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**CHRONICLE OF THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN LITHUANIA**
No. 71, August 15, 1986

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**CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN LITHUANIA No 71**

**A Translation of the Complete Lithuanian Original
LIETUVOS KATALIKŲ BAŽNYČIOS KRONIKA Nr. 71
Documenting the Struggle for Human Rights
In Soviet-Occupied Lithuania Today**

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**ON THE COVER: Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius (left), and Father Sigita
Tamkevičius In Vilnius. (See p. 2)**

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IN LITHUANIA No. 71**

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, 37 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 Teofilius Matulionis of Kaišiadorys and Archbishop Mečislovas Reinys of Vilnius were deported to a Siberian labor camp. Archbishop Reinys 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, was kept under severe government restrictions until 1982. In 1965, Monsignor Juozas Labukas-Matulaitis was consecrated in Rome to head the Archdiocese of Kaunas and the Diocese of Vilkaviškis. Two new bishops were consecrated in 1969: Bishop Romualdas Krivščiūnas was appointed Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Panevėžys, and Bishop Liudvikas Povilonis was appointed auxiliary to Bishop Labukas, and succeeded him after his death in 1979.

In 1982, Bishop Sladkevičius was permitted to return to his diocese as Apostolic Administrator of Kaišiadorys. Father Antanas Vaičius was named bishop and Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Telšiai and the Prelature of Klaipėda.

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
Translator

Appearing since 1972
Read this and pass it on!
If you can, reproduce it!

This issue is dedicated to the beloved Shepherd-exile of our Nation. His Excellency. Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius, this year commemorating the jubilees of twenty-five years of exile, fifty years of priesthood and seventy-five years of age

CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA, NO. 71

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**POPE JOHN PAUL II AND THE LITHUANIAN NATION
GREET BISHOP JULIJONAS STEPONAVIČIUS**

To our venerable brother, Julijonas Steponavičius,
Titular Bishop of Antarada

In 1980, commemorating the 25th anniversary of your consecration as a bishop, we sent you, venerable brother, a letter full of friendship and love, in which we recalled the course of your episcopacy, described your activities and saluted you joyfully, as it were, with a hymn. Your pastoral zeal, your courage and steadfastness in adversity were such that honoring you can be compared with the virtues of the Apostles whose honor you share. Together with us, on that occasion, you were honored not only by your flock, for whom you are constantly concerned, but also by the entire Church, which mourns with those who mourn, and rejoices with those who rejoice.

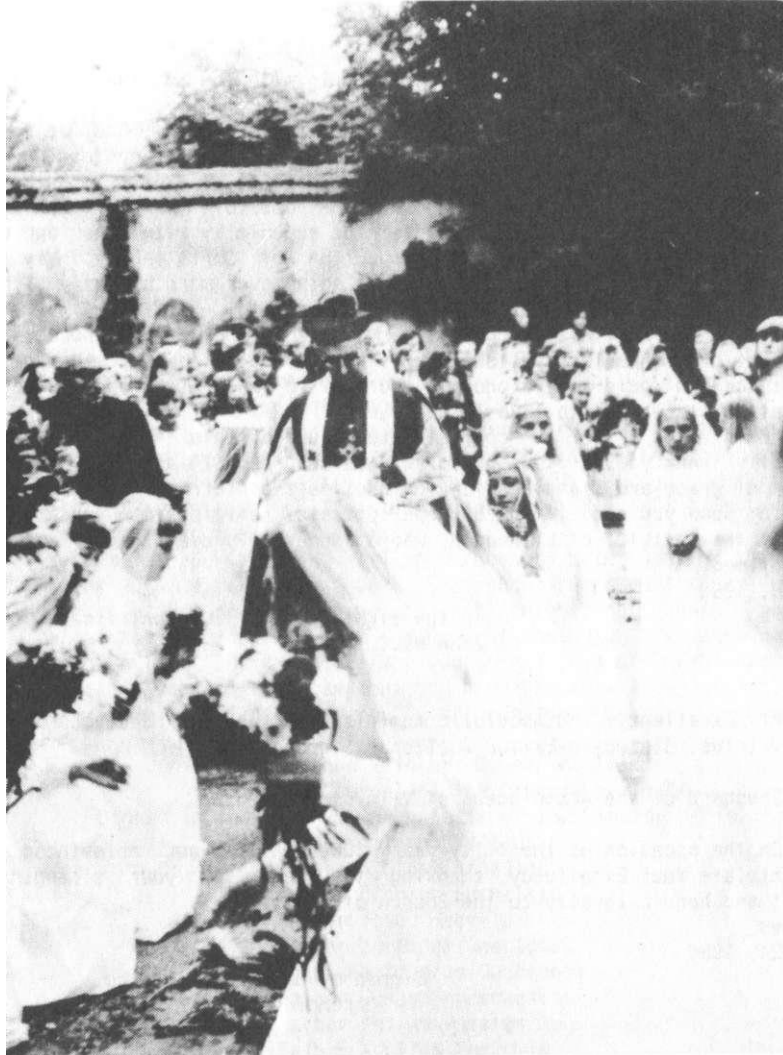
And now, venerable brother, another event approaches special to you and to all who know and love you: the fiftieth anniversary of your priesthood, which is the beginning and root of the episcopacy which you possess. This is truly a blessed day, for on that day God chose you from among many people as a priest after His own heart, distinguished you from others like the sacred Host, that you might offer yourself together with His Son. That day, he appointed you his most faithful servant, and you attained such honor as one who makes good use of the powers conferred by Christ's priesthood.

From that day, you, venerable brother, in the name of the Church sowed the seed of God's word, which always bears good fruit for heaven; you have forgiven sin, cleansing hearts burdened with faults; you have offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; you have saved souls from evil and protected from eternal damnation souls setting out into eternity and standing in peril of their salvation, strengthening them with Divine grace.

You have always been concerned for the faithful, like a father for his children, striving selflessly to enhance God's glory, intent that Church law be observed, trying to help the poor, carefully teaching the faithful, strengthening their faith and protecting them from dangers which threaten.

When, in 1955, your priesthood was enriched by ordination to the episcopacy, the fullness of the priesthood helped those virtues to increase in your soul, as though your priesthood were enveloped in flames of grace. Your soul, which the Holy Spirit consecrated as a shrine for itself, became a stronghold for the defense of the Christian faith which no winds, no storms, no misfortunes can demolish. In this way, venerable brother, for the faithful you became a banner to assemble under, and for unbelievers, a sign of contradiction.

Perhaps such was the plan of Divine Providence, that you should help your own more by walking the road of suffering than by being extolled and honored by everyone. Thus it has always been in the life of holy people,



Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius greeted by Lithuanian young people during the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination to the episcopacy in 1980. Attempts were made to discourage the faithful from attending the services at St. Michael's Church in Vilnius. Exiled without trial by Soviet authorities in 1961, Bishop Steponavičius has been prevented from exercising his duties in the Archdiocese of Vilnius.

since the welfare of nations is often tied in with the virtues of their leaders and shepherds.

So stand firm, venerable brother, ardently loving God, devoutly valuing your Faith, faithfully witnessing to it and boldly confessing it. These are truly your honor and that of the Church.

As for me, by love, prayer and any other possible means, I shall be in the venerable Lithuanian City of Vilnius especially with the approach of the 600th anniversary of the introduction of Christianity. May the light kindled that year not grow dim, but shine ever more brightly, like a beautiful moon risen in a clear sky.

I pray the Most Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, the Patroness and the boast of Lithuania, that she would grant you strength, the nation assistance and would always protect your native land. If this comes about, then all will be able to live in peace.

Ending this letter, I congratulate you on this joyful day, and cordially thank you for your conscientiousness, and I ask God for all manner of grace and blessings for you and yours conferring the apostolic blessing upon you and all the bishops, priests, religious men and women, and all the faithful of Lithuania, who are unusually dear to me.

The Vatican
May 20, 1986

In the eighth year of Our Pontificate
John Paul II

To: His Excellency, the Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Vilnius, Bishop-in-Exile, Julijonas Steponavičius

Dear Shepherd of the Archdiocese of Vilnius,

On the occasion of the fifty-year jubilee of your priesthood, we congratulate Your Excellency, thanking the Lord for your strength of spirit and heroic loyalty to the Church of Christ.

Vilnius
June 21, 1986

Signed by 85 priests of the
Archdiocese of Vilnius,

Venerable Bishop of the Capital of Lithuania,

On the occasion of the golden jubilee of your priesthood, we wish to express to you, Your Excellency, that fraternal solidarity and love with which the Second Vatican Council urges us to envelop all spiritual leaders, impeded for the name of Christ. (Vatican II, *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church*, No. 7)

By your unswerving faithfulness to Christ and the Church "you are our pride and our joy". (1 Thessalonians 2,20)

May you shine for many years to come as an example of that noble

loyalty!

Kaišiadorys, June 21, 1986

Signed by: Bishop Vincentas Sladkevičius
Apostolic Administrator of the
Diocese of Kaišiadorys and
68 priests of the Diocese

To: His Excellency, Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius
on the 50-year jubilee of his priesthood

We congratulate you, venerable bishop of the capital of Lithuania, on the golden jubilee of your priesthood!

The Lord has led you, Your Excellency, through fifty years of priestly service, ever nearer and nearer to Himself. Having conferred on you the fullness of the priestly vocation in the episcopacy thirty-one years ago, He has allowed you to stand under His cross in the silence of exile in Žagarė for twenty-five years.

The road of your life is a living witness to Lithuania and the world that in the 20th Century, the Church has such shepherds whom "neither death nor life, nor angels, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other creatures can separate from the Love of God which is ours in the Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 8,38) May your great love of Christ and of His Church sustain your strength so that you might be able to shine for us as a noble example of faithfulness to God for many more years!

Antanas Vaičius, Bishop of Telšiai
Priests' Council of the Diocese of Telšiai
Signed in the name of the priests of the Diocese of Telšiai:
Bishop Antanas Vaičius
Father Albinas Arnašius
Father Bronius Burneikis
Father Jonas Gedvila
Father Juozapas Gedgaudas
Canon Kazimieras Gasčiūnas
Father Jonas Kauneckas
Father Petras Puzaras
Father Adolfas Pudžemis
Father Juozas Pačinskas
Father Tadas Poška
Father Petras Palšis
Canon Juozapas Miklovas
Father Bernardas Talaišis



Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius (third from left) pictured with Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights members Father Alfonsas Svarinskas (far left) and Father Vincas Vélavičius (far right) and three unidentified priests in Žagarė, September 14, 1980.

To: His Excellency, Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius
Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Vilnius

Your Excellency, Bishop of the Church of Lithuania,
honorable jubilarian,

With deep respect and cordiality, we greet Your Excellency on the golden jubilee of your priesthood, and your seventy-fifty birthday.

The years of your life have been replete with painful experiences. When we lost you, an open wound was left in the Diocese of Panevėžys.

The Second Vatican Council urges us to solidarize, enveloping in brotherly love all spiritual leaders impeded for the name of Christ.

Even though you have experienced ignorance from various quarters, nevertheless, your loyalty to the Church and to the nation shines forth, and on that account, your person is even more honorable and closer to us. Separated in a human sense, we

are close in spirit.

We wish Your Excellency strength to continue your mission as bishop, through the power which comes from sacrifice and the love of God, in the loyalty of strength. Long life!

June 21, 1986

Signed by 90 priests of the
Diocese of Panevėžys

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On June 29, 1986, faithful from all corners of Lithuania who had streamed to the church of Žagarė, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the exile of Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius, the fiftieth years of his priesthood and his seventy-fifth birthday. During the services, sermons were preached by the pastor of Žagarė, Father Gustavas Gudanavičius, Father Ladislovas Baliūnas and Father Leonardas Jagminas.

Before the jubilee ceremonies, a letter of congratulations from Pope John Paul II to Bishop Steponavičius was read, giving great joy to the jubilarian and to all the faithful. After services, Father Algimantas Keina greeted His Excellency Bishop Steponavičius in the name of the priests of the Archdiocese of Vilnius. He was greeted by the Dean of Joniškis and other priests, of whom there were seven; youth from Vilnius, Žagarė, Kaunas, Šiauliai, Valkininkai, Prienai, Kapsukas, Kybartai, Mažeikiai, Joniškis and other cities cordially greeted the beloved bishop-in-exile, thanking God and him for that remarkable perseverance and love for the Church which His Excellency is showing these days in adversity and persecution.

THE TIMES OF MUROVJOV AND STALIN RETURN

After the arrests of Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas, Sigitas Tamkevičius and Jonas-Kastytis Matulionis, some priests --collaborators with the Soviet government and the more timid ones-- took it upon themselves to disseminate the idea that in case of conflict with the atheistic government, concessions must be made. Voices were heard daring to consider the self-sacrificing activities of the priests as unwise excesses and to accuse them of undoing unity, and the like. Those thinking differently and acting otherwise they called short-sighted, detrimental to Church unity.

The government atheists immediately spotted the altered morale among priests. In one of his earlier discussions with priests, Religious Affairs Commissioner Petras Anilionis emphasized that after the arrests of Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius, the attitudes of priests improved, and



The founding members of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers Rights. From left to right: Fathers Sigitas Tamkevičius, Vincentas Vélavicius, Juozas Zdebskis, Alfonsas Svarinskas and Jonas Kauneckas. Fathers Tamkevičius and Svarinskas are each serving 10 year terms in labor camp and internal exile. Father Juozas Zdebskis was killed in an automobile accident under mysterious circumstances on February 5, 1986. (See *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, No. 70.)

he emphasized that this will undoubtedly have positive results for the entire Catholic Church. That fear and flattery of the government atheists, under cover of the misleading word "diplomacy", have hastened the return of the times of Muroviov and Stalin, is witnessed by the meeting June 27, 1986, in Vilnius, of Religious Affairs Commissioner Petras Anilionis with the bishops and administrators of dioceses of Lithuania.

On June 27, 1986, Religious Affairs Commissioner Petras Anilionis summoned all Lithuanian bishops and administrators of dioceses to the diocesan chancery of Vilnius for the traditional summer "brainwashing". If the Commissioner tried to be tactful during the meetings with diocesan deans, and tried to convince them of religious freedom, then speaking with the bishops and administrators, he was angry and severe. The Commissioner began his talk with an angry accusation: "Among the participants in this meeting are *Chronicle* correspondents, thanks to whom the Vatican was immediately informed of our past meeting."

There followed various accusations and threats against the bishops for not straightening out the priests and seminarians. "In the seminary, there was a bad situation... even though after that first incident, when two seminarians were detained by the militia trying to bring into the seminary Juozas Girnius' book *Man without God*, Vice Rector Vytautas Vaičiūnas assured them that illegal literature of that nature would not be tolerated in the seminary, but it is known that books copied on the typewriter are circulating in the seminary, even today. Those whom we apprehend, we will punish without compunction," said Anilionis.

Quoting Canon Law, the Commissioner asserted that Church law forbids priests to offer Mass or preach in a neighboring parish, that permission of the bishop or the pastor is not enough for this, and consent of the atheists is needed: permission from the rayon Executive Committee. "It is time, at last, to have done with priest-extremists' tours of religious festivals," Anilionis railed. "All those travelling without rayon permission and those priests hosting them will be fined, and if that does not help, we will return to the earlier forceful practice of confiscating registration cards. If that still does not help, the priests themselves will be put to physical labor. Also, those priests who give reduced statistics regarding religious ministrations for the purpose of falsifying financial reports will receive appropriate penalties."

Anilionis was particularly displeased by the massive gathering of priests for the religious festivals at Žemaičių Kalvarija (Calvary of the Lowlanders) and Šiluva, where reparation services are held on the 13th of each month. "Why do priests have to accompany the procession around the Hills -- let the people go by themselves! If such gatherings of extremist priests recur, it will be necessary to enforce the law that a



Pilgrims making the Way of the Cross in Žemaičių Kalvarija. Nineteen chapels were built along the banks of the Varduva River during the 17th Century, each representing an aspect of the Passion of Christ.

single religious association can have only one house of prayer; we shall be forced to close the chapels at Žemaičių Kalvarija and the chapel at Šiluva. The first test of your good-will will be the festival of Žemaičių Kalvarija. It must go by as simply and as quietly as possible, without any processions or gathering of extremists," Anilionis loudly set forth his demands.

"Although those serious disturbers of the peace, Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and Father Sigitas Tamkevičius have been 'pacified', new ones nevertheless appear, and so the peace is disturbed again by various writings in which the Soviet government is lectured, and the extremists dare to teach even you, the bishops," said the Commissioner, "but the worst thing is that the example of the extremists has been followed even by the Committee for the Lithuanian Christianity Jubilee, led by Bishop Juozas Preikšas, in its letter to the Soviet government in which impossible things are requested: the return of the Cathedral of Vilnius, of the Church of Saint Casimir, of the Church of the Queen of Peace in Klaipėda, etc. These demands shall not be satisfied, and if the jubilee committee continues along the extremists' path, we will forbid the commemoration of the Baptism of Lithuania, and dissolve the committee itself,"



The late Petras Paulaitis returned to Lithuania in 1982 after serving 35 years in Soviet prison camps. Following his death on February 19, 1986, government officials attempted to impose a secular funeral. Paulaitis was buried, as a life-time believer, with the full rites of the Church.

Anilionis threatened the bishops.

He urged them to be assured that there shall be no unilateral concessions on the part of the government. "We are allowing you to restore churches in Vilnius, Kaunas and in some other cities. We have allowed you to purchase building materials in government stores. (Anilionis "forgot" that according to Soviet law, church buildings are state property, so permission to renovate them, even from a formal viewpoint, is not so great a concession to the Church.)

"To these concessions, the Church must respond with concessions," Anilionis said, "straightening out the priest-extremists --namely preventing them from running around to all the religious festivals-- purging the seminary of illegal literature and disciplining initiators and collectors of signatures to petitions and letters to government agencies."

He brought up the accusation that till now, there had been no suitable reaction to concessions granted by the Soviet government. "For instance, in Kretinga," the Commissioner continued, "the state gave permission to rebuild the steeple which had burned down during the war and to cast new bells; to

that end, permission was given to consult even with specialists from Democratic Germany. And how did the pastor of Kretinga and consutor of the diocese, Father Bronius Burneikis, show his gratitude for that? When Petras Paulaitis, a hardened anti-Soviet agitator and participant in bourgeois national gangs died, government officials asked the pastor not to inter the ex-criminal with Church services. The pastor paid no attention to the request and prepared a solemn funeral. See how the extremists respond to the government," Commissioner Anilionis complained.

It should be explained that the funeral of Petras Paulaitis was, from the viewpoint of the Church, just like that of any rank-and-file Catholic and to the demand of the KGB that the deceased not be interred with Church services, the pastor correctly replied, "He was a practicing Catholic, who died after receiving the sacraments, so I have no basis or right to refuse a religious funeral. He was buried just like every practicing Catholic."

It is not for government officials to determine who may and who may not be buried with a Church service. The late Petras Paulaitis was waked, not in church but at home, and he was not draped with the national flag, as Anilionis said; only a small national ribbon was pinned to his chest. Father Liudvikas Šarkauskas held funeral services for the deceased.

After Anilionis' lecture, Bishop Vincentas Sladkevičius raised some questions. Speaking to the deans in Kaišiadorys, Anilionis illustrated his claims about complete religious freedom in Lithuania with examples, purporting to show that children of believing parents hold responsible positions: they serve as deputies, communal farm chairmen and rectors of institutes.

Bishop Vincentas Sladkevičius reminded the Commissioner that this does not show freedom of religion if people in positions of deputies and directors of institutes are forced to conceal their beliefs, because it is a matter, not of the parents or grandparents, but of their children. Bishop Sladkevičius gave the Commissioner a concrete example of infringement upon freedom of belief and of expression of belief, the occasion on which government officials rudely accosted Father J. Kaminskas in the church of Molėtai as he was hearing the children's catechism.

What falsehood and deceit! The government atheists are "allowing" the repainting of the walls in some buildings confiscated by the government, while at the same time, doing everything by various forms of persecution: threats, fines and even arrests, to see that the churches are empty...

This is only the beginning of concessions expected by the government... As is well known, the chief arbiter of religious affairs in the Soviet Union, Kharchev, on a visit to Lithuania,

has stated, "The Catholic Church of Lithuania must be autocephalic, and that is, independent of Rome."

One must expect that in the near future, in return for permission to refurbish one or two church buildings, the Soviet government will demand such a concession also.

These are the kind of relaxations which will be brought about by the "improved" climate among priests since the arrests of Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius. according to Anilionis, speaking to the diocesan deans. What kind of "brighter" (!!!) future acquiescence to the Soviet government is leading to, the Commissioner specified only to the bishops.

If there is no serious opposition to such demands from the government and submission continues, we shall, before long, feel painful and perhaps hardly rectifiable consequences.

Soviet historian R. Vėbra characterizes persecution of the Church in the Murovjov era as follows: "It was forbidden to have any gatherings or to hold services in private homes without police permission... Priests were forbidden to visit other parishes, or while visiting them, to hold Mass... A system of fines for not observing these regulations was introduced." (R. Vėbra, *Lithuanian Catholic Clergy and Social Action*, ViInius, 1968)

So the times of Murovjov and Stalin are returning! These designs on the part of the atheists are intimidating and disturbing many and dampening spirits. We are preparing for the beatification of the Servant of God, Archbishop Jurgis Matulaitis. He had to live under similar conditions. In such a situation, he encouraged his contemporaries, "What remains to be done? Surely not to renounce our vocation? Surely not to acquiesce and submit to all matter of injustice, contrary to the law of the Church, and to the tendency to do nothing? Surely not to renounce our highest ideals, to become rusty, curled up and withdrawn out of fear? If we were to act so, then we would see that one day they would go so far as to forbid us to be Catholics. No, absolutely no!

"We must proceed bravely and boldly along the road which God shows us, where the spirit of God leads us and urges us to go, disregarding all obstacles and fearing nothing. If we are full of the spirit of God, we are bound to overcome everything in the end. The spirit cannot be bound in chains nor shut up in prison, nor kept in exile. Only enkindle our hearts, Lord, with the fire of your love!"

DEMEANING MOTHERHOOD

it is not right to ridicule universally
respected views, for by so doing, you
will not convince your adherents, but
only offend them.

(L. de Vovenarg 1715-1747)

When we look at the history of world culture, we see that for long ages, in all nations touched by Christian civilization, Mary the Mother of Jesus has become the personification of the most sublime femininity, and a girl's and mother's most beautiful ideal. She is, at the same time, the irrrnaculate virgin and the noble-hearted mother consenting to her Son's sacrifice for humankind. Delete from the picture of human culture art, poetry, custom -- everything inspired by the irrrnaculate youth and mysterious, unwonted motherhood of Mary -- how the picture of woman and mother pales!

From the 4th Century hymn of the Syrian Deacon, Ephriam, to Mary; through Dante, Petrarch and Novalis; through the "I will not allow you to demean the name of the Mother of God!" uttered by the hero in Adam Mickiewicz' *All Souls*'; to the youths' cry to their friend in the contemporary Lithuanian Soviet sketch, "You be Mary!", runs the veneration of the ideal of Mary. Thanks to her, generation after generation has known where to turn its gaze, from whom to learn beauty of spirit, even in the lowliest circumstances of life and work.

Today too, the example of the mother of Jesus continues to have a direct and conscious effect on people who are acquainted with religion, and an unconscious effect on those who are not through works of art and music, through the *Ave Maria*, *Stabat Mater*, *Magnificat* and *Salve Regina*.

And now, a woman's journal has undertaken an attack on the noblest of women... A representative of an institution of higher learning, training educators, has undertaken to demolish respect for the ideal mother... The aim of the action is to trample on Mary's honor, to snatch away the crown of her virginity and divine motherhood.

Why is this being done? Apparently for no other reason than to demolish religious belief, regardless of the means used or the results which will follow (an unfiliable spiritual void). In whose name is it being done -- perhaps in the name of objective science? Alas, the article has nothing in common with objective science.

Since the article demeaning the honor of Mary is based on texts from the translation of the *New Testament* which we prepared, we feel an obligation and a right to respond and to discuss the accusations to some extent.

1. "Jesus could not have been conceived by the action of the Holy Spirit because in Aramaic the word ruah, like the Lithuanian word dvasia, is of the feminine gender." As though readers did not know that the grammatical gender does not have to agree with biological gender. (A football star --Lithuanian, žvaigždė, feminine (Trans. Note)-- is, nevertheless, a man.) Then again, the question of sexual identity in the case of a divine intervention is entirely out of place, since we are speaking, not about physical relations, but about an extraordinary miraculous action, concerning which the angel said to Mary, "... for nothing is impossible to God." (Lk 1,37)

2. The author cites an alleged tale recounted by Professor Antanas Maceina in the overseas journal of cultural life, *Aidai*, concerning the rape of Mary in the hills. Most probably Maceina also refutes this unsupported speculation in the same article, but Balkevičius does not mention a word about that. Apparently, it is important to him to confuse rather than to explain. Neither we nor the general public have access to the stacks where the volumes of *Aidai* are kept, but we can point out a reply in the *New Testament* itself. This is the scene of the meeting between Mary and Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist (Lk 1, 39-56). Elizabeth greets her young relative as the mother of the Lord, and Mary responds with the hymn of exultation, the *Magnificat*: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit exults in God, my savior..." Are these the sentiments of a girl who has been exploited or raped?

3. The platonic Roman philosopher Celsus is known as an enemy of the Christians, but not as a historian. The *Talmud* is a "collection of religious and juridical and moral norms of Judaism." (*Lietuvos tarybinė encyklopedija* --Soviet Lithuanian Encyclopedia, Vol. 11, p. 82). Thus it is a religious, not a historical document. The tale from these two sources about some soldier named Panterus or Panderus as the putative father of Jesus does not negate the fact of Mary's virginity, but rather confirms the virginity of Mary: "Panderus" or "Panterus" originated by metaphysis from the word *parthenos*, meaning virgin. The Christians used to repeat so often that Jesus was born *ek Marias teis parthenou*, that the enemies of the Christians seized upon this title to create their own version.

The gospels, documents of history and faith tested a hundred times, affirm most clearly that the conception of Jesus was special and exceptional, without congress with a male.

4. Jesus Christ, by His divine nature (as Son of God), exists from all eternity. From His conception in the womb of Mary, He exists in His human nature. This is something that children, studying their catechism for First Communion, grasp without difficulty. They say: "In heaven, Jesus as God has only a Father, while on earth (as a human being), He has only a mother." This the learned author of the article either cannot or

wi I I not understand.

It was the human body of Christ which was conceived of Mary and not His eternal Godhead. Why then talk about the impossibility of God being born of a human being? A previously non-existent God cannot originate from a human being. But if a Son who was God before and remained God after took a body from Mary, then the title of Mother of God befits Mary (the mother-Son relationship is a personal relationship!).

5. Children preparing for First Communion find out that Mary's title "Immaculately Conceived" means that her soul was not touched by original sin, but says nothing about the origin of her body. The Church considers it to have been entirely natural, like all of ours, and honors Joachim and Ann as the natural parents of Mary in the truest sense of the word. The author of the article sneers at the title of Immaculately Conceived, attributing to it, too, the meaning of virginal conception. One who wishes to attack the claims of religion should understand what they mean, otherwise one can make a fool of oneself. Do the editors not place too much trust in the competence of their colleague? (Incidentally, the hymn *Most Pure* considered by the author to be anonymous in origin has a known author, Bishop A. Baranuskas.)

6. *Heos hou eteken hyion-* ("Until she bore a Son") (Mat 1,25). The conjunction *until* indicates the time up to a given point. It says nothing about the time after. Compare: "The girl was faithful to her betrothed until he returned from military service." In these words a statement is made about the entire time the young man was in the army. But does this sentence give one to understand that after that, she was unfaithful? And does the meaning of the sentence change if one uses the construction, "While her betrothed was in military service, the girl was faithful to him." (Compare in the Septuagint, 1 Mace 5,54: "None of them perished until they returned in peace." Nothing is said directly about what happened later, but it is understood that all the more after their return, they did not perish.) Like the earlier translation, "He (Joseph) did not know her until she bore a Son," so also our translation "Without his living with her as husband, she bore a Son," speaks of the entire time before the birth of Jesus and says nothing about what happened afterwards, and does not indicate that later it was otherwise.

The subsequent virginity of Mary is confirmed by the belief of the early ages of Christendom, witnessed to by the Second Century bishops and martyrs, the head of the Syrian Christians, Bishop of Antioch, disciple of the Apostles Ignatius (circa 50-110 A.D.), Irenaeus (140-202 A.D.), teacher of the Church Origen (185-285 A.D.) and others, further maintained by the Church. The Christians of the first centuries knew and understood the gospels no less than today's authors, and their belief in the lifelong virginity of Mary was hampered neither by

"until she bore" nor "the brothers of Jesus". about which we shall speak later.

The translator and the editor of the *New Testament*, acquainted with the style of Sacred Scripture and with the psychology of the deeply religious person, explain that most ancient tradition of the Church (in a footnote, not in the text), and do not distort the Word of God.

7. In the personal opinion of the author of the article, intimate relations between this couple of Nazareth, Joseph and Mary, should have begun at least after the birth of Jesus. In the personal opinion of the author, "otherwise it would not have made sense for Joseph to wed Mary" (our emphasis - C.K, V.A.).

That a non-believing man today sees no sense and thinks that he would never have acted the way Saint Joseph acted in his affair, but that mind set of his does not give him the right to speak for Saint Joseph. The latter had the religious obligation revealed to him by an angel: to be the legal husband of Mary, the legal father of Jesus and the actual protector of both. Therefore he "did as was commanded by the angel of the Lord" (Mat 1, 24).

8. The author of the article ignores completely many facts and circumstances proven by history; for example, the fact that among the Jews a patriarchal system prevailed in which the head of the family was the man and upon his death, not the mother but first-born son. Thus, upon the death of Joseph, Jesus became the head of the family in Nazareth, and when He left to proclaim His doctrine, His mother, left alone, had to accept the help of her male relatives and those of Jesus. The gospel does not mention Jesus' uncles. Apparently, they were no longer alive. It mentions the sisters of Mary -- these could only be sympathetic and provide comfort, but not act as her guardians. The only ones remaining were the elder cousins of Jesus who, being the guardians of Jesus' mother, and not understanding His work or mission, felt that they could "admonish" Jesus also.

The patriarchal system did not allow a younger brother to order an elder brother around. The fact that "His own" tried to oversee the behavior of Jesus indicates that they were older than Jesus, so they were not the true brothers of Jesus, for Jesus was the first-born.

The author unconsciously or through oversight confuses the issue by including His Mother among those "doing the admonishing", as if she too, did not believe in Jesus' mission. The gospel does not say this. The gospel mentions Mary coming with His "brethren" to speak with Jesus, but does not mention her in the passage which speaks about "admonishing Him".

The Acts of the Apostles tells how after the resurrection of Jesus, those so-called brothers of Jesus joined the group of apostles. This means that they, too, were convinced by the resurrection of Christ concerning His divinity. There is nothing

strange about the fact that the relatives were the last to believe: They were prevented by the everyday familiarity till then.

9. In the prologue to John's Gospel (Jn 1, 1-14), cosmic questions are treated: the coming of the Eternal Word into the world and the unwillingness of sinful humanity to receive his light. So he says that when he came to his own creatures (*eis ta idia*), his own did not wish to receive him (*kai hoi idiei auton ou pareiabon*). Mark 3, 21 speaks of a concrete situation, of the physical relatives of Jesus (*hoi par autou*). That is why John 1, 11 is translated "his own", and Mark 3,21 as "his own relatives". To say that John 1, 11 speaks about His relatives or His mother is quite unscientific, but the author is not afraid that readers might check the *New Testament* text: It was published fourteen years ago in an edition of 6,000 copies, while *Soviet Woman* has a circulation of more than half a million. Unless, in other words, every fiftieth person could check.

10. Ancient Jews were not the only ones who called cousins "brethren". (Note: Cousins are called "brethren" at least in the following places of the *Old Testament*: Genesis 13,8 and 29,12; Leviticus 10,4; 1Chronicles 23, 22.) Even today, in the Slavic languages, they are so-called (Russian, Byelorussian, Polish: *brat*, and only when it is necessary to specify is *dvojurodnjy, stryjeczny*, etc., added). The fact that the "brothers" mentioned in the gospels are not the children of Jesus' mother can be seen by comparing Matthew 13, 55 and Mark 15, 40. In the latter text, among the women looking on from afar at the crucifixion, is a woman also named Mary, the mother of James the Younger and Josias (Joseph) (sic), who in the other texts were numbered among the "brothers" of Jesus. In our *New Testament* commentary, similarity is noted, but it is not helpful to the thesis of the article's author, so the author does not mention it, contenting himself with the first quotation. Instead of objective or historical analysis, the author constantly offers his own reasoning: It is "sensible", "not sensible", "it would mean little", "what sense would it be", etc.

11. It appears to the author that "it is clear to everyone that the concept 'first-born' is meaningful only in the event that after the first child, there are more children". Does the author not speak too readily for "everyone"? Perhaps he thinks that none of the readers of the magazine have any notion of the religious or juridical meaning of the concept "first-born" in the Jewish nation. Male first-born must be dedicated to the Lord (Exodus 13,2). The first-born is the heir and the continuation of the line, and the head of the family after the father's death. And Jesus is the first-born, not in "an analogical sense", but in the very real sense (He is, after all, not the second, nor the fifth nor the ninth). If Jewish law is not

enough, let us recall the following fact: In the Middle East in 1930, an inscription was found on a tomb from the time of Christ, honoring a mother who died giving birth to her first-born --that is her only-- son.

The accusation that in translating Matthew 1, 25 we left out the word "first-born" is ill considered. It suffices to glance at the critical Greek edition of the *New Testament*, to learn that this word is not found in the oldest manuscripts of Matthew's Gospel (e.g., *The Greek New Testament*, edited by Kurt Alland, etc., UBS3. 1975). Why does the author not mention that we had no trouble allowing this word to stand in Luke 2,6?

12. The author does not only choose his quotations tendentiously, mentioning some and omitting others dealing with the same question, but he also arbitrarily truncates them. Here is an example from the childhood of Jesus: The twelve-year old Jesus remains in the Temple of Jerusalem after the Passover Festival. When, on the third day, his mother finding Him there questions Him, He replies, "Why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's affairs?" (Lk 2, 49) The author seizes only on the first part of Jesus' reply, "Why did you seek Me?", considering it suitable to support his thesis of a disobedient runaway boy. But he passes over the second part, showing His unchildish self awareness.

From that second part, it can be seen that the twelve-year-old Jesus already knows that He does not have a father on earth, that He is the Son of God and that He must be about the affairs of His Heavenly Father. One line later, the further relationship of Jesus with His mother and Saint Joseph was briefly described: "He then went down with them and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority..." (Lk 2, 51).

After quoting the lengthy scene of the meeting in the temple, the author found no need to exhaust the subject to the end, and the editors did not require it of him.

13. Jesus' parable of the obedient and the disobedient sons (Matt 21, 28-31) shows that in public children address their father as "Lord" (Sir). The saying "What is it to me and to you?" was often used in various ways, and its true meaning would be clear from the context or intonation. Equally respectful is addressing the mother as "woman" (Madam). Jesus' words, "What is it to you and to me?", the mother understood favorably, for she immediately said to the servant, "Do whatever He tells you" (John 2, 5).

Nor was Jesus' addressing His mother standing beneath the cross with the Beloved Disciple John "Woman, this is your son... this is your mother" (Jn 19, 26-27), impolite, but respectful. These words show two important facts: One that Jesus, suffering and dying, does not forget His mother, does not leave her to the care of even the most loving of relatives, but as it were by legacy, assigns her a loving protector. Secondly, this legacy

most clearly confirms the fact that Mary had no other children but Jesus, since the latter, dying, must provide her a protector.

We are unfortunately led to conclude: First: the author is unacquainted with the Greek *New Testament*, on which he tries to rest his arguments. Similarly, he has not acquainted himself with the law and customs of the ancient Israelites, or many concepts of Catholic theology, and his logic and scientific integrity is badly wanting.

Second: The most popular magazine in Soviet Lithuania, popular especially for its fashions, home economics and family advice, published in two languages with a circulation of more than half a million, so reaching almost every family speaking Lithuanian or Polish, appears to seriously disregard its readers (most of them are believers!), since it has published an insulting paper of very low quality, sarcastically written, of which they should be ashamed.

It is true, we hear, that many readers, especially the intelligentsia, are immune to anti-religious propaganda, and simply do not read anti-religious articles (especially by this author), not expecting to find in them objective information. Among the less educated, there are many people who have not learned to be skeptical, at least in part, of any printed word. In publishing an article so uncritically thrown together, the editors have shown that they consider their readers also uneducated and uncritical. Believers in general could, perhaps, rejoice that their views (beliefs) are attacked in such an unqualified fashion, but believers and the Church do not doubt the nation's culture and justifiably wish that the struggle of ideas (if it is unavoidable) be conducted honorably, that it should rather become a polite dialogue.

We can only regret that a women's journal has undertaken to insult the bright ideal of Mary, Virgin and Mother, and that people with such doubtful ethical qualifications as the author of the article under discussion is being entrusted to educate the future pedagogical cadres of Lithuania.

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April 30, 1986

**REBUTTAL OF AN ANONYMOUS ARTICLE IN THE NEWSPAPER
S O V I E T K L A I P É D A**

"What is one to think, seeing whole pages scrawled with signatures?" an anonymous writer asks the readers of *Soviet Klaipėda* in his article, "Noise, lies and the commandments of god" (*Tarybinė Klaipėda* -- *Soviet Klaipėda*, April 15, 1986).

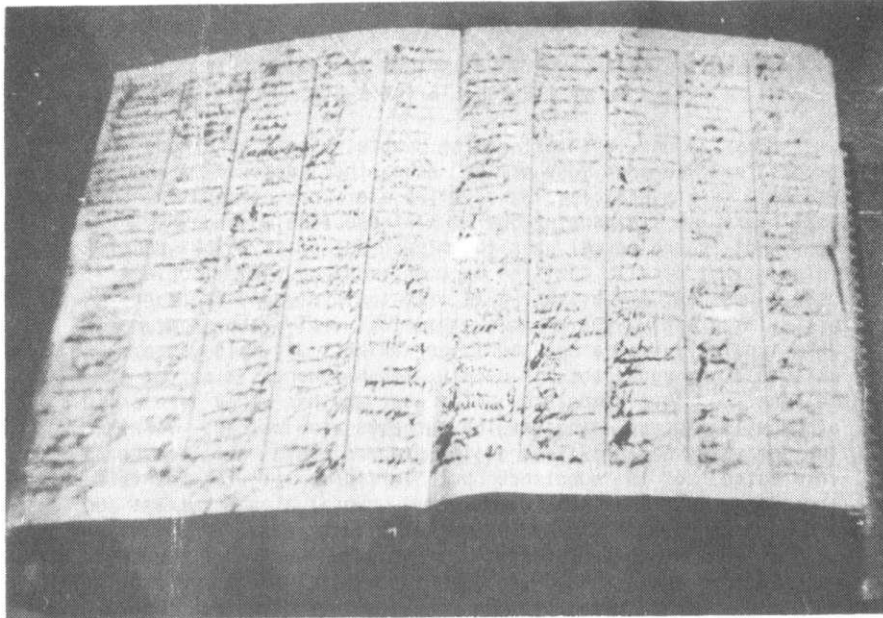
What is the normal, healthy-minded person to think? He will think, first of all, that the document must be very important if such a mass of people support it with their signatures, and he will immediately delve into the text of the document. Unfortunately, one cannot count the author of this anonymous article among such sensible people, for he rushes, first of all, to analyze the signatures: to see whether they are "in alphabetical order", whether the surnames are correct, whether the addresses and positions of the signers are given. Thus he is interested, not in substance but in form. It is possible, therefore, to think that we have come up against a formalist and bureaucrat, of which there is, alas, no lack in our agencies.

Those reading the anonymous article further are forced to come to some even sadder conclusions: This is a person of ill-will writing, who is not concerned with truth or justice, but defends with all means at his disposal an obvious injustice, a terrible wrong-doing, a shameful scandal: the seizure carried out by the Soviet government of the church in Klaipėda, erected with funds from the faithful.

The anonymous writer rhetorically exclaims, "It is high time for all the residents of Klaipėda to learn what is being written in their name." What a ridiculous concern! For a long time, almost twenty years, it has been known not only to residents of Klaipėda, but to all of Lithuania and world-wide, that the atheists took the beautiful Church of Mary, Queen of Peace away from the faithful and converted it into a philharmonic hall; they know that the faithful of Klaipėda cannot fit into their little old church for services; they know that justice is being sought in various forums. Piles of documents, petitions and complaints have been written, and hundreds of thousands of signatures have been collected. They know, also, that this whole just and persistent struggle of the faithful has butted up against dense insensitivity on the part of the atheists.

Why are the signatures so important to the author of the article? Why does he ask "Where are the correct surnames, where are the addresses and occupations?" when at the same time, he has not only concealed his place of employment, occupation, address or name, but has not even entered a "distorted signature".

Why the KGB needs correct addresses, names and places of employment, not only the faithful know, but also all those



A petition signed by 148,149 believers in Lithuania for the return of the Klaipeda Church. Although it has been the largest, it represents only one in a series since the church was confiscated thirty years ago.

--unbelievers or the indifferent-- who have tried in any way to defend the truth. For the KGB, it is a directory, indicating which home must be searched, which worker can be terrorized until he or she disclaims their own signature or else, refusing to obey, must be demoted. And what is the KGB to do with those whose signatures they cannot decipher, and whom they cannot terrorize? It seems this question is not new to the anonymous writer, either: "Who can decipher entire pages of squiggles? What do they conceal?" Here one would like to stop and ask once again: And who is hiding behind the mask of anonymity?

The anonymous writer is bothered because in the petitions, "In the name of the residents of Klaipeda, it is demanded that the philharmonic hall of Klaipeda be a church."

First of all, in the name of all the residents of Klaipeda and faithful of Lithuania, to ask the anonymous writer not to confuse the truth: it is not that "the philharmonic hall must be a church", but a church must not be converted to a philharmonic hall, when the faithful are simultaneously being forced to make use of cramped facilities unsuitable for a church.



His Excellency, Bishop Petras Maželis of Telšiai, blessing the cornerstone of the Church of Mary, Queen of Peace in Klaipėda on June 30, 1957. Shortly after completion, the church -built with the funds of believers-- was seized by the Soviet government and converted into a concert hall.

In the article, everything is distorted in a similar fashion through naive deviousness, deceit and bold-faced lies; the desire to intimidate the faithful who continue to seek truth and justice is not concealed.

In this way, the anonymous author's pen transforms the just demands of the faithful into "complaints, patched and pasted together on the basis of lies", "puzzling" (!), "mysterious" (!) and "unfounded" letters; he calls the writing of petitions and the collecting of signatures incitement of the residents of Klaipėda, disruption of order, vilification of the Soviet government, rabble-rousing attacks and unjust activities; the signatures most often appear under petitions "deceitfully elicited", falsified, thanks to some kind of "trickery"; and the signatures themselves are not signatures but very elaborately twisted squiggles, and not signed but "smeared". Even the very construction of the church back in those days was "not construction but a whole mess of illegalities, frauds and outright theft."

"Although much time has gone by, nevertheless even today simple workers can be found who were not paid for contracted

work performed," the anonymous writer complains. Indeed, it is something to think about: Why, after taking away the church built with the funds of the faithful and unjustly punishing the clergy who organized the construction of the church, government officials "forgot" to pay for their work all of the church builders who could have been left unpaid in full for their work only because of the confiscation of the church and the arrests of the priests? Does this fact not demean the government officials? What was the anonymous writer thinking when he dared to write that the workers had been left unpaid? Allow me to ask once more: then why have you not paid them for so long?

Deceit is concealed everywhere: "Who has the right to concern themselves with the affairs of the church?" the anonymous writer asks. And he answers, "Without a doubt, only its real caretakers."

In this way, he wishes to direct the attention of the believing public away from concern with the affair of the church --the public which as the saying goes among us, is the true caretaker of our life. To acknowledge the Committee or its chairman as the sole caretaker of the church is very convenient for the enemies of the Church who have reserved to themselves the right of dismissing it or of not confirming its election if it does not suit the officials of the government.

Hence it is easy to dispose of the chairman alone. To devalue and demean those who collect signatures just because they are "not young", "not too well educated", "their profession is humble" (a taxi-driver), in a workers' state is really not right; in this way, a person's honor and dignity are hurt. All the less have they deserved the name of cheaters and liars.

"From all this rise a few more questions: What prompts these people to act so tendentiously? Who teaches and supports them?" the anonymous writer further asks.

If he really does not know "who", then we suggest that he accept the conviction of the faithful: The injustice and deceit committed against the faithful impel Is them to act; the lies, injustice and perfidy (There is surprisingly much of that, even in the short article of the anonymous writer.) urge them to resist, because healthy human nature does not wish to compromise with evil, and seeks goodness and truth; these, people are taught to "act tendentiously" by their Christian conscience, and they are supported by God!

The enthusiasm of the faithful, in their struggle against injustices and falsehoods, is "paid" by the threats, punishments, arrests, imprisonments, labor camps and even death.

Ending this article, one would like to ask the anonymous author of the article to respond not only to the faithful in Klaipeda, but also to the question intriguing all the faithful of Lithuania. When will the Church of the Queen of Peace in Klaipeda, erected with the offerings of the faithful themselves

finally be returned? Will the faithful continue to have only the right to purchase a ticket and hear a concert? If they do not plan to return the church, then perhaps at least the funds contributed toward its construction should be returned to the faithful of Klaipeda. After all, stealing is forbidden not only by the Ten Commandments of God, but by the Constitutions of the USSR and the LSSR.

The author suggests that the writers of the petitions "recite to themselves the Ten Commandments of God and the seven capital sins". Love of neighbor requires one to instruct the ignorant. Read the Constitutions of the USSR and the LSSR and only then write such articles. If after all that, you still do not change your mind concerning the unjust confiscation of the church in Klaipeda, your article and your attitude not only toward the drafting of petitions regarding the church of Klaipeda, but also with regard to others, which defend basic rights of believers, is understandable. You belong to that "chosen" group of the public, which being "purely Soviet" consider the faithful to be beyond the pale of the law, perhaps that is the answer to your question: why your article is anonymous!

SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS

K a u n a s

On April 24, 1985, a search was carried out in the Kaunas apartment of the soldier, Juozas Kazalupskas, his storage shed and collective garden. The search was carried out by Militia Officer Vasiliauskas, Investigator Kavaliauskas, KGB Agents Matulevičius and another who did not present his credentials. Official witnesses were Mr. and Mrs. Vinuikov. Seized during the search were: Issue number 10 of the underground publication *Rūpintoje! is*, (*The Pensive Christ*), photographs of the priests Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius; pamphlets and books: "Believe and Be Silent", "Prophecies According to the LSSR Constitution", "The Associate Pastor of Kražiai and Martyr, S. Rimkus", a notebook, separate typewritten pages, manuscripts of J. Kazalupskas, a starter's pistol...

Presenting themselves to form the search, the officials stated that the search was being done on suspicion of theft, but finishing the search, they acknowledged that they were looking for printing apparatus and underground literature. Chekist Matulevičius was interested in knowing whether Kazalupskas had tape recordings of sermons by Svarinskas, Tamkevičius, Jonas Kauneckas, Petras Našlėnas, et al. Kazalupskas refused to sign the search report. The search lasted five hours.

K a u n a s

May 16, 1985, Kazalupskas was questioned at Kaunas KGB headquarters. Interrogator Kazakevičius informed the one being interrogated of the case against him. The chekist was particularly displeased by the following excerpts from manuscripts seized during the search: "The atheists have developed so many criminals that they do not fit into our prisons; if you want to jail a criminal, you have to know somebody...", was the personal complaint of one school principal to Kazalupskas.

On May 6, 1983, as Kazalupskas was trying to find out what the innocent priests were being tried for, responsible officials of the Vilnius Office of Internal Affairs advised him, "In the Soviet Union, truth is worthless; there is no truth, so don't look for it!" At the same time, on June 24, Prosecutor Bakučionis of the Lithuanian Republic Prosecutors' Office confirmed this, saying, "There has not been, there is not and there will not be any truth!"

Chekist Kazakevičius, after reading from a manuscript, "The best children of the nation have placed their offering on the nation's altar, but the cup is not full; our sacrifice is needed also... And today there are people who courageously stride along the honorable way of Christ to today's Golgotha, where they sacrifice their freedom, youth and even their life for God and a brighter future for the homeland," angrily demanded of Kazalupskas what kind of brighter future he wanted. The chekist attempted to accuse Kazalupskas of collecting signatures for the release of the sentenced priests, that he himself had drafted the texts of declarations, etc., demanded that he tell him where he had obtained the underground publication *Rupintojelis* number 10, when he had become acquainted with the convict priests and begun to collaborate in their criminal activities.

Kzalupskas refused to answer any questions, arguing that the search had been made on the pretext of looking for stolen goods but they had taken religious literature and his personal notes, and that questions were raised during the interrogation regarding his religious convictions --a procedure forbidden in various international agreements which have been signed by the Soviet Union.

Chekist Kazakevičius threatened to throw Kazalupskas into the KGB cellars. Picking up the criminal code, he tried to apply various articles. Finally, he suggested that Kazalupskas think seriously about his own future and that of his three children.

Ending the interrogaton, Chekist Kazakevičius demanded that Kazalupskas not say anything to anyone about the interrogation which had taken place.

On November 20, 1985, Kazalupskas was again interrogated in the offices of the Kaunas KGB. He was questioned by Chekist

Matulevičius, with the assistance of Kazakevičius. Matulevičius declared that Kazalupskas is accused of anti-Soviet activity according to the Criminal Code, Article 68, Id, and he presented a whole list of accusations: writing and taking calumniating documents to Moscow, to the highest levels of Soviet government (petitions to free Father Svarinskas and Father Tamkevičius were taken to Moscow with signatures of the faithful -- Ed. Note), while in uniform, in school, he had given anti-Soviet lectures, he had signed libelous statements, he keeps anti-Soviet literature at home, etc.

In response to the accusations, Kazalupskas calmly explained that if he did not believe in God, he would surely have rotted in prison as a criminal, that he could go to jail, even now, but only for God and the nation's ideals.

When the man under interrogation asked them to prove his alleged anti-Soviet crimes or to find in his manuscripts a single anti-Soviet or political sentence, the KGB agents rummaged through the material seized in the course of the search, but were unable to come up with anything specific. Matulevičius demanded that Kazalupskas promise not to take such materials to Moscow any longer, and if need be, would go directly to the KGB. The prisoner replied, "I have taken such material and if need be, I will take it in the future."

The chekist tried to convince Kazalupskas that religion is free and not persecuted by anyone. Kazalupskas showed a whole list of contrary events, thereby proving the untruthfulness of KGB agent Matulevičius' statement:

"The faithful, out of their own funds and with permission of the government, built themselves the Church of the Queen of Peace in Klaipėda; the atheists seized it and converted it into a philharmonic hall. The faithful of Gargždai have been asking permission for several years to raise the roof of the church since there is a lack of air, but the local government will not allow it. In Rylišké, the faithful, for lack of a church, prayed in a private home but the atheists dispersed them. The faithful put up a lean-to in the cemetery covered with polyethylene. The atheists tore this down and dispersed the faithful. In the *Rayon* of Telšiai, at the edge of the Rainiai Woods, a cross used to stand. One night, some soldiers blew it up.

"Can there be a greater persecution of religion when even the army and weapons are used?" asked Kazalupskas.

During the interrogation, Chekest Matulevičius threatened Kazalupskas with imprisonment several times. When the man under interrogation demanded that they return objects seized in the raid, the chekist replied that the articles would not be returned, but when Kazalupskas went on trial, they would incorporate the articles in his file.

G a r g ž d a i (Klaipėda Rayon)

In January, 1986, KGB agents came from Vilnius and for four hours interrogated the associate pastor of the parish of Gargždai, Father Antanas Šeškevičius. Father Šeškevičius was accused of working with the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*. Allegedly, it is thanks to him that statements by the faithful get into this publication. The chekists threatened to bring criminal charges against Father Šeškevičius.

V i l k a v i š k i s

On April 25, 1986, Antanas Kelmelis, a worker at the Vilkaviškis Metal Factory, was summoned from the factory. Two officials who did not give their names accused him of burglarizing a newsstand, and insisted that they accompany him to his home, where a search would be carried out. In front of the home (Statybinių 4-3), five men in civilian clothes were already waiting. Kelmelis was presented with a search warrant. Directing the search was Investigator Kašolaitis of the criminal division. When some packs of writing paper were found in the desk, Kašolaitis stated that the KGB would have to called in. Immediately, Vilkaviškis security agents Masalskis, Čėsna and Kanonenka showed up. The chekists demanded that he hand over his typewriter. During the search, they seized six packs of writing paper, a pack of carbon paper, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, about two hundred letters and addresses, and books: *In the Chekist's Clutches*, *In Soviet Prisons*, etc.

After the search, which lasted approximately four hours, Kelmelis was taken to Vilkaviškis KGB headquarters and interrogated. The security agents were interested in knowing where he had obtained the articles seized during the search. Letting him go home, they promised that in the future, they would be meeting with him more than once.

V i l k a v i š k i s

On May 19, 1986, at KGB headquarters in Vilnius, Interrogator Stepočinskas questioned Vilkaviškis resident Mrs. Dana Kelmelienė. The questions concerned articles seized in the course of a search carried out in her apartment April 25. (Where did she get this or that? What did she use it for? Whom did she know? Whom did she associate with?, etc.) Also questioned was her husband, Antanas Kelmelis. Both Kelmelises were interrogated the following day also. Mrs. Kelmelienė did not sign the interrogation record.

V i l k a v i š k i s

On April 24, 1986, a search was carried out in the

apartment of P. Blažukas, a resident of Vilkaviškis. Seized during the search were: a typewriter, carbon paper, books copied by typewriter: *How They Shot Us to Death*, *Memories of a Conscript*, etc. That day and the following, Blažukas was interrogated at Vilkaviškis KGB headquarters where they threatened to bring criminal proceedings against him.

T e l š i a i

In April and May, 1986, the KGB interrogated children and youths who went regularly to the Cathedral of Telšiai. The aim was to recruit informers from among them, to inform on Father Vincas Veiavičius, who in the words of the chekists, is selling information abroad. The new security chief is trying to charm youth into doing the work of Judas. "You may go to church; you will be required only to tell the security police everything that goes on in church," a chekist explained to the youths.

K a u n a s

On May 22, 1986, a raid was carried out on the home of engineer Algirdas Patackas, who lives on Petrauskio gatvė, Kaunas. In charge of the raid was KGB agent Aleinikov. During the search, some books were taken, among them, *The Region of Šeiniai-Suvalkai*, and some manuscripts. Found in the room was a wooden cross decorated with Lithuanian symbols, which the KGB also took. The search lasted three hours.

The same day, a search was also carried out at the home of Antanas Patackas (Algirdas' father), formerly an instructor at the Agricultural Academy, living in Žemoji gatvė. Seized during the search were these books: *Father Ambraziejus Jakavonis*, *The Region of Seiniai-Suvalkai*, *Motiejus Gustaitis*, *Archbishop Reins - 100 Years*, *The Blessed Mykolas Giedraitis*, various handwritten and typed notes, a pocket diary with various entries, an *Erika* typewriter, etc. The search lasted about six hours. In charge were Major Pilelis and Col. Česnavičius. This was the second search at the home of Patackas. The first had occurred in April, 1977, after he had been discharged from work for contacts with Lithuanians in Byelorussia. Seized during the search were: *Memoirs of Petras Klimas and History of Lithuania* by V. Sruoga.

On April 29, KGB agent Urbonas tried to prove to Patackas, who had been summoned to Vilnius, that he was the author of *Lithuania Separated*.

On July 29, Algirdas Patackas, who had come to Vilnius KGB headquarters for questioning, was arrested. His wife received notice that Patackas was charged according to Par. 199 of the Criminal Code.

K a u n a s

On May 22, 1986, KGB agents headed by Aleinikov, raided the apartment of Paulius Martinaitis, Širvintų gatvė. A raid was carried out also on the home of Petras Kimbris of Kaunas, from whom the following books were seized: *Lithuania Separated, Eastern Lithuania, Parts i and //*. On May 23, Chekist Aleinikov showed up at the home of Miss Adelė Urbonaitė, on Kapsų gatvė, together with another KGB agent. Lacking a search warrant, he deceitfully stated that he would not carry out a search, but he took from the apartment two typewriters, and the following books: *Father Ambraziejus Jakavonis*, Pascal's *Pensees* (Lithuanian translation), A. Blum's *School for Prayer*, *The Little Spring by the Railroad*, etc.

G a r l i a v a (Kaunas Rayon)

On May 22, 1986, KGB agents raided the apartment of Arūnas Rekašius on Ramybės gatvė, in Garliava. Rekašius is accused of disseminating anti-Soviet slogans, and of raising the Lithuanian flag on February 16 (Lithuanian Independence Day -- Trans. Note). The chekists demanded that he turn over the typewriter he had used in reproducing the statements. During the search, they found none of the articles they were looking for. The following day, May 23, Rekašius was interrogated at Kaunas KGB headquarters.

G a r l i a v a

On May 22, 1986, a raid was carried out also on the apartment of Mindaugas Babonas of Garliava. They seized religious books and memoirs written in his father's hand.

G a r l i a v a

On May 22, 1986, a raid was carried out on the home of Saulius Kelpšas, living on Pažangos gatvė, in Garliava, in charge of the raid was Militia Captain Krasauskas. Participating in the raid were three security police who did not give their names, and KGB agent Petrauskas. Seized during the search were: a considerable amount of religious literature reproduced by typewriter, about one hundred tapes with recorded music, etc. After the raid, Kelpšas was hauled off to KGB headquarters in Kaunas, and interrogated, with the interrogation continuing the following day, May 23.

K a u n a s

On May 23, 1986, Miss Aldona Raižytė was apprehended on the

street and taken to Kaunas KGB headquarters. Miss Raižytė was questioned in connection with the search which had been carried out in the apartment of Saulius Kelpšas. That same day, security agents also interrogated Kaunas resident, Miss G. Bružaitė, and forced her to admit that she was acquainted with Kelpšas.

O m s u k c h a n (Region of Magadan)

On May 14, 1986, a raid was carried out on the dormitory room of Antanas Terleckas, in exile and living in Omsukchan. The raid was carried out by Vilnius security agent Cesnavičius, and two chekists from Magadan. The security agents mentioned that criminal proceedings have been brought against some woman who had sent Terleckas excerpts of the book *In the Chekist's ditches*.

Confiscated during the raid were seven letters of Terleckas written to people living in Lithuania. At the end of the search, Česnavičius declared, "I'm getting ready to have you moved."

OUR PRISONERS

Father Alfonsas Svarinskas writes:

"Time passes very quickly here, too; it has been three years already and it seems like everything happened yesterday. Time leaves marks on everyone, and I'm 62 years old already. I do not have much longer to live, and yet, how many good ideas in my soul! But I am not growing old in spirit, probably because I am in good physical condition.

"On Sundays, I adhere to our Viduklė schedule. Each day, we draw nearer to eternity. It is important that we mature in spirit, and do everything in our power to leave the world behind us more beautiful, better and more just. Let us remember the verse in the Gospel about the talents; we must justify God's trust in us.

"I am glad that you visit Viduklė and remember me. Usually it is said, 'Out of sight, out of mind.' In this case, it is just the opposite: after all, it has been three years. In this way we all grow...

"Saint Augustine was really right when he said that our hearts will rest only in God. My hope is the Lord God. I am happy, since, as Saint Luke affirms, 'The Lord loves a cheerful giver.' Forgive me for being brief. It will soon be Easter the resurrection of Christ. I greet everyone, everyone! With you in prayer and spirit. Allelulia!"

February 12, 1986

From the letters of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius:

"This is the third Easter that I am not hearing the organ and the *Alleluia* joyfully echoing from thousands of hearts, but the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ overcomes distance and barriers and makes the heart tremble joyfully. Easter experiences are so precious to me that they cannot be dimmed neither by time nor by any distortion...

"Holy Thursday evening, in my thoughts, I participated in the Last Supper. After that, I stood at the foot of Christ's cross, and Saturday evening, with all the living members of the Church, I renewed my baptismal promises. Easter Day was a holiday from work, so I was able to meditate without interruption, to associate with the Lord of life and death, and with all those for whom the resurrection of Christ is the greatest truth in life.

"On Holy Saturday evening and Easter, I prayed especially for the people closest to me, that their life, signed with the resurrection of Christ, might be full of the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control, (c.f. Galatians, 5,22)

"I trust that in our homeland, more than one pair of hands will be joined in prayer for me as well, so that having once taught others to live and suffer, I would not now be just a 'gong booming or a cymbal clashing.'

"Easter Tuesday, I read the newspaper *Arguments and Facts*, and could not believe my eyes -- on March 5, Father Juozas Zdebskis died tragically. I read the report again and again and there was no doubt. The Lord's will be done! He knows best who should work, who should suffer and who should rest after all tribulations.

"I first met Father Juozas in Alytus, in the spring of 1965. He replaced me and I went to Lazdijai. After a few years, providence brought us together on the job, at the Prienai reclamation project. It was always possible to learn from him self-sacrifice, perseverance, tranquility and depth of spirit. Lord reward him for his big heart and that goodness which he shared with others, by granting him eternal life and peace next to your heart!"

April 7, 1986

Father Jonas-Kąstytiis Matulionis writes:

"...My most meaningful days were not those during which audiences in Moscow and in Vilnius applauded, and not when, at the mention of my name, applause would roar out (Father Jonas-Kąstytiis Matulionis studied at the Conservatory of



Povilas Pečeliūnas

Vilnius, and was expelled from it for singing in Church), but in the priesthood. To be moved offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to weep with the penitent, to experience the thrill of preaching, to comfort the sick; at the baptism of a child, earnestly to ask the parents to be an example for life... and everything for which the priesthood empowers one. We must accept everything which the Lord sends, worship Him wherever His will places us, where He wishes to be worshipped by us. Our duty is to do His will, to submit and be thankful, no matter where our road leads, in what lands we stop in and among what faces we have to live -- even though it be hell on earth -- so long as it be with God!"

1986

Povilas Pečeliūnas writes:

"...Ah, health! How very necessary it is. Alas, it is the worst problem. I would like to remain silent about myself, but that air, it seems -- air is not bought or sold, one should not have to safeguard it... However, it appears that oxygen is also rationed. It would appear that for someone like me, there is a required minimum of oxygen... and keeping in mind my age and health, obviously there is not enough of it.

"You rise in the morning as though you had just finished work and were preparing for rest. And so it goes, day after day. And as time goes on, it gets worse. It is regrettable that I do not know according to which 'paragraph' the amount of oxygen is set... So as you see, everyone's troubles are just about the same. The only thing I don't have to complain about is my apartment. They simply took it away. If I ever return, my 'apartment' will be all of Lithuania. That is more important than four walls. Besides, the less one has, the happier one is. It is downright distasteful to look at those who drive themselves from morning till night for material 'values'. They gradually become degraded, lose the ability to think, and there can be no talk of conscience, though they wear the feathers of a peacock.

"When a person does not concern himself with material goods, he fears nothing. He carries everything with him. And those who wish to break him become powerless, because they do not have the means to frighten or terrorize him. At this time I have nothing, so I can look at many things with a smile."

1986

From the letters of Vladas Lapienis:

"O great God and Father dear,
Strengthen man, frail and weak.
It is so ordered that only heaven
fulfills his boundless desires."
(Maironis)

"Accept trials with the greatest joy for they strengthen faith, test and develop patience and perfection," says Sacred Scripture. I have the high honor of being the oldest of all the prisoners in this zone. According to some prisoners, I am as it were their father. Even though deprived of freedom, nevertheless, by modeling one's life on the life of Jesus, one begins to understand the Lord's words better. I cannot brag about the state of my burden, for heart pains do occur: however, I am happy and I rejoice because the Lord has said, "Rejoice and be glad for a great reward awaits you in heaven"... Why then should we mourn? Always and everywhere let us trust the test sent by God, for those who love Him, all things work out for the good... Eternity draws near, the Christian must always be in the future... Many people remain unacquainted with the Gospel, if they are not taken with its living spirit... Often I wish neither to read nor to listen: I find in God everything I want. I recall the words of Thomas A' Kempis, author of *The Imitation of Christ*: if I possess all the knowledge in the world, but have not love, what good will that do me in the sight of God, who

will judge me according to my works? Prolixity does not satisfy the soul... Only a holy life, a clear conscience and trust in God constitute true peace of heart.

1985

NEWS FROM THE DIOCESES

To: General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev of the Central Committee
Communist Party of the Soviet Union

From: The Priests of the Diocese of Panevėžys of the Catholic
Church of Lithuania

A Petition

In 1987, the Catholics of Lithuania will celebrate the 600-year jubilee of the introduction of Christianity into Lithuania. In the course of 600 years, Christian teaching has become deeply rooted in our nation. The Constitution of the USSR guarantees freedom of conscience, but atheist activists turn this guarantee of the Constitution into something of little worth.

1. The children of believers are persecuted in school, morally terrorized for public church attendance and forcibly enrolled in atheistic organizations against the wishes of their parents. Those not signing up are warned that they will not be able to get into institutions of higher or advanced education. Those who do sign up are forbidden to fulfill religious obligations and those who participate in services, some of them candidates for diplomas, are not even allowed to take final examinations. Those wishing to fulfill their religious obligations must do so surreptitiously, and thus from their early years, are forced to be hypocrites. This is a canker on our society.

2. Various government employees and teachers cannot fulfill their religious obligations publicly as demanded by their beliefs and conscience. Therefore, to fulfill their religious obligations, they are forced to go to far-off places so that no one will see them. Teachers who are religious believers must speak against their own conscience -- like atheists, even though Par. 50 of the LSSR Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience. When someone in a responsible position leaves wife and children and remarries, this is considered his personal affair, and for it, he is not disciplined; if a government employee publicly carries out religious obligations, he is demoted.



A religious procession to Šiluva

3. The USSR Constitution guarantees equality of all citizens, but how is it in real life? The atheists have everything: Press, radio, television..., while believers are not allowed access to these means of communication. After World War II, only a part of the families of believers were able to obtain prayerbooks and catechisms. At the service of the atheists are all schools, from kindergarten to university, while it is forbidden to teach the children of believing parents catechism, even in church: for such instruction, priests are tried and punished. Believers are not allowed to plan excursions or hire a car, even a taxi to go to attend a religious festival, for example, Šiluva or the Calvary of the Lowlanders -- Varduva.

Believers are not always allowed to summon a priest to the hospital for a patient at the point of death.

It is not allowed to pray during the wake of a believer at the funeral parlor, as Catholics are accustomed to do.

4. According to Par. 50 of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic Constitution, the Church is separated from the state, but in real life, it is otherwise: When bishops or administrators of dioceses appoint someone to a parish or transfer him out, the Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs, as representative of the atheist government, impeding the well-being of the Church, makes the final decision regarding clergy appointments, nomination of candidates to the episcopacy,

or to administratorship of a diocese, the selection of seminary professors, the acceptance of candidates for the seminary and allows all too few of them to be accepted so that there is a great shortage of priests.

The Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs interferes in the composition of Priests' Councils and Colleges of Consultors. This is interference in the internal affairs of the Church. Officials of the civil government interfere even in religious devotions: Why did such and such a priest conduct services? Why were prayers offered for priests suffering in prison? They interfere even in families, and in the formation of parish committees.

5. Christianity was first introduced into Lithuania in Vilnius, so the Cathedral of Vilnius is the cradle of Lithuanian Christianity, and this shrine has been taken away from the faithful. Saint Casimir is the patron of Lithuania, but the church dedicated to him in Vilnius has been converted into a Museum of Atheism, just as the church erected by the offerings of the believers of Klaipėda has been transformed into a Philharmonic Hall. This is to ridicule the faithful.

6. The USSR has obligated itself to abide by the *Universal Déclarâtion of Human Rights*, the 18th paragraph of which states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

The USSR has also obligated itself to carry out the Helsinki Final Accords, Section 7 of which states: "The participating states will respect individual rights and freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief...", and in Section 10, it states, "The participating states will fulfill in good faith their obligations under international law, both those obligations arising from the generally recognized principles and rules of international law, and those obligations arising from treaties or other agreements, in conformity with international law, to which they are parties."

Hence, the abovementioned injustices against believers are a transgression against international obligations.

7. When clergy or faithful publicize the injustices and calumnies committed against them, they are accused of vilifying the Soviet Union and sentenced, e.g., Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, Father Jonas Matulionis and some Catholic laymen have been sentenced, just for defending believers' rights. If the government is to abide by the Constitution and its obligations, they should be released.

We appeal to you as leader of the nation to see that the aforesaid unconstitutional injustices and discrimination against

believers be done away with and rectified.

1985

Signed by the following priests, Fathers:

1. Petras Adomonis, 2. Bronius Antanaitis, 3. Juozas Antanavičius, 4. Vincentas Arlauskas, 5. Boleslovas Babrauskas, 6. Jonas Bagdonas, 7. Juozas Bagdonas, 8. Bronius Balaiša, 9. Antanas Balaišis, 10. Vytautas Balašauskas, 11. Jonas Balčiūnas, 12. Juozas Balčiūnas, 13. Jurgis Balickaitis, 14. Kostas Balsys, 15. Petras Baltuška, 16. Algis Baniulis, 17. Petras Baniulis, 18. Kazimieras Baronas, 19. Henrikas Bernatovičius, 20. Valdas Braukyla.

21. Adolfas Breivė, 22. Petras Budriūnas, 23. Jonas Buliauskas, 24. Jonas Butkys, 25. Paulius Ciuckis, 26. Feliksas Čišauskas, 27. Algirdas Dauknys, 28. Juozas Dubnikas, 29. Steponas Galvydis, 30. Juozapas Garška, 31. Juozas Giedraitis, 32. Kazimieras Girnius, 33. Mykolas Gečys, 34. Antanas Gobis, 35. Alfonas Grauslys, 36. Antanas Gružauskas, 37. Klemensas Gtauskas, 38. Gaudentas Ikamas, 39. Vincentas Inkratas, 40. Tadas Ivanovskis.

41. Alfonsas Jančys, 42. Paulius Jankevičius, 43. Juozas Janulis, 44. Vytautas Jasiūnas, 45. Jonas Jatulis, 46. Paulius Juozėnas, 47. Jonas Jurgaitis, 48. Antanas Jušks, 49. Alfonsas Kadžius, 50. Antanas Kairys, 51. Vytautas Kapočius, 52. Stasys Kazėnas, 53. Lionginas Keršulis, 54. Petras Kiela, 55. Antanas Kietis, 56. Anicetas Kisiekis, 57. Paulius Klezys, 58. Petras Krasauskas, 59. Vladas Kremenskas, 60. Stanislovas Krumpiauskas.

61. Petras Kuzmickas, 62. Jonas Labakojis, 63. Juozas Laukšas, 64. Leonas Lukšas, 65. Petras Matkevičius, 66. Vytautas Marozas, 67. Aleksandras Masys, 68. Vytautas Masys, 69. Juozapas Mickevičius, 70. Antanas Mikulėnas, 71. Algirdas Miškinis, 72. Paulius Miškinis, 73. Antanas Mitrikas, 74. Kazimieras Mozūras, 75. Jonas Nagulevičius, 76. Algirdas Narušis, 77. Lionginas Nenišis, 78. Petras Nykšta, 79. Albinas Paltanavičius, 80. Antanas Petrauskas.

81. Albinas Pipiras, 82. Jonas Pranevičius, 83. Augustinas Pranskietis, 84. Robertas Pukenis, 85. Izidorius Puriuškis, 86. Antanas Rameikis, 87. Jonas Rimša, 88. Edmundas Rinkevičius, 89. Pranciškus Sabaliauskas, 90. Raimondas Saprignonas, 91. Aurelijus Simonaitis, 92. Bronius Simsonas, 93. Leonardas Skardinskas, 94. Jonas Skirelis, 95. Mykolas Stonys, 96. Vincentas Stankevičius, 97. Bronius Strazdas, 98. Alfonsas Strielčiūnas, 99. Aloyzas Sungaila, 100. Paulius Svirskis.

101. Ignas šaučiūnas, 102. Bronius Šlapelis, 103. Paulius Šliauteris, 104. Gediminas Šukys, 105. Juozapas šumskis, 106. Albertas Talačka, 107. Leonardas Tamošauskas, 108. Pranas

Tamulionis, 109. Stasys Tamulionis, 110. Petras Tarulis, 111. Petras Tijušas, 112. Vytautas Tvari jonas, 113. Jonas Uogintas, 114. Benediktas Urbonas, 115. Sigitas Uždavinys, 116. Jonas Vaičiūnas, 117. Antanas Vaiančiūnas, 118. Antanas Valantinas, 119. Juozapas Varnas, 120. Paulius Varžinskas.

121. Antanas Vaškevičius, 122. Virginijus Vailentas, 123. Vytautas Zakrys, 124. Stasys Zubavičius, 125. Antanas Zulionis, 126. Bronius Žilinskas, 127. Serafinas Žvinys.

P.S. In the Diocese of Panevėžys, at the time of these signatures, there were 130 priests. Copies have been sent to the bishops and to the administrators of the dioceses.

To: The Bishops and Apostolic Administrators of Lithuania
From: The Priests of the Diocese of Vilkaiviškis

A Petition

We the undersigned priests of the Diocese of Vilkaiviškis, concerned that the 600-year jubilee of the Baptism of Lithuania be suitably commemorated request the bishops of Lithuania and administrators of dioceses:

1. To invite our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, to visit Lithuania in 1987.

2. To request the Holy Father that he, on the occasion of the jubilee of the Baptism of Lithuania, proclaim Blessed the Servant of God, Archbishop Jurgis Matulaitis, and that he officially sanction veneration of Mykolas Giedraitis, who has the title of Blessed.

3. To request the government of the Soviet Union:

a. That priests should not be prevented from catechizing children as Canon Law requires,

b. That the faithful, especially children and youth, not be persecuted for the public practice of their religion and that they not be forced to join atheistic organizations,

c. That the Cathedral of Vilnius and the church of Klaipėda be returned to the faithful, that permission be given to erect churches in new cities, as well as in the suburbs of Vilnius, Kaunas and other large cities,

d. That the exiled Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Vilnius, Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius, be allowed to return to his duties,

e. That the faithful be allowed to make use of the same freedom of speech and press as the atheists,

f. That the leadership of the Church not be interfered with in the appointment of clergy,

g. That suitable candidates not be prevented from preparing for the priesthood, and from being priests,

h. That the cases of Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas, Sigitas Tamkevičius, Jonas Matulionis and lay believers, sentenced for defending the rights of the Church and of the faithful be reviewed, and that they be released,

4. To acquaint the believing public more widely with the life, virtues and activities of the Servant of God, Archbishop Jurgis Matulaitis. Likewise, the other eminent personages of our nation be publicized: Father Andrius Rudamina, Father Jurgis Pabrėža, Father Alfonsas Lipniūnas, Archbishop Mečislovas Reinys, Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius, Professor Stasys Šalkauskas, Professor Pranas Dovydaitis, Educator Marija Pečkauskaitė and others.

5. To see that the seminary administration and faculty, behave everywhere as bright examples of Church spirit, and that they convey that spirit to their charges. Not to ordain to the priesthood seminarians who have not developed an ecclesiastical spirit in the seminary.

6. To continue the successfully initiated work of propagating temperence. To see that in all dioceses and parishes, at least once a year temperence days would be organized.

June 1, 1986

Signed by the following, Fathers:

1. Pranas Adomaitis 2. Vincas Akelis 3. Antanas Aleksandravičius 4. Algirdas Andrišiūnas 5. Jonas Alesius 6. Vincas Bandža 7. Jonas Baranauskas 8. Kęstutis Bekasovas 9. Vladas Bobinas 10. Jonas Bučinskis 11. Vytautas Būdas 12. Jonas Būga 13. Boleslovas Čegelskas 14. Vincas Čėsna 15. Vaclovas Degutis 16. Antanas Diškevičius 17. Gvidonas Dovydaitis 18. Petras Dumbliauskas 19. Antanas Gražulis 20. Juozas Gražulis 21. Jonas Grudzinskas 22. Juozas Gumauskas 23. Vytautas Guogis 24. Vytautas Gustaitis

25. Vytautas Insoda 26. Vincas Jalinskas 27. Boleslovas Jarušauskas 28. Juozas Klimavičius 29. Kazimieras Juškevičius 30. Petras Krasauskas 31. Kazimieras Kudirka 32. Lionginas Kunevičius 33. Juozas Kupstaitis 34. Antanas Liupšys 35. A. Liesis 36. Jonas Maksvytis 37. Jonas Malinauskas 38. Juozas Matulaitis 39. Juozas Matulevičius 40. Antanas Mieldažys 41. Juozas Mieldažys 42. Stasys Mikalajūnas 43. Kazimieras Montvila 44. Petras Orlickas 45. Bronius Paltanavičius 46. Algirdas Pasilauskas 47. Pranas Perlaitis 48. Vincas Petruševičius

49. Ignas Plioraitis 50. Gvidonas Pušinitis 51. Juozas Radzevičius 52. Vaclovas Radzevičius 53. Antanas Račkus 54. Boleslovas Ražukas 55. Valerijas Rudzinskas 56. Salemonas Samuolis 57. Petras Stika 58. Vaclovas Stakėnas 59. Gintautas Steponaitis 60. Jurgis Sventickas 61. Pranciškus Šulskis 62.

Antanas Urbonavičius 63. Vitas Urbonas 64. Juozas Užupis 65.
Petras Vagneris 66. Romualdas Vaičiulaitis 67. Vytautas
Vaitkauskas 68. Tadeušas Villianas 69. Jonas Varkala 70. Antanas
Vitkus 71. Juozas Žemaitis 72. Kęstutis Brilius

Not found, Fathers:

1. Petras Balanda 2. Andrius Gustaitis 3. Donatas
Jasulaitis 4. Juozas Juškaitis 5. Jonas Kavaliauskas 6.
Leonardas Kavaliūnas 7. Jonas Palukaitis 8. Andriejus Rimas 9.
Jonas Rusinas 10. Alfonsas Sadauskas 11. Gracijus Sakalauskas
12. Gintautas Skučas 13. Juozas šalčius 14. Raimundas Žukauskas

To: Mikhail Gorbachev, Secretary General, Communist Party, USSR
Copies to: The Bishops and diocesan administrators of Lithuania
From: The priests of the Diocese of Vilkašskis
of the Catholic Church in Lithuania

A Petition

At the present time, Fathers Sigitas Tamkevičius, Alfonsas
Svarinskas, Jonas-Kaštutis Matulionis and others, rank-and-file
faithful, suffer imprisonment and exile.

To the believing public and to us priests of Lithuania, it
is clear that they have been sentenced for faithfulness to God
and the Church.

On that basis, we priests of the Diocese of Vilkašskis
request that you release the imprisoned priests and other
faithful.

Signed by the Fathers:

1. Pranas Adomaitis 2. Vincas Akelis 3. Antanas
Aleksandravičius 4. Algirdas Andrišiūnas 5. Jonas Alesius 6.
Vincas Bandža 7. Jonas Baranauskas 8. Kęstutis Bekasovas 9.
Juozas Berteška 10. Vladas Bobinas 11. Jonas Bučinskas 12.
Gediminas Budevičius 13. Vytautas Būdas 14. Jonas Būga 15.
Boleslovas Čegelskas 16. Vincas Česna 17. Vaclovas Degutis 18.
Antanas Diškevičius 19. Gvidonas Dovydaitis 20. Petras
Dumbliauskas 21. Vincas Dumčius 22. Antanas Gražulis 23. Juozas
Gražulis 24. Jonas Grudzinskas 25. Juozas Gumauskas
26. Vytautas Guogis 27. Vytautas Gustaitis 28. Andrius
Gustaitis 29. Vytautas Insoda 30. Vincas Jalinskas 31.
Boleslovas Jarušauskas 32. Juozas Juškaitis 33. Juozas
Klimavičius 34. Kazimieras Juškevičius 35. Petras Krasauskas 36.
Kazimieras Kudirka 37. Lioginas Kunevičius 38. Juozas
Kupstaitis 39. A. Liesis 40. Antanas Liupšys 41. Jonas Maksvytis
42. Juozas Matulaitis 43. Juozas Matulevičius 44. Antanas

Mieldažys 45. Juozas Mieldažys 46. Stasys Mikalajūnas 47. Kazimieras Montvila 48. Petras Orlickas 49. Bronius Paltanavičius 50. Algirdas Pasilauškas 51. Juozas Pečiukonis 52. Pranas Perlaitis

53. Ignas Plioraitis 54. Gvidonas Pušinaitis 55. Juozas Radzevičius 56. Vaclovas Radzevičius 57. Antanas Račkauskas 58. Boleslovas Ražukas 59. Valerijus Rudzinskas 60. Salemonas Samuolis 61. Petras Stika 62. Gintautas Skučas 63. Vaclovas Stakėnas 64. Gintautas Steponaitis 65. Jurgis Sventickas 66. Juozas Šalčius 67. Pranciškus Šulskis 68. Antanas Urbonavičius 69. Vitas Urbonas 70. Juozas Užupis 71. Petras Vagneris 72. Romualdas Vaičiulaitis 73. Vytautas Vaitkus 74. Tadeušas Viliūnas 75. Jonas Varkala 76. Antanas Vitkus 77. Juozas Zdebskis 78. Juozas Žemaitis 79. Kęstutis Briilius

Not found, Fathers:

1. Donatas Jasulaitis 2. Jonas Kavaliauskas 3. Leonardas Kavaliūnas 4. Jonas Palukaitis 5. Vincas Petruševičius 6. Rimas Andriejus 7. Jonas Rusinas 8. Alfonsas Sadauskas 9. Gracijus Sakaluskas 10. Kazimieras Skučas 11. Raimundas Žukauskas

K a i š i a d o r y s

On June 10, 1986, Petras Anilionis, Commissioner for Religious Affairs "brainwashed" the Deans of the Diocese of Kaišiadorys, responding to a communication from the priests to Mikhail Gorbachev, and trying to convince them that Soviet religious freedom is especially broad: "Even the children of church committee members can enter institutions."

Anilionis "forgot" to mention that only those youths are accepted who renounce their faith, enrolling in atheistic organizations, and who have not been involved with the KGB.

During the meeting the Commissioner faulted Father Jonas Zubrus for preaching in parishes other than his own.

V i i n i u s

On June 11, 1986, Commissioner Petras Anilionis of the Council for Religious Affairs summoned the Deans of the Archdiocese of Vilnius to the Chancery. To them, as he had to deans of other dioceses, the Commissioner responded to the petition from the priests of the Dioceses of Kaunas and Panevėžys, addressed to Mikhail Gorbachev.

The Commissioner expressed his displeasure at the fact that signatures are being collected on greetings to His Excellency, Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius, on the occasion of the fifty-year jubilee of his priesthood. It is the understanding of Anilionis that each priest can greet the bishop separately, but

such collective greetings are a source of scandal to Lithuanians abroad, and specifically the magazine, *Akiračiai (Perspectives* , published in Chicago Trans. Note).

K a u n a s

On June 18, 1986, the deans of the Dioceses of Kaunas and Vilkaviškis were summoned to the chancery office. Here, Petras Anilionis responded to the communication of priests of the dioceses of Kaunas and Panevėžys to Mikhail Gorbachev.

"What hypocrisy! Some priests whom I have visited agreed that it is good that they arrested Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius -- life is more peaceful! But when someone comes to collect signatures, they rush to sign.

"Remember, these documents are not thrown into the trash. They are catalogued and analyzed and when something comes up, everything will be recalled. Then you can blame only yourselves," the angry Anilionis began the meeting.

Anilionis was displeased that the petitions were based on international agreements and declarations. In his opinion, It would do to note well that in international agreements, rights and freedoms are provided for and guaranteed to the degree that they do not undermine the security of the country and the system of government.

"You have complete freedom of the press: 160,000 prayerbooks! When were there so many? Almost 200 per parish! And how many people are there in church? For example, in the parish of Šlavantai at Easter -- 33, in Šventežeris -- 120, in Lazdijai, about 200 -- so there are quite enough," Anilionis continued to lie.

The Dean of Lazdijai, Father Vincas Jalinskas, objected, saying that this was not true: In Lazdijai at Easter, there are over 2000 people and in Šventežeris, at least 1200 people!

Petras Anilionis was very displeased that there are parishes, e.g., in the Deanery of Lazdijai -- Veisiejai and Kapčiamiestis-- which do not give government agencies statistical information about religious ministrations, while other parishes submit deflated figures. "We shall record that there were no religious ministrations in these churches. Know that this can have painful consequences in the future when the state determines the editions for future prayerbooks," the Commissioner again threatened.

Touching on the question of catechisms, Anilionis affirmed that the government allowed the publication of enough catechisms; besides, some things from the catechisms were printed in the prayerbooks. "'And in general, why lie?' a priest said to me, 'we provide our own catechisms!' Then why cry that there are not enough?" the Commissioner persisted. (The faithful are provided with illegally published catechisms and prayerbooks

at the risk of raids and arrests -- two cases concerning holy cards, raids, investigations and threats: Is this the "complete" Soviet freedom of press touted by Anilionis? -- Ed. Note)

During his lecture, the speaker recalled two seminarians who were expelled from the seminary on his orders for possession of illegally reproduced religious literature. Allegedly the commissioner knows that typewritten literature is still spreading in the seminary. "If we still catch them, there will be no mercy! There are complaints of a shortage of priests," Anilionis continued. "Then why do you let them go to other republics. The seminary in Kaunas prepares priests only for Lithuania, and the one in Riga for the entire Soviet Union. Take, for instance, Father Jonas Zubrus -- what is he running around for in Novosibirsk and elsewhere? If there are believers there, let them send their candidates to the seminary in Riga, and they will have their own priests! As for Father Zubrus, there are enough village churches in Lithuania."

The Commissioner agreed that in the Diocese of Telšiai, there is a great shortage of priests. Not infrequently, one priest serves three or four parishes, only it is his conviction that the extremist priests are responsible for such a situation, since they purposely incite to distribute the newly ordained priests to dioceses unevenly, so that they might be able to blame the Soviet government for the shortage of priests. To solve this problem, Anilionis advised straightening out the extremists not to try teaching the bishops and the situation will change. (We cannot understand why Anilionis could not bring himself to point out a single diocese in which there was a surplus of priests, or no priestless parishes -- Ed. Note.)

"In your petitions you complain that psychotics are being accepted for the seminary. For this, the priests who write them recommendations are responsible. Give us enough loyal and healthy candidates instead of fanatics and anti-Soviets, and they will be admitted," Anilionis explained.

"Failure to get along with the Soviet government will always produce bad results, and don't try to pressure me. For instance, in the church of Radviliškis, it is essential to raise the ceiling. The pastor, Vice-dean L. Vaičelionis, in an attempt to pressure me, said, 'People are getting ready to go to Moscow, so let's compromise, give us permission!' They don't have to go to Moscow, I am quite aware of the situation. It is necessary to raise the ceiling. The people want it, but neither I nor the Soviet government are to blame, but the pastor, who will not give in to the requirements of the local government and does not abide by the *Regulations for Religious Associations*. As long as such a situation exists, the parish will receive no permit.

The Commissioner would not allow Father Vaičelionis to explain, but interrupted him and continued. The speaker was displeased that priests and faithful are praying not only in

church, but also at sites made sacred by the people: the Hill of Crosses, the little cemetery Žarėnai-Latveičiai, and especially in Aikšneniai. "Here the extremists, Father Antanas Lukošaitis and Father Antanas Aleksandravičius, with the assistance of women living as nuns, are inciting religious passions praying outside, in public, when just a few hundred meters away is a church. It is time to straighten out these places," Anilionis complained.

"You cannot say we interfere in clergy appointments; for instance, we did not allow Father Juozas Gražulis to be appointed to Rudamina only because his appointment there was sought by foreign agents -- chroniclers wishing to have the equivalent of their own network of correspondents in the republic. We will not support such plans! For the fact that we did not allow that same priest to be appointed to Meteliai, you should be grateful. We are concerned that the Church have him longer. Being closer to his extremist brother (Father Antanas Gražulis, who is serving in the church of Alytus II), he can follow in the footsteps of the extremists, leading to prison. We are seeing to it that Father Gražulis have good friends and a good environment protecting him from this misfortune," said Commissioner Anilionis.

The Dean of Vilkaviškis, Father Vytautas Vaitauskas, asked what to do about catechizing children. In Gražiškiai, where he served earlier, there were only a few children, so it was possible to test them, each in a separate facility. But what to do in Vilkaviškis, where there are hundreds of children preparing for First Communion?

Vice Chairman Juozas Urbonas of the Rayon Executive Committee fell upon the children being tested in church, confiscated their catechisms, and threatened them.

Anilionis emphasized that priests were allowed only to test children, and by no means to teach, or give any explanations. What it means to test, every priest must know well and abide by it. As for Urbonas, he was soon due to retire. So Anilionis advised them not to create a commotion, and as an example of cooperation with the government, he indicated the parish of Kybartai. "The example of Kybartai stands as a witness of how beautifully atheists and believers can get along together when no disturbance is raised. As long as Sigitas Tamkevičius was around, it appeared that the flood of petitions from so-called wronged believers would not end. But when the sensible Father Alfonsas Sadauskas came, everything straightened out -- even the unmarried women claiming to be nuns are unable to stir up the believers. In this regard, Kybartai should be an example to other parishes," Anilionis said. (Not so, the faithful of Kybartai have many painful and unresolved problems -- Ed. Note.)

The extremists and the Voice of America have vilified our conferences as "brainwashing," the Commissioner persisted. "We

know other examples. Some bishops allow the extremists to brainwash them (references were made to the bishops of Telšiai and Kaišiadorys), and after such brainwashing, we will not be able to talk sense with them. The bishops are supposed to brainwash the extremists, and not the other way around!"

The worst thing in the problem of petitions, according to Ani Mortis, is the fact that the document from the priests of the Panevėžys Diocese was sent out with the return address of little old Father Jonas Vaičiūnas (and when he was required to explain himself, the aforesaid priest replied, "I am old and not afraid of anything, I'm going to die soon anyway!" All this, in the words of the Commissioner, is a flight from legal responsibility and an abuse of the Soviet government's humaneness.), while the priests of the Archdiocese of Kaunas, in their petition, gave the chancery address.

After his lecture, Commissioner Anilionis refused to join the others at dinner.

J o n i š k i s

On April 1, 1986, members of rayon church committees were invited to Joniškis for a meeting with Assistant Commissioner for Religious Affairs, Jozėnas. They were asked not to inform parish priests about the up-coming meeting.

At the beginning of the meeting, Jozėnas praised Soviet freedom: In his opinion, enough prayerbooks are being published. The priests are supplied with missals; whoever wishes may participate in religious services, etc.

For about half an hour, Vice Commissioner Jozėnas spelled out to those assembled the "offenses" of Father Gustavas Gudanavičius, pastor of Žagarė. According to Jozėnas, the transgressions of this extremist can be separated into four categories:

1. Catechization of children. Last summer, before the evening Mass, he taught children religion.

2. He organizes funeral processions through the city with cross and banners.

3. He preaches political sermons.

4. He writes calumnious statements to the Soviet government. In these statements, he openly attacks Soviet government policy with regard to the Church. "It appears that Father Gudanavičius is convinced that we will not dare send him as an elderly person to prison for anti-Soviet propaganda, but this cannot continue. In the first place, the church committee of Žagarė must require its pastor to discontinue his criminal activity," Vice Commissioner Jozėnas said.

Last year, while Father Gudanavičius was teaching religion to children, District Chairwoman Jasienė burst into church accompanied by Militiawoman Jūralienė, in uniform, and a

representative from the school. Ignoring the fact that there were grown-ups in church with their children, the members of the committee took down the names of the children under instruction, and drew up a complaint against Father Gudavičius. The rayon prosecutor warned Father Gudavičius that for teaching the children religion, he risked three years in prison. Soon after, that same militia woman, Jūramėnė, complained in the rayon newspaper that children were becoming delinquents.

Father Gudavičius explained to the people in a sermon that the proliferation of delinquency is associated with adolescents' ignorance in the area of religion. He said that children were being prevented from knowing their faith, and this in itself, puts them on the road of amoral conduct. After this sermon, Father Gudavičius was accused of giving a political sermon. Party organizer Jasas wrote in the rayon newspaper that in the District of Žagarė, twenty-eight propagandists are spreading the atheist worldview. Working especially well is individual contact among believers: Atheists actively visit families of believers and try to convince parents not to let their children go to church.

The pastor commented on this article from the pulpit, saying that there is only one priest in the parish against twenty-eight propagandists, and even he is forbidden to visit the families of the faithful...

The sermon was considered to be a political indiscretion. Jozėnas demanded that church committee members monitor the activities of priests more strictly. According to the Office of the Commissioner for Religious Affairs, church committees are required:

1. To request rayon executive committees for permission for this or that priest to come in for religious festivals. The committee must not allow priests without such permission to approach the altar.

2. They must see that priests do not teach the children catechism.

3. In the parishes, All Souls' processions to the cemetery must not be organized; funerals must not become religious demonstrations. The priest is forbidden to take part in the funeral procession. It is forbidden to carry a cross or banners.

Even though the lecturer complained about the increase in activities of priests in the Joniškis Rayon, nevertheless as a matter of fact, in the rayon, as in other rayons in Northern Lithuania, the situation is sad. Following are a few examples:

Last year, Father Alvydas Granickas, who had just completed seminary studies, was assigned to Joniškis as associate pastor. The atheists, seeing that the associate was consorting with children and youth, began demonstratively to follow him, even on sick calls. The atheists dared to instruct the pastor of Joniškis which priests to invite to religious festivals, and

which not to invite. The church committee of the parish of Kriukai, without informing the pastor, is carrying out directions of the civil government. In the church of Pašvitinys, there are almost no children or youth. Area Dean, Father Boleslovas Stasuitis, intimidated by the atheists, asked one mother not to allow her children to serve at Mass. In parishes of the rayon, very few children are being prepared for First Communion.

The situation in Žagarė is somewhat better. Here, about twenty children are prepared for First Communion each year, where approximately ten years ago, over one hundred children used to be prepared. Terrorized in various ways are those people who in any way assist His Excellency, Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius: Driving him to church festivals, priests' funerals or anywhere else. Penalizing them, officials openly say, "Don't drive the bishop or priests around!"

In atheist events, at the Žagarė school, pupils are turned against the bishop. It is explained to them that as long as Bishop Steponavičius is alive, Vilnius shall not have a bishop, and that is the only obstacle.

P r i e n a i

On April 3, 1986, members of the Prienai church committee were summoned to the rayon Executive Committee. About twenty-five persons assembled, with the atheists definitely in the majority. The meeting was conducted by Vice Commissioner for Religious Affairs, Jozenas. At the beginning of the meeting, the speaker talked about the Party Congress, emphasizing that under the Soviet government, living conditions had improved considerably. "Salaries are good and automobiles are easy to obtain: During the religious festival at ZemaiCig Kalvarija (Calvary of the Lowlanders), there are over five thousand automobiles", said Vice Commissioner Jozenas.

Jozenas scolded the faithful for petitions written to the Soviet government in Moscow, demanding the return of churches which have been closed and the release of the unjustly sentenced priests.

During the meeting, it was explained that priests are forbidden to make home visitations, and that it is forbidden to visit believers for the purpose of blessing their apartments. Committee member Vobolis objected, "Is it your understanding that I am supposed to bring my house to church to be blessed? After all, it is not the Party Secretary we invite, but a priest. It is we the faithful who support the church and the priests; you don't contribute a kopek, so please do not interfere in our affairs."

Asked why young men are prevented from enrolling in the seminary, and why those who enroll are terrorized by the KGB in



Father Juozas Žemaitis, pastor of the parish in šakiai.

various ways, Jozenas tried to avoid the question, explaining that many more candidates are accepted into the seminary than it is possible, in general, to take. As for the fact that many churches lack priests, the speaker expressed the view, "There's nothing you can do about it -- there is also a shortage of agricultural specialists."

One committee member inquired whether it would be possible to obtain permission to erect a cross. The question went unanswered. Last year, in response to a similar question, Jozėnas said that permission to erect a cross is given by the *rayon* government, in consultation with the local architect; however, the party leaders and architects sitting in the hall remained silent. They knew well that they do not have the right to give such permission. The *Rayon* Executive Committee Chairman, Maruškeviđius, said in his speech that there are laws which the faithful will have to keep quite strictly in the future.

Š a k i a i

On June 19, 1986, Father Juozas Žemaitis, Pastor of the parish of Šakiai, was summoned to the rayon Executive Committee. Waiting for him were Šakiai Rayon Executive Committee Vice Chairwoman Mrs. Kasparevičienė, City Executive Chairman Angonis and Prosecutor Diržius. Vice Chairwoman Kasparevičienė scolded the pastor for ignoring the warning he received last year, and organizing children again this year, and systematically teaching them religion, thereby violating Par. 143 of the Criminal Code. Father Žemaitis explained that there is no organized teaching of children. During evening devotions, sermons catechetical in content are preached to all the faithful among whom there are no fewer grownups than children. All who wish to listen do so. Prosecutor Diržius advised him to send the children home and to speak only to the adults. The pastor declared that in Lithuania so far, there probably is no priest who would order children from church.

"There have been enough catechisms printed, let the parents themselves teach their own children religion," said Vice Chairwoman Kasparevičienė. Father Žemaitis corrected the Vice Chairwoman, reminding her that the supply of catechisms printed six months earlier, in a small edition, was bought up in a few weeks and that lately, it has been impossible to purchase or even borrow catechisms. To Vice Chairwoman Kasparevičienė's and Prosecutor Diržius' demand that he not violate Soviet law, Father Žemaitis responded that he has never been involved in anti-state activity and has never broken any laws, but to explain the truths of the faith, and to help parents prepare their children for the reception of the sacraments is his essential duty as a priest.

Š i l a l é

On July 10, 1986, a group of responsible Rayon Executive Committee officials forced their way into the church of Šilalė: Vice Chairwoman Mrs. M. Karinauskiene, TGTVK Director Lesčiauskas, Homeroom Teacher Mrs. Skalauskiene of the general class and Cultural Section Director Vytautas Jankauskas. In church at that time, Mass was being offered. Taking part in the services were seven women and about fifty children. The children were responding out loud to the prayers of the Mass. While services were going on, the officials did not interfere with anyone. But afterwards, all went to the sacristy and declared to the pastor, Father Antanas Ivanauskas, that they found him teaching children religion. The pastor explained that he had been offering Mass, and the children had taken part in the services. The officials drafted a report, stating that the

children were being instructed, and forced the pastor to sign it. Father Ivanauskas explained in the second half of the report that the report had been incorrectly drafted. Father Ivanauskas was fined fifty rubles.

G a r g ž d a i (Klaipėda Rayon)

On December 30, 1985, Father Antanas Šeškevičius, the associate pastor of the parish of Gargždai, was summoned to the Laugaliai Home for Elderly Invalids to administer the sacraments to a seriously ill patient. Other patients of the home wished to make use of the same opportunity. The priest had barely taken care of the dying patient when a disturbance was heard in the corridor. Mrs. Jadvyga Dotienė, Assistant Director of the infirmary, was shooing away all those who wanted to meet with the priest... A frightened elderly lady, weeping, complained to the departing priest, "Now they'll take us away to the insane asylum..." The old people are afraid on account of the case of Janina Riaukaitė: Upon complaining about religious restrictions and other shortcomings, she was taken to the Infirmary for Psychiatric Invalids at Macikai, in the Rayon of Šilutė. Miss Riaukaitė requested several times to be returned to the infirmary at Laugaliai, but no one from the administration paid any attention to her requests.

The director of the infirmary agrees to admit a priest only to see patients obviously dying, but she refuses to grant requests of patients who are no longer ambulatory to call a priest.

To: The Supreme Court of the Lithuanian SSR
From: Father Antanas Šeškevičius, son of Kazys
Resident of the Klaipėda Rayon
Gargždg m., Tilto 1-2

A Petition

The Administrative Committee of the Gargždai City, Klaipėda Rayon, Council of Peoples' Deputies Executive Committee, fined me 50 rubles on March 26 of this year for accompanying a deceased person along Žemaitės Street in ecclesiastical apparel, thus violating Par. 50 of the *Regulations for Religious Associations*. Disagreeing with their decision, I appealed to the Peoples' Court of the Klaipėda Rayon, but the latter confirmed the fine on April 17 of this year, giving no consideration either to my testimony or that of witnesses, nor that of participants in the funeral or the faithful. It is my strong conviction that the administrative committee and the Peoples' Court acted unjustly, so I come to you requesting you to correct

the mistake which has been made: to annul the decision for the following reasons:

1. Art. 50 forbids religious processions, rituals and ceremonies out-of-doors. However, a funeral is neither a procession nor a ceremony, nor a religious ritual, but a parade to the cemetery. When a soldier, a student or a Party Member, an atheist, is interred, there is a suitable parade with visible signs of respect. When a believer is interred, by centuries-old tradition, the priest, in funeral garb, precedes the casket. No one calls the funeral whether it be of soldiers, Party members or believers a procession or ceremony, but rather a funeral parade. It is a religious procession when they walk with the Blessed Sacrament through the city and the fields or when on ember days, the faithful approach the crosses. But nowadays, in our country, such processions are impossible.

Therefore, on March 14, the family and friends of K. Kerpė wished to bury him as a Catholic, and not as an atheist, so they asked me to accompany the remains in procession to the old cemetery, 300 meters further on. It is my duty to carry out the wishes of the faithful in accord with the law. Hence, neither participants in the parade nor the priest violated Par. 50 of the *Regulations for Religious Associations*. Hence, the priest was penalized unjustly.

2. Mrs. J. Miliauskienė, Chairwoman of the City of Gargždai, in 1985 sent the church committee a letter stating that for reasons of safety, "All forms of parades, marches and processions including funeral processions" are forbidden, but that order was not promulgated anywhere publicly: not in the newspaper nor anywhere else, but parades and non-church funerals continue to take place as in the past. In other words, this ban is meant only for us. However, the faithful do not know this, so they accompany the remains from the city and the villages to the church, and in keeping with an old tradition of the residents of Gargždai, to the old cemetery, and then they drive to the new cemetery in Laugaliai, 2 km away.

Moreover, the Administrative Commission in levying the fine on me stated to me and twenty of the faithful that processions are allowed, only the priest must sit in the cab of the truck. As a matter of fact, traffic along out-of-the-way Žemaitės Street is very sparse, so there is no interference. The Administrative Commission, in levying the fine, said nothing either verbally or in writing about interference with traffic. The greatest criminal is the priest in his surplice and biretta before the casket, and not in the truck cab. Did he hinder traffic more than the wide truck carrying the casket? Is it logical to penalize him?

3. In 1977, Commissioner for Religious Affairs Kazimieras Tumėnas summoned me to Vilnius, and gave me an answer to my petition of July 19, 1977: The priest is allowed to precede the

casket, and he may even carry the cross. He came to Gargždai and so informed Comrade Leita. Hence, we interred believers in this way without any interference until the unthinking outbursts of local officials last year, forbidding such a funeral. Is it possible that the commissioner understands Par. 50 less clearly than rank-and-file atheists who twist his words making it a criminal offense? Then all articles become chaotic. Each one explains things as he sees fit.

4. The funeral of a believer with a priest, cross and banners is guaranteed also in the *Roman Catholic Ritual for the Dioceses of Lithuania*, lid, pps. 256-265, printed by the government in 1966, and surely checked out with the government. Commissioner Tumėnas himself used it as a basis for his actions. That *Ritual* has not been annulled.

5. This is the procedure for funerals even in cities of the *rayon* where traffic is lighter and in almost all non-*rayon* cities and towns, like Gargždai, and in villages. Is Gargždai a separate republic, where the laws are different?

6. The Peoples' Court of the *Rayon* of Klaipėda has been presented with an affidavit signed by 528 believers and participants in the funeral, in which, over their own signatures, they expressed the wish to inter their dear ones and to inter themselves at all times in the Catholic manner (with priest, cross and banners).

Three participants in the funeral of the late K. Kerpė (Stefanija Kerpienė, daughter of Jonas, residing in Dovi Mai; Stasė Urbonienė, daughter of Antanas, of the J. Janonis Collective Farm and Mrs. Zuzana Telšinskienė, living in Saulažoliai) clearly testified during the trial that they requested me to inter the deceased in the Catholic manner. I carried out their wishes; as a priest I could not do otherwise. I therefore request the Supreme Court to annul the unjust fine and, in this way, influence the government of the City of Gargždai not to interfere with funerals in the future.

Enclosures: 1. A copy of this petition for the Peoples' Court of the *Rayon* of Klaipėda. 2. A copy of the affidavit from the faithful of the parish of Gargždai and participants in the funeral.

Gargždai, April 21, 1986

Father A. Šeškevičius

P.S. On July 31, 1985, the Administrative Committee of the Gargždai City Executive Committee had accused Father Antanas Šeškevičius of organizing a funeral procession from church to cemetery, and fined him 40 rubles. When Father Šeškevičius refused to pay the fine, Marshall Galina Kavoliūnienė showed up at his home, and in the presence of the witness Vladas Šatkauskas, confiscated a transistor radio, number VEF-202.

K a z o k i š k é s (Trakai Rayon)

Father Jonas Zubrus was invited to preach during the Feast of Pentecost in the church of Kazokiškės. After the feast, the Rayon Administrative Committee fined the local pastor, Father Jonas Kazlauskas, 50 rubles for allowing Father Zubrus to preach without consulting rayon authorities.

Religious Affairs Commissioner Petras Anilionis admonished Father Zubrus in writing for the sermon he delivered in Kazokiškės. The preacher had allegedly misinformed the faithful by asserting that the hopes of the 18th Century enlightenment and the positivists that education and science will solve all problems did not come about.

T a u r a g n a i (Utena Rayon)

In June, 1986, the pastor of Tauragnai, Father Bronius Šlapelis, was given a 25-ruble fine for inviting priests from neighboring parishes to a parish religious festival without permission of the rayon authorities.

V i a v i s (Trakai Rayon)

In July, 1986, the Administrative Committee of Trakai Rayon penalized the pastor of Vievis, Father Antanas Černa, 50 rubles because visiting clergy had conducted services and preached in the church of Vievis during the Festival of Saints Peter and Paul, without obtaining permission of rayon authorities. After the reprimand from the government atheists, Father Černa's nerves were effected and he went to the hospital for treatment.

V e p r i a i (Ukmergė Rayon)

In Aukštaityje, the Festival of the Calvary of Vepriai is quite widely known. Although the Stations of the Cross were demolished a long time ago by the Soviet government, the faithful nevertheless come to Vepriai in great numbers from various places in Lithuania at Pentecost, and after Mass, singing hymns, they make the Way of the Cross, making use of the sites of the former shrines.

By order of the Soviet government, the local pastor, Father Juozas Vaičieliūnas, is required to report to Antanas Perednis, Vice Chairman of the Ukmergė Executive Committee, which priests are going to hold services during the festival days, or preach.

This year, Father Petras Tavoraitis, pastor of the neighboring parish of Pabaiskis, was invited to preach. Vice Chairman Perednis refused to give permission since Father

Tavoraitis refuses to vote in the election and at All Souls', he goes with the believers to the cemetery to pray.

Vilnius

At approximately the same time when the elevation of Father Algirdas Gutauskas to monsignor was learned, the news spread in Lithuania about his interview with the Austrian newspaper *Volksstimme* (September 12, 1985). How authentic this interview is, what are the actual words of Father Gutauskas and what is the figment of the reporter's pen is difficult for the reader to judge...

The faithful are shocked by Administrator Gutauskas' statement that he does not know any people in the Diocese of Vilnius who have been persecuted or otherwise pressured on account of their religion or loyalty to the Church. A living example of such persecution is Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius of Vilnius, and his twenty-five-year-old exile. Surely Father Gutauskas has not forgotten that he himself was once calumniated in the press, forfeited his registration card, and for some time could not fully carry out his priestly duties!

During the interview, the administrator of the diocese mentioned that, "Politics is the affair of the Party and the government, and priests should pray."

At the time when Father Gutauskas' registration card was confiscated from him, he was not involved in politics, so what was he punished for? Nowadays, the administrator of the diocese, Father Gutauskas, travels abroad, his statements can be found in the atheist press (Canon Law forbids cooperating with the atheist press)... This is not a ministry of prayer...

Does the administrator abide by this rule expressed to the reporter that politics is not fitting for a priest?

When almost all those entering the seminary and studying there are terrorized by the KGB in one way or another, and when there is the public statement of Father Rokas Puzonas, describing in detail the ways in which this interference takes place, the assertion of Father Gutauskas that he does not know anything about interference by the civil authorities in acceptance of candidates to the priesthood is shocking. It is known to everyone in Lithuania what outside forces demand of the candidates and who is the final arbiter of their numbers -- the rector or the commissioner.

Asked about the convicted priests Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius, the administrator explained that he could not say much since the trial had taken place in Kaunas. As a matter of fact, the trial took place in Vilnius and caused a great sensation.

It is not without grounds that believers asked themselves how Father Gutauskas could have been ignorant about a trial



Petras Paulaitis lying in state in Kretinga.

which went on for about a week, when the faithful gathered every morning at the Gates of Dawn to pray, and only after that they rode over to the courthouse.

The administrator boasted that high-level ecclesiastics do not live so poorly: They travel abroad, see Rome, Lourdes, Nairobi... That is one side of the coin. But where is the other?

At the end of the interview, Father Gutauskas exhibited a prayerbook (or missal) printed on good paper at a government press, and bound in leather. It should be noted that the good paper is not a Soviet, but a Vatican gift, while the leather binding was not done at the government press, but privately.

If the honorable administrator really sees the present-day life of the Church in Lithuania the way he describes it in his interview, then how is it possible, ignoring the obvious facts, to administer Church affairs?

The atheists' permission to renovate this or that church is merely a secondary matter, doing little to help the proclamation of the Gospel in Lithuania today under pressure to become atheistic. When there are no believers what good will the restored churches be?

K a u n a s

In the spring of 1986, the Commissioner for Religious

Affairs, Petras Anilionis, demanded that the Interdiocesan Seminary of Kaunas delay the ordination of Deacon Edmundas Atkočiūnas to the priesthood. The reason was that Deacon Atkočiūnas failed to attend lectures on the Soviet Constitution during the academic year. Thanks to the reaction from priests and the efforts of Bishop Antanas Vaičius of Telšiai, the Commissioner withdrew his demand.

K r e t i n g a

On February 19, 1986, Petras Paulaitis died in Kretinga, having served thirty-five years in Soviet camps. During the funeral, friends placed a Lithuanian tri-color ribbon on his casket. Funeral services were conducted by Father Liudvikas Šarkauskas. The pastor of Kretinga, Father Bronius Burneikis (even though he himself did not participate in the funeral), was summoned to come to Vilnius and give Commissioner Petras Anilionis an explanation concerning Petras Paulaitis' funeral. Bishop Antanas Vaičius of Telšiai was required to guarantee in writing that such "offenses" will not be repeated.

Kaišadorys

After the appearance in *Soviet Woman* magazine of the article by V. Balkevičius entitled, "The Holy Family", cynically impugning the honor of Jesus and His mother, Mary, His Excellency Bishop Vincentas Sladkevičius of the Diocese of Kaišadorys informed the editors of the magazine in writing that he was cancelling his subscription to the aforesaid journal.

T e l š i a i

On June 12, 1986, the sixtieth anniversary of the creation of the Ecclesiastical Province of Lithuania was commemorated in the Cathedral of Telšiai. Participating in the commemoration were: Bishops Liudvikas Povilonis, Vincentas Sladkevičius and Romualdas Krikščiūnas, Diocesan Administrator Msgr. Kazimieras Dulksnys, many priests and a great throng of the faithful, especially of the youth.

During the services, they prayed for the deceased bishops of Telšiai, chancery staff and seminary professors. After the services, the youth of the Telšiai Cathedral greeted their bishop, Antanas Vaičius, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday and name day. At the end of services, Maironis' *Lietuva brangi, mano Tėvynė* (*Beloved Lithuania, My Homeland*) rang out powerfully, and at the same time, emotionally.



Bishop Antanas Vaičius

V i l n i u s

On May 17, 1986, in the Church of Saint Michael, in Vilnius, the centennial of the birth of Professor Stasys Šalkauskis was commemorated. Father Vaclovas Aliulis spoke in two sermons of his life, his person and his work. Participating in the commemoration was the wife of Professor Šalkauskis, whom the youth and the faithful from other cities of Lithuania presented with flowers after the services. A similar commemoration was held in the parish church of Saint Anthony in Kaunas.

Ž e m a i č i ū K a l v a r i j a

June 2-9, 1986, crowds of people from all over Lithuania thronged to the great religious festival of Žemaičių Kalvarija, especially many young people. Feeling, after a powerful

religious experience, that all of the faithful are children of Mary's Land, and having drawn strength to live virtuously, the devotees returned home.

On Sunday, and on Wednesday of the festival which has become the traditional priests' day, Bishop Antanas Vaičius of Telšiai presided over the services and procession. At the shrines, sermons were preached. During the Festival of Žemaičių Kalvarija, 23,000 communions were distributed. Even though the KGB engaged in various forms of harassment, more of the faithful participated this year than last. Commissioner for Religious Affairs Petras Anilionis, wishing to begin monitoring the sermons preached during the festival, demanded that prior to the festival, Bishop Vaičius submit the names of those priests who were going to preach.

From the list of preachers which he received, Anilionis immediately struck the name of Father Edmundas Atkočiūnas. Despite the requirements of the Commissioner, about sixty sermons were preached at Žemaičių Kalvarija.

Immediately after the festival, Anilionis visited Bishop Vaičius in Telšiai and required that the Dean of Plungė, Father Kazimieras Gasčiūnas and the pastor of Žemaičių Kalvarija, Father Liudas Dambrauskas, be summoned. Anilionis sternly rebuked the bishop and the aforesaid priests for not abiding by his directives during the Festival of Žemaičių Kalvarija. The Commissioner was particularly bothered by the sermons preached by the Associate Pastor of Telšiai, Father Boleslovas Jonauskas, the pastor of Žarėnai-Latveliai, Father Algimantas Pakamanis and the pastor of Kiaukliai, Father Rokas Puzonas. For his sermon, Father Jonauskas was even summoned to the Vilnius KGB to explain himself.

A l k s n ė n a i (Vilkaviškis Rayon)

On September 18, 1985, Vice Chairman Juozas Urbonas of the Vilkaviškis Rayon Executive Committee came to see Father Antanas Lukošaitis, pastor of the parish of Alksnėnai. The Vice Chairman was displeased with the pastoral work of Father Lukošaitis among the faithful, especially the services in the Žalosios Cemetery and the fréquentation of the Alksnėnai Shrine by crowds of people. Because of the fact that the faithful travel to the shrine of Alksnėnai from just about all over Lithuania, and because Mass is held and sermons are delivered, Urbonas threatened to take care of Father Lukošaitis just as he had the priests of the parish of Kybartai, Sigitas Tamkevičius and Jonas-Kąstytis Matulionis. The Vice Chairman sternly declared that a criminal case had been initiated against Father Lukošaitis. The priest replied, "In your hands is a stick, in ours is the rosary."

At this, the Vice Chairman calmed down and, bidding

farewell, left the rectory.

On September 25, 1985, Father Lukošaitis was summoned to the Office of Religious Affairs Commissioner Petras Anilionis for a lecture. The main charge was that he serves as many as four parishes. Anilionis declared that Masses held in the Žalioji Cemetery for the dead are not religious ceremonies allowed by law. The Commissioner recalled the case of Associate Pastor J. Matulionis as a "disturber of the peace" and gave Father Lukošaitis to understand that if he continued to hold services in the Žalioji Cemetery, he would be considered a similar disturber of the peace. As firmly as possible, he forbade the priest to service the chapels of Slabada and the Žalioji Cemetery.

Taking his leave, Anilionis warned Father Lukošaitis to abide by all the directives which had been given.

R u m š i š k é s (Kaunas Rayon)

In October, 1985, with the permission of Father Juozas Žemaitis, scenes were shot in the church of Rumšiškės for the film *Paskendulė* (*The Drowned Woman*). On one side of the church sat about one hundred actors and on the other, the faithful. In the sermon during the services, the pastor explained that the Church, too, must contribute to "culture". "Is it our duty to add to the work of those for whom it is already difficult?" Father Žemaitis sympathized with the filmmakers.

Even the weekly *Literatūra ir Menas* (*Literature and Art*) was scandalized by the atheistic distortions in the film.

M i k o i i š k i a i (Kretinga Rayon)

On March 11, 1986, the church committee of the parish of Mikoliškiai addressed to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the LSSR a request for help:

"On July 28, 1976, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the LSSR ratified by decree the *Regulations for Religious Associations*. The third regulation guarantees 'the religious association has the right to obtain... means of transport'. For our parish, this regulation is very practical for we must obtain a bus with about twenty-six seats, or at least a *Latvija* to bring communal farmers from the villages to church on Sundays, and to take them home, for they live 4-11 km. from the church, and it is impossible to get there by scheduled bus or to come back; the schedule is not convenient. For elderly people to go and to return on foot is impossible, and only three families still live near the church.

"We requested the motorpool to change the bus schedule for Sundays, but they did not deign to do so, even though it would not have been difficult. For some time, we used to hire buses

from various agencies, but the local government forbade this. We requested the administration of the J. Janonis Communal Farm to transport its workers on Sundays to church and to bring them back, but they refused to do so. What are we to do? We are forced to avail ourselves of the right granted by you to obtain our own means of transportation. We applied to the Council of Ministers of the LSSR, asking whether they could sell us a used bus, or at least a *Latvijs*. The response was positive, but it required the consent of the Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs. The latter explained that in the *Regulations*, the word transportation means only a light automobile. At first, even the Commissioner allowed us to acquire a bus, but he quickly began to explain this regulation in his own fashion.

"In the petition, the faithful of the parish of Mikoliškiai note the fact that there is no logic in the actions of Commissioner Anilionis: 'No permission is needed to obtain a light automobile', while in the *Regulations*, it is clearly stated that the association has the right to obtain *the means of transportation*. 'That is inhumane,' write the faithful, 'a special effort is being made to make life difficult for communal farmers.' Meanwhile, the Soviet Constitution asserts, 'The Communist Party of the Soviet Union exists for the people and serves the people.' (Par. 6)

"We hope to receive a just and humane reply and permission to purchase at least a used bus," the church committee of the parish of Mikoliškiai ends its petition.

On April 19, 1986, the church committee of Mikoliškiai again applied to Religious Affairs Commissioner Petras Anilionis with the request that he facilitate transportation. The people of Mikoliškiai name in their petition a whole list of agencies and organizations: The LSSR Ministry of Automobiles, Transportation and Highways, the carpools of Kretinga and Klaipėda and the administration of the J. Janonis Communal Farm, all of which refused to help them.

"Just as you cannot force a person to abstain from food and drink, so you will never be able to force a believer not to go to church," it states in the petition. "Therefore, we request you, in the name of all of us, to help us by your intervention. You have enough power to address the appropriate agencies. ...Help us to rent a bus because this is possibly easier. For the humaneness you show us, we will be thankful."

Religious Affairs Commissioner Anilionis refused to assist the faithful of Mikoliškiai.

P r i e n a i

To: Comrade M. Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central
Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

Copies to: The Bishops and Diocesan Administrators of Lithuania
Commissioner P. Anilionis of the Council for
Religious Affairs
From: The Faithful of the Parish of Prienai ,

A Petition

For a number of years now, the priests of our parish have been terrorized for visiting the apartments of the faithful (1986, City of Prienai, Tarybų armijos gatvė). We invite them ourselves, while atheist teachers visit our homes uninvited, and there try to carry on agitation against our religious convictions, and for this they are neither punished nor terrorized.

Is this compatible with the equality of believers and unbelievers before the law, which our Constitution proclaims?

What law forbids us to invite a priest (as a full-fledged citizen of the USSR) into our homes? We wish to live in homes which would be blessed annually by the priests in keeping with our Catholic traditions. Surely, this modest wish of ours cannot pose a threat to the Soviet order?

Please arrange that the government organs of the Rayon of Prienai would cease terrorizing our priests and would not prevent them from visiting our apartments.

Signed by 1670 believers

P a i i I è (Kelmė Rayon)

On April 13, 1986, after the principal Mass, the faithful of Pašilė, adults and children, greeted their pastor, Father Stanislovas Anužis, on the occasion of his name day. A show by the children ended with the choristers' singing, *Ilgiausių metų (Long life!)* ... This did not please chairman Antanas Pakutinskis, the Chairman of the church committee, supported by the government. In every way he could, he berated the choristers, children and church security guard Antanas Saunoris.

On April 14, Pakutinskis informed the Rayon Executive Committee about the celebration for the priest. Back from the rayon, he threatened to report church guard Saunoris for "crime", called him a state criminal, etc.

I n d ū r a (Gardinas Region)

The Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs of the Region of Gardinas demanded of Father Kazimieras Žilys that he not read the lesson during Masses for the dead from the letter to the Philippians beginning with the words, "Our homeland is in heaven..." (Phil 3,20).

In the opinion of the Commissioner of Gardinas, that is an

anti-Soviet statement. In his words, "If our homeland is in heaven, that means that the Soviet Union is no longer the true homeland of the faithful."

That same Commissioner criticized Father Žiyls for not giving absolution to persons living together without the Sacrament of Matrimony. Allegedly, that would be a kind of punishment applied to believers while the *Regulations for Religious Associations* do not allow priests to assign punishments to believers.

IN THE SOVIET SCHOOL

K a u n a s

On March 26, 1986, Miss Marytė Gudaitytė, expelled in 1985 from the P. Mažylis School of Medicine in Kaunas (see *Chronicle* No. 68), went to the Ministry for Higher and Special Intermediate Education in Lithuania to inquire whether she would be allowed to complete her studies in the P. Mažylis School of Medicine. Mrs. Lesnickienė, staff member of the Ministry responsible for schools of medicine stated that she recalled this girl, she knows that she is a believer, and that last year, she was expelled from school. A man who was right there began to explain that medicine and religion are two incompatible things, therefore, a believing person cannot work in medicine. They were advised to first inquire at the school, and only after that, to the ministry.

On April 2, Miss Gudaitytė went to the P. Mažylis School of Medicine in Kaunas. She was received by Vice Director Grigas of the school, and Instructor Mrs. Pečulienė. First they asked where their former pupil works, and whether she was not engaging in anti-Soviet activities. They advised her not to try to conceal anything from them, for everything would become clear just the same. When Miss Gudaitytė asked what, in their opinion, can be considered anti-Soviet activity, Mrs. Pečulienė stated that she had heard that offerings were being taken up for the priest-prisoners, and sent to the prison, and this is considered anti-Soviet activity...

The instructors were interested in knowing whether Miss Gudaitytė still believes. The student explained that she cannot imagine life without faith, and faith does not interfere with work; on the contrary, it can only help. Mrs. Pečulienė corrected Miss Gudaitytė, saying that she had been expelled from school not for religion, but for anti-Soviet activity (writing letters to prisoners! -- Ed. Note).

Finally, Miss Gudaitytė was told to bring her record from work and after writing a petition, to begin her practicum.

On April 16, when Miss Gudaitytė had brought her record and other documents, Instructor Pečulienė began to explain that her

themselves to be interrogated, expressing satisfaction that their children were associating with people who are believers and not with drunkards. On the pretext that the mother did not know where her children were, The officials threatened to take away mothers' rights from Mrs. Matijosiene when she refused to give the required addresses.

For the purposes of intimidation, a complaint was written and Mrs. MatijoSiené was told to sign a statement to the effect that she was familiar with the contents of the document.

On June 3, students Vidmantas Novikas, Ruta Gudonyté, Danius and Gintaras Matijosius were interrogated by their teachers, and pressured to write explanations. The youngsters would not explain or sign anything.

NEW UNDERGROUND PUBLICATIONS

Aušra (The Dawn), No. 50(90). In September, 1985, a new issue of the underground publication *Aušra* appeared, marking the 45th anniversary of the Soviet occupation. A former Lithuanian officer in an open letter entitled, "How the Russian Tanks Voted for the 'Lithuanian' Assembly", tells of the painful situation of the Lithuanian army in 1940:

"We were all alone between two serpents, in the East and in the West... We the surviving witnesses of the crimes of the Russian Empire continue today to cry 'Justice! Freedom!'", the former officer ends his letter.

In the article "Who Are the Real Pirates?", approval is given to the very necessary efforts of Baltic patriots abroad and all freedom-loving people to direct world attention to the real situation of the Baltic nations. Gratitude is expressed to everyone contributing to the Baltic Tribunal which took place in July, 1985, in Copenhagen; the Baltic Peace and Freedom Cruise, ending with the demonstration in Helsinki by passengers of the *Baltic Star* and meetings and demonstrations in Stockholm, which once again reminded the "lookouts" in Moscow that the real piratical attack on the Baltic shore took place forty-five years ago, when Moscow seized the three Baltic States.

Aušra 51(91). *Aušra* 51(91), appearing in December, 1986 (sic), in its introductory article, "Christmas Meditations", expresses the firm belief that "the Christ of Christmas will gather all people of good will for one purpose: the re-establishment of truth and love in our homeland and nation". In the publication, the attention of the public is directed to the difficult situation of three young men: Ričardas Andrijauskas and the brothers Mečislovas and Gintaras Tarasevičius.

In May, 1983, they tried to cross the Soviet-Finnish border, and for this, the KGB continues to terrorize them to this day, not allowing them to study or to work steadily, constantly threatening to isolate them from the public. They are constantly threatened with physical violence.

Also printed is a reply in the form of an open letter from Lithuanian mothers to the mother of S. Antanov; Vladas Lapienis' *Memoirs of a Soviet Prisoner* continue.

Lithuanian, remember that:

Father Alfonsas Svarinskas
Father Sigitas Tamkevičius
Father Jonas-Kastytis Matulionis
Docent Vytautas Skuodis
Algirdas Patackas
Jadvyga Bieliauskienė
Vladas Lapienis
Romas Žemaitis
Gintautas Iešmantas
Povilas Pečeliūnas
Antanas Terleckas
Liudas Dambrauskas
Algirdas Statkevičius

and others bear the chains of slavery so that you might live and believe in freedom.

Lithuania, 1986

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