Soviet officials against young believers. Such actions have increased considerably in recent times.

A group of young believers celebrated the arrival of 1981 at the Rumšiškės Ethnic Museum. Although only bright song came from young lips, and youthful joy burst from innocent hearts, this occasion did not pass without certain consequences. The security

police falsely charged the youth with hooliganism and began interrogations. Marytė Vėlyvytė was subjected to special blackmail: she was threatened with expulsion from Mažylis Medical School in Kaunas.

In August, 1981, a group of young believers from Vilnius spent their vacation at Baltųjų Lokajų Lake. On the evening of the 28th, the youth were attacked by a group of militia. Drunken militiamen insulted the girls with unprecedented cynicism and sadism, spat in their faces and threatened to rape them. They brutally threw all the young people into vehicles and took them to the Molėtai Militia Department. At the militia department, they were held an entire day, occasionally interrogated. Two students, Alfonsas Vinclovas and Audronė Ginkutė, were expelled from the Vilnius State University. The young people are still being blackmailed.

On August 18, 1981, a group of believers, schoolchildren from Kybartai, were vacationing at Šlavantai Lake, in the *Rayon* of Lazdijai. On August 20th, as they were preparing to return home, they were detained by militia officials, forced into a bus and taken to the *rayon* militia department. There, the youngsters were interrogated and some adults — Bernadeta Mališkaitė and Onutė Šarakauskaitė — were held at the militia department for three days, charged with organizing religious instruction of children. The Administrative Commission of the Lazdijai *Rayon* Executive Committee fined them fifty rubles each, although this had been just a routine trip which had not been cleared with *Rayon* Communist Youth League and party leaders.

On October 15, 1981, Albinas Chščėnavičius and his family left the town of Pagiriai for Šiaulėnai through Šiluva (because they planned to visit the Šiluva cemetery). Their son's friend, Rimantas Jasinskas, accompanied them. On the Raseiniai-Šiluva road they were stopped by militia officials and forbidden to proceed. The people left the car and tried to reach Šiluva on foot. The militia seized the teenager pedestrians and bundled them into a vehicle. Confused by what was happening, the parents ran to the vehicle. The militia vehicle knocked the mother down and injured the father's hand. The boys and later the parents were taken to the militia station. Rimantas Jasinskas was beaten and kicked until (Mrs) Chščėnavičienė, who was beyond the wall heard and began to shout: "Don't beat him!" Albinas Chščėnavičius was sentenced to one week imprisonment and the mother was fined.

On October 25, 1981, Kęstutis Vareikonis decided to walk from

Raseiniai to Šiluva, in atonement for the nation's sins. As he was walking the seventeenth kilometer (10th mile), militia officials, without question or explanation, pushed him into a vehicle and took him to the militia department. During the interrogation, Kęstutis was crudely ridiculed and his rosary was confiscated. Furthermore, the young man was given a ten ruble fine.

In 1981, at the Kelmelis apartment, Statybininkų 4-3, Vilkaviškis, some young people were celebrating a birthday. The party mood was spoiled by militiamen and security agents who forced their way into the apartment, supposedly for the purpose of checking the identities of those assembled. The young people were taken to the Vilkaviškis militia department. Although the intruders had promised to detain them only fifteen minutes, they checked their identities for 4 1/2 hours and it is uncertain the young people would have been released, had not emergency medical help been necessary for one of the girls.

Some time before, three students—Zita Vizbergaitė, Ramunė Butkevičiūtė and Dalia Dambrauskaitė — did not receive their diplomas ostensibly because they "failed" the communism exams, but actually because they were devout believers and the institute administration was well aware of the fact.

These are just several instances. Who can enumerate the intimidation of individual young people?

In view of such facts the question arises: Where are we living? We are assured that we are the citizens of the most democratic country, but thus far we see democracy only on paper.

Why do sober young people displease officials? Why does the faith of young people bother them? On the basis of what laws do young people not have the right to go on trips, have parties or deepen their faith?

Do Soviet government representatives not see the moral poverty of atheist young people who are filling up prisons, correctional work colonies, venereal disease clinics, that they have to direct all their forces toward terrorizing believing young people? The inevitable conclusion is that this is done deliberately to bolster the unsuccessful campaign to render the nation godless by administrative methods.

We demand in justice that the most basic human rights be guaranteed: to live according to one's conscience and beliefs.

1982

**Signed by believers from the following towns:**

<b>Anykščiai</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Alytus</b>	<b>565</b>
<b>Alunta</b>	<b>200</b>
<b>Biržai</b>	<b>200</b>
<b>Garliava</b>	<b>1,972</b>
<b>Igliauka</b>	<b>194</b>
<b>Kaunas</b>	<b>3,814</b>
<b>Kėdainiai</b>	<b>683</b>
<b>Kapčiamiestis</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Kučiūnai</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>Kretinga</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Karmėlava</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>Leipalingis</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Molėtai</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>Pagiriai</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Panevėžys</b>	<b>1,925</b>
<b>Papilis</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Pandėlis</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Prienai</b>	<b>890</b>
<b>Ramygala</b>	<b>370</b>
<b>Rokiškis app.</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Skandinavilė</b>	<b>238</b>
<b>Stirniai</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Šiauliai</b>	<b>1,239</b>
<b>Šeduva</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Šėta</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Šlavantai</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Šilutė</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Ukmergė</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Užuguostis</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Valkininkai</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>Veisiejai</b>	<b>185</b>
<b>Viduklė</b>	<b>588</b>
<b>Žilina</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Josvainiai</b>	<b>200</b>
<b>Kupiškės app.</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Seredžius</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Raudondvaris</b>	<b>138</b>

<b>Tabariškė</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Utena</b>	<b>333</b>
<b>Vištytis</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Vilkaviškis</b>	<b>200</b>
<b>Gižai</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Kybartai</b>	<b>580</b>
<b>Griškabūdis</b>	<b>346</b>
<b>Sasnava</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Virbalis</b>	<b>245</b>
<b>Kapsukas</b>	<b>234</b>

**Totai: 18,341**

#### **RETURNED**

**On February 1, 1982, after completing half of her sentence, Gemma Jadvyga Stanelytė was released from the Nižnij Tagile Criminal Labor Camp.**

**What does this new security police maneuver mean? Gemma Jadvyga Stanelytė was convicted in 1979 for organizing a religious procession to Šiluva.**

#### **THE CHURCH IS "SEPARATE" FROM THE STATE**

**All district and city executive committees have been ordered in 1982 to continue spying on the religious life of parishes, and to provide the Council for Religious Affairs with information according to the form reprinted below:**

##### **I. The Situation in the Religious Community and the State of Religiosity**

**1. Outline of the work of the executive organ and the review commission:**

- a. voluntary donations (how much).**
- b. how is the ledger book kept (does it correspond to religious needs)**
- c. help in organizing religious feasts.**
- d. how are the material needs of the house of worship**



**Gemma-Jadvyga Stanelytė**

managed (repair heating, accumulation of inventory, etc).

e. most active members of the executive organ and review commission (first and last names).

f. does the priest suppress the activities of the review commission and the executive organ?

2. How is the requirement carried out that an inventory of house of worship property be made yearly?

3. What percentage of people are believers, in that number, what percentage of young people are believers, what percentage of school-age children attend church, how many received First Communion,

how many children were confirmed, how many Easter confessions, how many believers attended church at Christmas 1982, what was the content of the Christmas sermon?

## **II. Activities of the clergy**

**1. Typical violations of religious cult laws. Does the clergy interfere in family, organization or school matters. Children who serve at mass and other church rites: last and first names, grade, school.**

The activities of extremist priests (the content of their sermons, organizing various clubs and meetings and marches not sanctioned by laws, writing letters and complaints, collecting signatures for the purpose of inciting believers against government organs).

**2. The adaptability of the clergy to today's living conditions, their views on the world political situation and the ideological distractions of Western propaganda.**

**3. Do young people show an interest in religious literature or church articles (crosses, "holy" pictures, etc.).**

**4. Main directions, trends and methods of the clergy's work with inhabitants. New Forms of work with young people, parents, women, intellectuals.**

**5. Number of sermons heard and preached during the year:**

- a. of a purely religious nature
- b. of a political nature (on questions of peace, war, friendship between nations)
- c. on the subject of morals and virtue
- d. establishing a relationship between religious and nationality
- e. of an anti-social nature (distorting the reality of socialist life), etc.

**6. Describe the more important religious feasts, devotions, numbers of participants, the clergy's efforts to organize these feasts, the participation of believers in the said feasts, how actively (how many attended in 1980 and how many in 1981).**

## **III. Explanation of Laws and the Fight Against Violators**

**1. How many lectures given on the Soviet Constitution and the Regulations for Religious Associations.**

**2. What kind of activities are conducted by....., member of the group monitoring observance of religious cult laws.**

**3. The role of the executive committee of the city and district**

council in implementing religious cult laws.

4. Were houses of worship and clergymen robbed; were the culprits apprehended.

5. How many statements were received in 1981 from individuals or groups of believers and clergymen; which letters or complaints were legitimate or repeated? What questions were they on, and how were they resolved?

6. How are decisions of party and Soviet organs implemented on the question of monitoring observance of cult laws?

7. A short synopsis of decisions or procedural plans adopted after deliberation at council sessions, meetings, consultations.

Preventive work with the clergy: personal talks, warnings, etc. etc.

8. Requests, remarks, suggestions.

#### THE TRIAL OF FATHER LEONAS ŠAPOKAS KILLERS

Father Leonas was murdered in the Luokė rectory during the night of October 8, 1980. Only after the free world press began to comment widely about this sadistic crime, did *Tiesa (The Truth)* print on August 15, 1981, an article entitled "Žudikai suimti" ("Killers Arrested") by Vytautas Zeimantas (special KGB correspondent).

The trial of Father Leonas Šapoka's killers was held in the hall of the *Mastis* factory in Telšiai on December 2, 3, 4 and 7, 1981. The large hall did not accommodate all who wished to attend the trial; therefore many followed the trial proceedings in the vestibule through loudspeakers. Security agents from Vilnius attentively watched the crowd; there was no shortage of militiamen either.

The trial was presided over by Lithuanian SSR Supreme Court Judge Jukna, the prosecutor: Mackevičius, defense attorneys: (Mrs.) Šidlauskienė, Jankauskas and Aleksandravičius.

One day the trial proceedings were recorded on film.

The accused:

Jonas Sabaliauskas, born 1955, agronomist,

Danielius Mockevičius born 1962, Communist Youth League member, caretaker of the Raseiniai Veterinary station,

Adonas Lukšas, 30 years of age, common thief.

Sabaliauskas and Lukšas were not on trial for the first time.

In his speech, Prosecutor Mackevičius wanted to know what

had brought them to the prisoners' dock and why they had brutally murdered a man, but he received no answer. He demanded the death penalty for Jonas Sabaliauskas and fifteen years imprisonment for the other two.

The people who attended the trial proceedings formed the impression that it was not the three culprits who were on trial, but godlessness which removed God from young hearts and left instead a vacuum, turning people into beasts.

During the trial, certain circumstances which the Soviet press had suppressed came to light. For instance, the instigators of this sadistic crime — veterinarians Preibys and Zigmas Mockevičius — were white-washed, while the heavy punishment fell only on secondary figures, technical workers.

Father Leonas Šapoka had helped the orphaned Preibys complete his veterinary studies, obtain an apartment and purchase a car. His reward was this. Preibys told his cousins Zigmas (Communist Party member, speculator in drugs and cars) and Danielius that Father Šapoka had a great deal of money, was a coward and would hand over the money himself if threatened. Preibys took both cousins to see Father Šapoka and there the culprits carefully studied the rectory. At the trial, Preibys slandered Father Šapoka, alleging that he did not practice celibacy; he tried to exonerate himself by claiming that he had merely told the culprits that the pastor was very generous. Thus, Preibys remained a mere witness.

Zigmas Mockevičius had planned the attack on Father Šapoka but at the very last minute had refused to participate; therefore Adomas Lukšas had been invited to replace him. Following the crime, Zigmas Mockevičius sold his car (he sold three that summer) and admitted himself to a psychiatric hospital, thus becoming "unchargeable".

The culprits had formulated a detailed plan for attacking the rectory and after drinking a bottle of liquor began to execute it. Sabaliauskas attacked the pastor. The tortured priest showed where the church money — 587 rubles — was kept and found himself in the hands of a sadist. The torture lasted several hours; the judge stated that eighty-three blows were struck. Expert testimony confirmed: a broken rib, three burn wounds, fifty blows to the body, a knife wound in the neck, six-seven neck vertebrae broken; the victim had been strangled.

Because the pastor's money had been placed in a savings account, the killers could not obtain it.

The defense attorney stated that the accused had not received a proper upbringing and that was the reason they found themselves behind bars.

Not one of the accused asked for mercy, and on the last day they were in the best of spirits, as if they had learned of extenuating circumstances.

The mother of the condemned Sabaliauskas related that her son was quite good, but unfortunately had made the acquaintance of Zigmąs Mockevičius, who involved him in crime.

The audience greeted the sentence with loud applause. "What good will it do?" others said, "All of Lithuania can be executed in this way. It is necessary to change the bankrupt atheist upbringing which has corrupted the nation."

The trial did not reveal the actual truth about the murder of Father Leonas Šapoka and probably no one will ever reveal it. While this trial was being held, Helsinki group member Father Bronius Laurinavičius was killed in Vilnius. His true killers also will remain shrouded in mystery.

#### **Fellow Lithuanian, Don't Forget!**

**Sergei Kovalev  
Balys Gajauskas  
Viktoras Petkus  
Mečislovas Jurevičius  
Vytautas Vaičiūnas  
Povilas Pečeliūnas  
Gintautas Iešmantas**

**Genė Navickaitė  
Julius Sasnauskas  
Anastazas Janulis  
Vytautas Skuodis  
Petras Paulaitis  
Algirdas Statkevičius  
Antanas Terleckas**

**and others who bear the shackles of prison, so that you might live and practice your faith.**

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