

Y T I S



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THE KNIGHT



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Vytis- The Knight

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*The Knights of
Lithuania endeavors
to instill in its mem-
bers an attachment to
Lithuania, the land of
our ancestors, a devo-
tion to our Roman
Catholic Faith and a
knowledge, appreciation and love of the
Lithuanian language, customs and culture
since the K of L began in 1913.*

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On the Cover: Our Lady of Vilnius, the miraculous painting in the Gate of Dawn Chapel – JJA 8/99

In 1503-22 a stone wall with nine gates and defensive towers was built around Vilnius. The Gate of Dawn was located near the Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity on the sprawling southeastern side of the city. The Russians occupied Lithuania in 1795, and from 1799-1805 they destroyed the wall of Vilnius, leaving only the Gate of Dawn, which had already become a religious shrine dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. At a later time the Lithuanian name *Aušros Vartai*, and the Polish *Ostra Brama* ("the sharp gate") came into usage. The painting of the Virgin of the Gate of Dawn became known for its alleged miraculousness in the 17th century.

From the Encyclopedia Lituanica

To My Fellow Knights

Mother's Day is always a special day for reflection, because all of us have a mother, as we also have a great Blessed Mother. This year, I had asked council 133 president, Maryte Sepikas to write about her mother, as the stories she told me about her seemed quite interesting. (See page 6) Maryte made me promise to say a few words about my own mother, who is the president of council 100, Amsterdam.

My mom, aka, Mirga Bablin, deserves all the positive adjectives one can think of, plus more. She is a 1st generation Lithuanian-American and the mother of seven others besides myself. What I remember most about my mom is when she donned the cap and gown and graduated college in 1966, eight months pregnant with my youngest brother. She was a working mother long before it became the norm, somehow juggling home and work responsibilities like a real trooper. Like Maryte's mom, she also named me after our Blessed Mother, which says a lot for the devout faith our mothers have instilled in us. So we salute our dear mothers during this month and always.



Edward & Mirga Bablin with your Editor

Letters & email to the editor

Recording Our Heritage

To the Editor:

There are some Knights of Lithuania who have been members for 50 or more years.

These people have interesting stories to tell about their experiences and K of L involvements and their work to help Lithuania become free. This is important history waiting to be told and that will be lost as years go by. These stories involve keeping councils together, writing to servicemen, meeting spouses and helping Lithuania.

Let's encourage our members to gather up their memories and let all of us enjoy this history. Council members, let's find these long time members and send their experiences to VYTIS for us all to enjoy!

Sincerely,
HM Clemincine Miller
C-141, Bridgeport, CT

Ed. Note: Clemincine's idea is a great project for councils. It can be a valuable history book for times to come. Some could be published in VYTIS or on a website.

Lithuanian WebWatcher

To the Editor:

Responding to your question-Anything interesting regarding Lithuania on the internet.

My mother's first cousin who came to this country as a child from Lithuania, wrote her autobiography several years prior to her death. One of her grandsons set up a website with her autobio along with several old treasured photos of memorable times of her life.. Those photos piqued the interest of the "powers that be" that were involved in filming the movie "The Story of Us". They contacted the grandson for permission and the photos were included in the movie. Bruce Willis' character mentioned a Lithuanian grandmother in the film .

All you have to do is locate the web-site:
www.pgmedia.com/helen/mylife.html The site is called The Life and Times of a Lithuanian Immigrant

Dorothy Richmire C-136

Lithuanians in Tokyo

To the Editor:

My niece, Emile Corey recently accompanied her husband on a business trip to Japan. It just so happened she was there on February 16 and read a copy of the Japan Times. Some interesting facts included in the articles written by members of the Lithuanian embassy in Tokyo: ☞ *Letters continued on page 23*

**Text of the talk given by
Pope John Paul II at St. Peter's in
Rome on St. Casimir Day.
Mar. 4, 2000
Millennium Celebration**

Submitted by R. Alexander, C-7, Waterbury, CT

Meilieji Broliai ir Sesės Lietuviai!

Sveiki atvyke I Šventojo Petro namus, "jūsų, jubiliejinės maldos kelionės tiksla! Beveik kiekviena savaitę, bendruosiuose Audiencijose, turiu progą pasveikinti tikinčiųjų grupes atvykstančias iš Lietuvos. Šiandiena čia jūsų yra gausu, nes atstovaujate visą savo Tautą. Sveikinu Kauno Arkivyskupą, Vyskupų konferencijos Pirmininką Sigitą Tamkevičių, ir jam dėkoju už šiltus žodžius, kuriuos man išsakė jūsų vardu. Taipogi sveikinu Vilniaus Arkivyskupą ir visus čia esančius Vyskopus, turėdamas mintyje ir nuoširdžiausius linkežimus Garbingajam Kardinolui Vincentui Skadkevičiui, kurį sulaukė namuose nestipri sveikata. Taip pat sveikinu kunigus, vienuolius ir vienules bei visus jus čia esančius.

Mano mintys savaimė grįžta į 1993 metų rugsėjį įvykusia mano ganytojišką kelionę į jūsų mylimą šalį; taip pat į 1987 metais Vaitiekuno Bazilikje kartu su gausiai susirinkusiais visos Europos Vyskupais švęstą "krikšto" šešių šimtų metų sukaktį. Lietuva buvo paskutinė Baltijos Šalis tapusi krikščioniška ir vienintelė išliko ištikima katalikų Bendrijai liuteroniškos Reformacijos laikotarpiu.

Dekojame Dievui už lietuvių tautos ištikimybę bažnyčiai ir Šventojo Petro Įpėdiniui, taip pat už tikėjimą kurį liudijo daug Vyskupų, kunigų, vienuolių ir tikinčiųjų, dažnai iki pat kankinystės ypatingai per penkiadešimt tragiškų komunistinės okupacijos ir persekiojimo metų.

Šiandien, atgavusi savo pilietybę ir tikėjimo laisvę Lietuva sugrįžo į savo vietą europinės šeimos

tarpe. Laisvė yra įpareigojanti: mieli lietuviai, jūsų tauta, su savo kultūriniu paveldu, paženklinutu verte kančių, išgyventų dėl dydvyriškos ištikimybės krikščioniškam pašaukimui, turi įnešti savo indėlį dėl dvasinio Europos atsinaujinimo ir susitaikymo tarp tautų. Šventasis Kazimieras, jūsų globėjas, kurio dieną švenčiame butent šiandien, dėjo dideles pastangas dėl vienybės Kristaus ir Evangelijos vardan. Jo pavyzdys jums tešviečia ir jus teveda. Tegul praeities liudijimas jums būna akstinas naujoms pastangoms dėl evangelizacijos.

Trečiojo tūkstantmečio aušroje krikščioniai su nauja jėga girdi savo Širdyse aidinčius Apaštalo Pauliaus žodžius: "Caritas Christi urget nos - Kristaus meilė mus ragina (2 Kor 5, 14). Iš tiesų, šiandienos žmogui labiau nei bet kada reikia evangelijos, kad jis galėtų eiti tiesos, laisvės, teisingumo ir taikos keliais. Visų pirma jam jos reikia tam, kad pažinų Dievą ir save patį, kad puoselėtų savo paties kilnumo suvokimą ir pagarbą gyvybei, atpirktai Kristaus kančia.

Iš širdies linkiu, kad ši jubiliejinė maldos kelionė į Roma jūsų Bendruomenes labiau atvertų Bažnyčios visuotinumui plotmei. Apaštalų ir kankinių atminimo vietų aplankymas, susitikimas su Petro Įpėdiniu, malda kelta į Dievą kartu su gausa tikinčiųjų iš visų pasaulio žemynų, tegul jus skatina, brangieji, mylėti Bažnyčią ir jai tarnauti. Dėkite pastangų pagilinti Antrojo Vatikano Susirinkimo pažinimą tam, kad galėtume perteikti jo mokymus į konkrečias bažnytinio ir visuomeninio gyvenimo aplinkybes, pradedant nuo jūsų šeimų ir nuo jūsų parapijų. Gailestingumas ir atleidimas, meilė mažiems ir vargšams, dosni ir kilnaširdė tarnystė tegul būna jūsų išskiremieji ženklai, ir tegul iškalbingai byloja, jog esate broliška vienuma Kristuje.

Kristus, kuris yra tas pats vakar, šiandien ir rytoj, tegul jus lydi ir teveda jūsų žingsnius. Kristus yra su jumis. Tegul niekada jūsų neapleidžia šitas paguodžaitis tikrumas. Bukite drąsūs skelbėjai ir džiaugsmingi savo gyvo buvimo pasaulyje liudininkai!

Popiežius meldžiasi už jus ir su nuoširdžia meile visus jus laimina. ❖❖❖

VALDAS ADAMKUS

CANDIDATE FOR HONORARY MEMBERSHIP



The Knights of Lithuania Constitution provides that, in addition to granting Honorary Membership to active members, we can also grant the honor to:

"outstanding Catholic Lithuanians whose achievements for God and Country have been preeminently outstanding and exemplary of the ideals of the organization."

What better candidate can we have on whom we confer Honorary Membership than our next candidate - the President of the Republic of Lithuania, **VALDAS ADAMKUS.**

From his sacrifices as a teen-age freedom fighter for Lithuania after its occupation by Soviet Russia, to his use of his position as an environmental specialist in the US to also help Lithuania environmentally, to his political activity among American Lithuanians, to his ultimate election as President of a newly-independent Republic of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus has never faltered in promoting the needs of his native Lithuania, with all the talents and opportunities at his disposal.

Valdas Adamkus was born in Kaunas Nov. 3, 1926. He studied at Ausra Gymnasium in Kaunas, then during WWII, after Lithuania's occupation by the Soviet Communists, he joined the resistance movement fighting for Lithuania's independence. He fled to Germany with his parents in 1944 but returned the same year to fight in the National Defence Force in the armed struggle against the Soviet army. Later, he again fled Lithuania.

After continuing his education in Germany, he came to the US in 1949, graduated as a construction engineer from the University of Illinois, but always was concerned about the state of his native Lithuania, and always found time to work for her betterment and independence. He served in various capacities in Lithuanian emigre organizations and was chairman of the American Lithuanian Council.

In the early 1970's, Mr. Adamkus began his work as a US environmental protection specialist, headed an environmental research center and later was administrator of the Fifth Region (Midwest) of the US Environmental Protection Agency, and office he held until 1997. Lithuania benefited from his work here also, for while he could not free Lithuania, he attempted to make it environmentally secure. He visited Lithuania at least once a year, assisted environmental institutions in the Baltic states in acquiring academic literature, equipment and software, coordinated US aid to the Baltic states in environmental protection and organization of visits abroad for Lithuanian academics, and was awarded an international environmental award for outstanding achieve-

ments and several gold medals from US Presidents for outstanding service to the USA.

When Lithuania finally became free, he headed the electoral campaign of presidential candidate Stasys Lozoraitis in Lithuania in 1993, uniting a bloc of moderate and right-of-center forces there. During that campaign, Adamkus heard the first whisper of his new calling, as many asked him why he was campaigning for someone else, not himself!

When he retired from his post in the Environmental Protection Agency, Mr. Adamkus could easily have rested on his laurels and enjoyed retirement on the Golf Course or puttering around his house. But to quote his wife Alma, "he's just not that kind of person." In 1998, he was elected President of Lithuania, returning to his native land to help her through her difficult times of becoming a stable and prosperous independent nation. Today, he enjoys an approval rating of 85.8% in Lithuania.

When he took office, Valdas Adamkus promised to serve, not to rule, and called the people to join the work of rebuilding the nation. He emphasized that the main goal in his foreign policy remains the same - the European Union and NATO. He closed his remarks by saying "Lithuania shall grow, so it must. We shall grow together with it. I am one of you. I am with you. " One cannot scan the Lithuanian American press without constantly reading of the efforts of this popular and hard-working new President of Lithuania to improve relations with other nations, to bring new commerce into the nation, to assist in the plight of the citizens and especially the children of Lithuania, and to improve her lot overall. His leadership is outstanding, and we wish him well.

The Knights of Lithuania are with him also, and vow to continue to aid the land of their ancestry however they can. We are indeed proud that Mr. Adamkus has accepted to become one of us, and look forward to July, when we can confer on him the greatest honor the Knights can bestow - Honorary Membership. Valdas Adamkus has indeed proven himself worthy of this honor.

-by Loretta I. Stukas, HM Chair



Our Loving California Mother -

THE AMBER QUEEN

by Marytė Sepikas

Our mother has lived life to its fullest, laughed often and loved much, gaining the respect of many. Her life has been hard, blessed and is most successful. Always a farm girl, she has always had a great respect for the earth's beauty. She never fails to look at the best in others or give the best of herself.

Her family knows God blessed us with the best mother there is. Mother always knew best. She still makes the best blue ribbon Lithuanian raisin bread and kugelis, loves amber, all animals and growing prize-winning roses, but most importantly she loves her family and God. She continues to encourage us to always do our best.

How blessed and grateful her children are, born in America of Lithuanian parents, we had the very best of both worlds, America's freedom and Lithuania's European culture, manners and traditions. We appreciate how difficult it was for them upon their arrival in America with little English, no money and all they knew was hard work. They not only survived such odds, they thrived and rose to the top.

Elena Mailaite Sepikiene was born on a farm in



Vilkaviskio Apskriety Bartininku Valciui Sausinyku Kaime, Lithuania to Magdalena and Jonas Maila, the eldest of 8 children. Although her childhood was hard on the farm, she could never imagine the difficulties and turns that her future would reveal. As a young lady she and her family dodged bombs falling on her family's land. Her family fled from Lithuania on October 16, 1944 with only a few possessions. Sadly one son was caught in the escape and was forced to stay behind as they escaped to the refugee relocation campus in Germany. Although they

kept in touch, none of his siblings would see him again.

No one can question her faith. She will tell everyone that her Catholic faith helped her family survive the war and political change. She promised God to name her first girl child after the Blessed Virgin Mary. The winds of war brought so many changes to everything she knew.

In the refugee relocation camp, she met her husband, Juozas Sepikas. Thankfully Dad had a distant relative, Anna Norvilas, in Chicago and they were able to immigrate to America on July 2, 1949.

They arrived in Chicago with an uncertain future, no money, speaking little English, but with a single bag packed with the Lithuanian work ethic and big dreams of a better life in America. They worked two to three jobs at all times just to get ahead.

Their proudest day was when they received their citizenship. We remember how they hung their new citizenship papers in the living room for all too see. They became active in the Chicago Lithuanian community. Their four children, Joe Jr., Jonas, Onute and Maryte, were born in Chicago. She was thrilled



when they were able to sponsor her parents and sisters to come to America where they were all reunited.

The family reunion did not last long as our father decided to move the family to sunny California. Mom missed her family tremendously. Nevertheless her spirit soared and bloomed in California. She started gardening and growing prize-winning fragrant roses in the few moments she had while raising four children.

At times there was not enough money for dolls and bikes, but somehow she always managed to buy any book we needed. Our home was always filled with books.

"Knowledge is power. They can take everything but your education away from you." One of her biggest dreams came true as she beamed with joy as she witnessed all four of her children graduate college. One of our favorite family photos are those where we asked Mom to wear our graduation caps and gowns as we knew that she was graduating right along with us. Through her encouragement we have traveled the world and continue new adventures meeting lifetime friends along the way. taught us that "Attitude is everything". Demand the best of yourself and nothing is impossible.

Joe is an attorney married to Jurate Petraitis of Cleveland and have a son, Linas, Grandma's pride and joy. Onute works for Xerox as a systems analyst and is married to Vytas Keblys of Michigan. Jonas is a professor of astronomy, physics and math. She is very proud of Maryte's legal and writing skills, but more importantly Maryte's work with the Lithuanian community.

She speaks four languages and always encouraged the love of the Lithuanian language, songs and dances. As our parents taught us Lithuanian, we in turn

taught them English and the American lifestyle. We even developed our own "Sepikas" language, a choice blend of English and Lithuanian.

She instills in us the love of family, God, nature, values and two countries. She has a great sense of humor and loves jokes. Our friends love being with Mom because of her very intelligent, positive and contemporary outlook. She taught us the respect of parents, ancestors and education. As children, we feared Mom more than the police and she knew it. Often quoting Lithuanian life quotes such as "He who doesn't listen to parents will eat dry bread." She is so proud that all four graduated college and do not smoke or drink.

She fills our lives with so many memories - holidays filled with delicious traditional foods, lots of nature projects and love -so rich and fun. On one occasion she wore the boys' basketball outfit and played a few hoops. She taught us that there was no expiration date on memories, that they would always be a comfort.

Family life revolved around the kitchen with good food, family and course friends. Mother Goose, Mother Earth and Mother Teresa into one - she still is a real class act.

She is a no nonsense mother and is still as strong yet as gentle rose petal. We thought she never was afraid of anyone or anything. She is our constant strength. In her

glory days, we watched her move mountains with her work ethic, beliefs and energy. She has never stopped working and to this day continues her rose gardens, enjoys meeting with friends, always wears amber and generally enjoys life to its very fullest, especially at K of L meetings.

This little Lithuanian farm girl grew up gaining the respect not only of her family, but the community and business world as well. For this we thank you. All the stars in are not enough to thank you for all you have done for us.

Mylim tave, Maryte, Onute, Juozas ir Onute



IN MEMORIAM

Sister M Agnesine Dering, SSC

Sister of St. Casimir, Sister M. Agnesine Dering (84) who was a former assistant professor at Loyola University in Chicago, died in Chicago on February 26, 2000. Sister was a devoted member of Council 36 (Brighton Park). While she could not attend the meetings, everything was of interest to her regarding the Knights of Lithuania. She faithfully followed their communications and supported their good works with her prayers.

Sister entered the Sisters of St. Casimir in 1932 and was a member for 67 years. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. in English from Loyola and did post graduate work in Journalism at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI.

Sister Agnesine taught English and Journalism at St. Casimir Academy and in 1952 when it became Maria High School she continued her teaching career there. In 1955, she became the principal of Villa Joseph Marie High School, conducted by the Sisters of St. Casimir, in Holland, PA. While there she supervised the construction of a new school which tripled the enrollment. Upon returning to Chicago, Sister taught at Maria Junior College. In August of 1964 she was appointed the supervisor of the high schools conducted by the Sisters of St. Casimir. In 1970, Sister was appointed the General Secretary for the congregation which she undertook along with her part time teaching at Loyola University. Sister taught English at Loyola for 20 years.

For Sister Agnesine, teaching



was her life. She not only taught English but she also taught the students how to live life with joy and confidence.

"Throughout her life time many of her former students became her lasting friends because she was a very positive and affirming person," said Sister Immacula, General Superior. "She treasured their friendship and they treasured her

for her excellent creative teaching and for her caring, compassionate ways and the great influence she had upon their lives." One young man wrote to her saying, "I was getting very discouraged. Luckily I got into your class, by Divine intervention. You treated me as someone with some kind of ability and with respect and I needed those ideas badly. The confidence I got from you spread to my other classes. I have you to thank for it." "Letters similar to this were routine in Sister Agnesine's life time," said Sister Immacula.

Sister Agnesine was the Editor of the congregation's newspaper, *Journeys*, for ten years. In 1994, Sister Agnesine was appointed to the Chicago Archdiocesan Historical Commission, which investigated the writings and life of Servant of God, Mother Maria Kaupas, the foundress of the Sisters of St. Casimir, whose cause is up for beatification in Rome. Sister Agnesine knew Mother Maria personally and was delighted to be able to take such an active part in the beatification process.

While teaching was her life, Sister Agnesine was also a poet. (See pg. 9)

-submitted by Sister Margaret Petcavage, SSC (C-36)



<i>HM Kazys Sipaila</i> (photo, left) President C-29 Newark, NJ April 2, 2000 †	<i>Raymond Pukis</i> C-3 Phila March 4, 2000 †	<i>Mary Matunis</i> C-144 Anthracite Dec. 27, 1999 †	<i>Frances Yavorsky</i> C-46, ForestCity April 23, 1999 4th Degree member and Ritual Chair †††
<i>Anthony Maculaitis</i> C-110 Maspeth April 27, 1999	<i>Peter Ferone</i> C-110 Maspeth Feb. 18, 2000	<i>Gordon Gudas</i> C-24 Chicago March 5, 2000	<i>Veronica Morris</i> C-46, ForestCity Jan. 24, 2000 <i>Rest in Peace</i>
	<i>Howard Fuchs</i> C-109 Gr. Neck May 4, 1999		

Celebrating the Poetry of Sister M. Agnesine and her love for two great women: Mary, Mother of Our Lord and Mother Maria Kaupas

**On First Viewing
Our Lady of Šiluva**

**At the National Shrine of the Immaculate
Conception, Washington, D.C.**

Amazed, I see this dazzling newness
But renews the splendored sum
Of every sculptured visage
Caught in marble; softened by the message
Impressed upon your gracious image
Is the unspoken word - yet heard- supernaturally
serene.

For I have gazed upon you thus
A thousand times before, a hundred ways,
O ever "Blessed among women."
But here I read the eternal answers you keep for
every man
Who seeks a silent-strong compassion.
Your sweet-sad eyes are placid pools
Where unshed tears reflect your client's own.

And now I know the grand largesse
A Queen bestows
In bending with a kindly majesty
to him who pleads.
(Do you do this to keep alive the legend
That they tell of Šiluva,
There sighing winds like murmured prayers
Incline the pines with swaying courtesy
Forever in your direction?)

Oh, I forget not
That "Salvation was laid in a Woman,"
And that the Child you gently hold
Is regally Divine,
And claims with you, Divinity as kin.

Of such a Mother and of such a Child,
I beg the grace of patient ages
To produce from the poor pine cones
Of my life's Faith and Hope
The evergreens of Charity.

**On First Viewing
the Mosaic of
Mother Maria Kaupas**

In a reverent return to beginnings
via a blending and structuring
of precious bits of stone, and tint, and texture
while guided via an artist's view (helped by
head, hands, and heart)
to form remembered images readily,
the noble light and life leading to
The Founding of the Sisters of St. Casimir
by their gentle, gracious guide,
Mother Maria Kaupas.

Inspired by grace, their beloved Foundress
with noble intent took form and life
in the meaning and the seeking
for a special way of life.

May the hues and forms of the blending array
of stones spell out the story of the goodness
of our Foundress as Leader and Teacher,
Mother, Sister and Friend to many!

Accept our fervent thanks most gentle one
for the graciousness of place with you
in the heart-touching mosaic message,
as our Foundress, Leader,
Mother, Teacher, and Friend.

We render you our deepest thanks for the
bountiful grace of journeying with you
in the mysteries of the Mosaic honoring you
as our holy Foundress and blessed One forever,
Mother Maria Kaupas!

*Sister M. Agnesine Dering, SSC, Ph.D.
Sisters of St. Casimir, Chicago, IL*

WITH LOVE TO... AND FROM... *Lithuania*

By Bemice Mikatavage,
C-144 Humanitarian Aid Chair

The Anthracite Council 144 of Pennsylvania has contributed a great deal to Lithuania since it was chartered in 1977 (about \$100,000 in monetary aid alone), but this is a story of how we are trying to alleviate some of the hardships that our brothers and sisters in Lithuania are now experiencing.

Since regaining their freedom, conditions seem to be getting worse instead of better. The year 2000 has been designated as a year of economizing in Lithuania. Taxes have risen, teachers salaries have been reduced, and the government may not be giving aid for school supplies, notebooks, etc. Parents will have to pay for school books. These things are just some of the additional weight to be added to the already heavy burden being carried by the parents, many of them unemployed. Pensions have also been reduced. We cannot provide humanitarian aid to everyone, but the boxes we send are a ray of hope, a gift of friendship and love that is appreciated by the recipients.

Our story begins in 1996, when we began keeping records of the contents and weight of our humanitarian aid shipments. Anna Panchari, a C-144 member who has been shipping to her relatives in Lithuania since the 1970's, began collecting good, usable clothing, etc. for Lithuania in her garage. Parishioners and friends of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Minersville, PA donated a large amount of new baby and childrens clothing. With council 144 paying shipping costs, we began sending to Sr. Helen Ivanauskas, C.J.C., Vice-president of Lithuanian Childrens Relief, Inc., Brockton, MA. A \$500 donation was also given to Sr. Helen who made the arrangements to purchase a washer and dryer for a very needy couple with many foster children.

During 1997, we were able to acquire a lot of shoes, sneakers and boots from a retiring shoe store owner. We watched for clearance sales and purchased new underwear and tights, pantyhose, and socks at huge savings. Members and non members gave donations. We outgrew Anna's garage and began storing on the second floor of a garage owed by Annie Morgalis, Minersville, PA. The space was needed because clothing is sorted first by condition, (only very good garments are considered), then season, and last by gender and age. In the spring, summer items are sent and in the fall, winter items.

In 1998 we contacted Jeanne Dorr, a teacher from New Jersey who is on the Board of Directors for Lithuanian Orphan Care. Jeanne visits Lithuania every two years, and writes humanitarian articles about people she interviews. She gave us names and places of some of the poorest, and their greatest needs. We began sending aid to these places directly, and were able to correspond with them.

Our policy is to put a letter in the first package sent, informing the recipient that they must tell us in what condition their boxes have been received. We also inform them that if we do not hear from them, future aid will not be sent. A self addressed envelope is enclosed.



*Students from Aleknaičiu performing at Christmas
(note the "Joe Boxer" polos we sent)*

**The "Boruzeliu"
group at L-D Saulute
Daycare, Prienai
with teacher,
Veronika
Bartuskiene**



The following are excerpts from just a few of the many heart-warming letters we have received:

■ "It gives me great pleasure to write you this thank you letter. Today, Fri., Oct. 23, 1998 about 11:00 in the

morning, an attractive white car delivered your package to us. I noticed that the packing was done with love and care. A heartfelt thanks to you, my dear ones...

■ "The gifts you sent were just what we needed. We appreciate the paper and crayons. Now I will feel free to give the children a whole sheet of paper to draw on. I used to cut the sheets in half to make them last...

■ "We are so thankful we are not the forgotten ones. It's wonderful to know that someone cares...

■ "Your gift affects me personally because my grandfather Martin Slaminkas was a miner in Pennsylvania. I know he died there, but I don't know where his grave is and at what age he died...

■ "On Dec. 22, 1998, in the evening, an event was to take place by Boruziuku Group. It was a meeting with Father Christmas. But an unexpected miracle happened. In the morning a man came into our midst and brought your gift—a big box. You can't imagine how overjoyed the children were. Quickly we opened the box and they began to take out all kinds of goodies...

■ "We wear clothing donated from all over the world because we as yet cannot afford to buy new ones...

■ "The sleeping bag was a very welcome gift. One little girl named Aukse who refused to take a nap on the little cots, now uses the sleeping bag...

■ "In the winter our salaries are barely enough to pay for food and the rent...

■ "Thank you sincerely for the package containing clothing and aspirin. The cold of winter is just about here and

so we are grateful for your gifts...

■ "I'm very pleased that your group is from the coal mining region. In 1914 my family was exiled to Siberia and my father had to work in the coal mines there. It seems that God has allowed us to be connected...

■ "First, in the name of the children, parents and teacher, we gratefully thank you for your extraordinary kindness, love, dedication and concern for our unfortunate children. Attending a school would be impossible without concerned people providing aid for them...

■ "Again, our heartfelt thanks for the gifts, donations and your untiring efforts to make a joyous holiday for our children. You understand our heavy burden...

■ "I am hesitant to ask, since you have already addressed the students, but boys shoes are very badly needed. If you can help, we would be very grateful. We can only thank all of you with our prayers...

■ "Our heartfelt thanks for the many things sent. We gave some as Christmas presents to the orphans (new jeans and tops were among the items sent) and it made them very happy. The medications (over-the-counter) were greatly needed for the elderly—everything sent was needed. Thank you for your good hearts and for having such great concern for us...

By 1998, our "warehouse" also had an annex in the living room/dining area of the Morgalis home. Our care boxes were sent to Rev. Leonas Jakimavicius, Alytus for the needy; Sr. Elvyra, Rumbonys for the orphans and nuns residing there; Caritas, Kaunas; Laima Makutenaite,

Laikinos Vaiku Globos Namai, Vilnius; Brone and Stasys Grusai for Aleknaiciu Pradine Mokykia; Panavezio Vaiku Globos Narnai, Panavezys; Jonas Kirkliauskas, Klebiskio Pagrindine Mokykla, Klebiskis; Veronika Bartuskiene, L.D. Saulute, Prienai; Sv. Kazimero Globos Namai, Naujasis Daugeliskis; Alytus Specializuoti Kudikiu Namai, Alytus; St. Clare Hospice in Utena; Sr. Michele, Utena; Sv. Jokubas Hospital and Dr. Vaiva Eringyte, Vilnius; Vasula Karmelyou Vienolynas, Kauno raj.; Delfinuku Darzeliui, Vilnius; and some individuals who received a one-time emergency aid box. Among those was a village priest living in a tiny rectory without a bathroom or washing machine caring for his elderly mother who had taken a stroke and was incontinent.

We were offered, in 1998, a complete set of Houghton-Mifflin Reading Series from Kdg. thru 9th grade. Vincent Kreder, a teacher from New Jersey who has been teaching in Lithuania for seven years, offered to set up a reading program. He is the English teacher at 4-ji Vidurine Mokykla at Druskininkai. Enough books were donated to have reading programs in three schools. Forty-three boxes totaling 1,949 pounds of books were sent in 1998 and 1999 with some help from Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid and the Knights Foundation.

Robert Bulchis, a C-144 member from Oregon has donated hundreds of toothbrushes and large tubes of toothpaste plus bandaids and various other items for our shipments. His concern for Lithuania's orphans prompted him to donate \$1,000 for medical aid to orphans in memory of his wife, Helen. He also sponsors a child through Lithuanian Orphan Care. Through the years he has collected and donated computers for Lithuania, and has greatly contributed to our cause. This compassionate K of L'er has been written about in Oregon newspapers for other charitable work- he has also performed.

Tom and Anna Helen McDonald, C-144 pack the boxes for the orphans and poor people that are sent to Sr. Michelle, Utena and the medical supplies and hospital clothing for St. Clare Hospital (formerly Hospice) in Utena which are shipped by our council. Annie Morgalis, Bernice Mikatavage, Anna Panchari and Anne Sikora pack for all other recipients.

Council 144 and many individual members sponsor orphans through Orphan Care. The council has also adopted St. Ann's Church in Pavandienis and through its donations the church was remodeled. A twelve year old boy with leukemia from the Prienai area is also sent medication and other items from an anonymous donor and the council.

In 1999, a donation was sent to the Carmelite Nuns in the Kaunas region for the monastery that is being built. We also send boxes of clothing and food to them to distribute to

the poor that beg at their door.

Footwear-shoes and boots are in great demand, especially childrens'. We do not send narrow shoes because most people go barefoot a lot and their feet are wider. One of our members sent a beautiful pair of narrow, ladies shoes to a relative who took them to her place of employment where everyone tried to fit in them, but a "Cinderella" wasn't to be found.

In a small village, the primary school closed. The ten boys enrolled are now attending a school 7 kilometers away. They are bussed in the morning but walk home after school. A retired, elderly couple who are like second parents to them wrote Feb. 9th that the sneakers we sent them last year (their only pair of footwear) are falling apart due to the rain, mud and snow. They do not have boots. Unfortunately, it will be May before they receive our shipment containing new footwear.

Bed linens are also requested, but not our small pillow cases. Sweaters-wool, part wool or acrylic are sent, but not our stylish, heavy cotton ones which increase the shipping costs and are not warm.

We try to match the clothing we send to the recipients. Sometimes we have their sizes, but mostly we rely on photos that are sent to us. We do keep a record of every item that is sent to each destination. This is a great help in determining what is needed next time. If there are 18 children in a home we make sure that each one will receive something. Extra items are put in the boxes for the caretakers who earn so little.

Toiletries are excellent Christmas gifts such as: combs, Chapsticks, deodorants, small mirrors and hair pieces for girls, handkerchiefs, toothbrushes and toothpaste, hand lotions. Multivitamins, vitamin C, Tylenol, aspirin, muscle rubs, etc. are always needed.

St. Casimir's Church, St. Clair, PA and St. Francis Church, Minersville have "Giving Christmas Trees" which contain requests for the orphans and St. Clare Hospital. St. Casimir's also have an Easter Egg Tree for that purpose. Beautiful items are donated.

From 01/13/97 to 01/18/2000 we shipped 247 boxes totaling 7,922 lbs. Tom McDonald transports the Utena shipments, and all of the other boxes are loaded and driven to their pick-up destination in Frackville, PA by Tony Panchari, Anna's son. A tremendous task.

At present, we are preparing another large shipment. It is a job that gives great personal satisfaction. We feel our aid has given hope and happiness to at least some of the poor. A recipient wrote, "When we receive a box it is like a ray of sunshine on an otherwise cloudy day." It is these sincere, heartwarming letters that make our day. ...And, it is love, to and from Lithuania.



Thoughts from the Heart of a Camp Neringa Child

My family has been a part of Camp Neringa for over 30 years. My aunt was a camper at Neringa's "older sister" camp: Camp Immaculata in Putnum, CT (The Sisters of the Immaculate Conception organized camps at their convent prior to moving the camp to Vermont). My sisters and I went to Camp Neringa in Mariboro, VT starting in 1979. My cousins soon joined us when they came of age, twelve years later. Within the last three years, my nephew and niece have also followed the fabulous tradition. I come from a Neringa family and am I Neringa child!

Neringa in itself is an extended family. No matter how many years pass, the friendships and memories are as strong as when they were taking place. I have traveled extensively throughout the years and have met many fellow campers in the United States. As soon as Neringa was mentioned, an instant bond was formed. The memories of giggling from the bunks after lights out, the bonfire songs and skits, role playing dramatic Lithuanian historical events, hikes, sports, reflections and mass in the birch shrine, inspirational counselors, swimming in the pond, the breathtaking starry night sky, the whole camp at the flagpole field twice a day, ...the list goes on.

Many of the campers return to Neringa as counselors. I am one of them! The children that I have counseled and watched grow up from the age of seven, are now counselors. A true sense of family and belonging fills our hearts and spirits. Neringa not only shows children the fun in summer camp activities, Neringa teaches children self esteem, honesty to themselves and others, team work, joy of accomplishment, leadership, Lithuanian language/heritage and the indescribable Neringa spirit that warms the soul. I speak from my heart, for I am a Neringa child.

I encourage you to make Neringa a part of your family! The 2000 camp schedule includes a session in



Family Fun at Camp Neringa

English for children 7-16 years old from August 6-19 and a family camp in English for families with young children from June 30-July 4. For more information regarding these sessions or sessions in Lithuanian please contact Dana Grajauskaite (Camp Director) at 617-923-4583 or neringai@yahoo.com

-Lucia Samulis

Neringa Camper and Counselor Emeritus!



ON THE CALENDAR:

July 27-30, 2000 - Knights of Lithuania National Convention, Los Angeles, CA
contact: Maryte Sepikas (818) 782-1248

July 26, St. Ann's Mass at St. Ann's Basilica, Scranton at 2:30 pm

September 17, 2000 - MAD District Fall Meeting, C-136 Hudson-Mohawk, hosts

October 15, 2000 - C-29, Newark, NJ Annual Dinner and Dance,
Reservations must be made, but all are welcome.



-He that's content hath enough. He that complains hath too much.

-A full belly makes a dull brain.

-from Poor Richard's Almanac

Sioux City, Iowa

The Story of St. Casimir's Church (1915-1998)

by Edward Baranauskas

In a visit to Lithuania in 1976, I had the pleasure of getting acquainted with another member of my tourist group, a gentleman from Sioux City, Iowa. This was the first time I ever knew there was a Lithuanian community there.

My parents came here from Lithuania before the First World War. During my genealogical research on them, I was able to examine the passenger manifest of the SS Kursk, the vessel that brought my mother here in 1913. On the same page she was listed, were the names of two gentlemen who were going to Sioux City, Iowa.

A few months ago, I was very fortunate to find my Dad's old address book, and to my surprise, was the name of a gentleman who lived in Sioux City. His last name was spelled a little differently than the family name of my Dad's stepfather, Laskauskas. Who was he, and why was my Dad corresponding with him? After doing some research on his origin, I learned that he was born in the same town in Lithuania as my Dad, Troškunai, and that he could possibly have been my step-granduncle.

Curiosity now got the best of me. What was there about Sioux City that attracted so many Lithuanians? I decided to look into the history of Sioux City, and learn about its Lithuanian parish.

Sioux City is located in the western part of Iowa, its second largest city, at the point where the Big Sioux and Missouri rivers meet. It is next to Nebraska, and less than a hundred miles north of its nearest Lithuanian community, Omaha.



St. Casimir's of Sioux City, Iowa

A flour mill and a sash and door company were established in 1866, but over the years, with the buying of cattle, hogs and sheep, the meat packing industry became the city's largest employer, and this in turn, resulted in new businesses. During the Czar's time, the majority of Lithuanians were involved with agriculture and livestock, and so there did not seem to be much of a problem to adjust to life in America's heartland.

The story of St. Casimir's Church had a happy beginning, made possible by the determination and sacrifices of a hardy group of Lithuanian immigrants who brought their traditions and Catholic faith with them. Unfortunately, however, it had a sad ending, a victim of the changing of the times.

Lithuanians began to settle in Sioux City around 1900, and their numbers increased to about 400 in 1904. At that time they belonged to St. Joseph's parish. For their Easter duty they were accustomed to invite Father Jurgis Jonaitis, then at Omaha, Neb., or some other Lithuanian priest. On May 11, 1913 (Pentecost), Father Konstantinas Satkus came from Chicago for confessions and Mass. His visit drew 200 people to an organizational meeting three days later, at which time a slate of officers was elected. Headed by Father Satkus, a delegation visited the Most Rev. Philip J. Garrigan, the first Bishop of the Diocese of Sioux City, who gave his approval for a separate parish.

The year 1915 was very important for St. Casimir's parish. The Lithuanians increased in numbers

to about 1, 500, and during that year, the parish was organized, the site for the new church was decided upon, the building fund was established, and work on the church was begun. Construction of a new church gained momentum when Father Mykolas Cybulskis arrived on May 20, 1915 shortly after his ordination. Bishop Garrigan came to a parish meeting on June 20 to greet him, whose seminary studies in Fribourg, Switzerland was sponsored by the diocese. Bishop Garrigan blessed the cornerstone on October 24, 1915.



Father Simon Morkunas

Father Cybulskis celebrated Mass for the first time in the basement of the Church on Christmas Day, two months later. The Church was completed by Easter Sunday, 1916, at which time the first Mass was celebrated in the church proper. On July 2, 1916, Bishop Garrigan dedicated the church.

When Father Cybulskis left Sioux City, in 1917, the members of the parish experienced difficult times. There was a continuous succession of pastors, several remaining only a few months or a few days, and there were times when the parish was without a Lithuanian priest altogether. At such times, there was no one to speak to them in Lithuanian and to keep them together, and it became difficult to raise enough money to pay even the interest on the debt.

Father George G.M. Cesna became pastor in 1922. During his pastorate, a new rectory was built, and the parish debt was paid off. He brought the parish through the difficult years of the Great Depression and World War II. He passed away on April 6, 1951.

Father Cesna's successor was Father Simon Morkunas. He was ordained in Lithuania in 1933, and had a very colorful career in his native country. As the Red Army approached Lithuania in the summer of 1944 he was forced to leave his parish, and together with his Archbishop, fled to Germany. He became a legend by his outgoing, winning ways and persuasive fund-raising capacity.

In 1953, he enlisted the renowned refugee artist, Prof. Adolfas Valeška, to redecorate the church, install twenty-seven exquisite stained glass windows imported from Munich, Germany, and execute three oil paintings to adorn the interior walls. New light fixtures imported from Venice, Italy, were also installed. Prof. Valeška was a member of Father Morkunas' parish in Lithuania. The beautiful rework of the church interior prompted the diocese newspaper, *The Globe* (issue Thursday, September 3, 1953) to publish a picture of it, with the caption: "Interior, St. Casimir's

Church--Gold Coast."

Alongside the replacement of Mass vestments, the parish grounds, too, received a facelift. Father Morkunas, with his uncanny skills in acquiring funds, persuaded his eighty families to rally behind him.

He saw many hardships afflict his parishioners, including two devastating floods and the closing of several meat packing plants which left a large percentage of parish families without an income. Resilient and hard working parishioners, survived and again prospered.

As he neared the normal retirement age of 75, Father Morkunas became troubled that there would be no replacement, or at least, no pastor of Lithuanian descent. He refused to give up the parish, zealously staying on until health problems compelled him to leave on July 2, 1990, at the age of eighty-eight. He left a legacy of \$350,000 in the parish treasury to prolong the life of St. Casimir's parish, at least for a while.

He entered a Catholic retirement home where he was well cared for. He passed away on July 5, 1997 at the age of 99. Then a Monsignor, he had a very colorful history of accomplishments in Lithuania and also in the United States.

With the changing demographics of Sioux City, the parish began to see a decline in membership, and as a result, St. Casimir's parish was changed to a mission (☞ turn to page 19)

**PROJECT OF SOME CHANGES IN THE
ANTHEM OF KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA**

(to be presented at the K of L Convention in Los Angeles, CA, in 2000)

At the Knights of Lithuania Convention of 1999 in Philadelphia, PA, Helen Chesko from PA, was concerned about an important aspect of our Knights of Lithuania Anthem. She asked if the words "Mums viska dave Lietuva" could not be corrected to a more satisfactory expression. A resolution was passed and I, Faustas Strolia, Chairperson of committee for Culture and the Lithuanian language, was entrusted to review and eventually revise it. There was also a dissatisfaction with "plieno kardas" as the wrong sentiment for expressing our organization's ideals.

I invited Rev. Anthony Zakarauskas (C-112), our Mid-America District's Spiritual Advisor, himself a musician, and Petras Apolinaras Bagdonas (C-112), a Lithuanian linguist and poet, and a member of our Knights of Lithuania Choir in Chicago, to assist me on this project.

As our source we used the 1916 mixed choir version, copyrighted by S. P. Tananevicz. Words by M. Gustaitis, music by A. Aleksis. Our attention was caught by some mis-spelling, hyphanization and capitalization of different Lithuanian words. A better version can be found in the "Knights of Lithuania Constitution", 1994, p. 32, but even this has some inadequacies. The perfect version can be found in Ignas Sakalas' "Lietuvos Vyciai Amerikoje", p. 11.

By viewing the phrase "O plieno kardas" (which was in this four part chorus version repeated five times) we reached the conclusion that it is superfluous, as it unnecessarily interrupts the flow of the melody. This redundant section could easily be omitted without doing any harm to the structure of the melody.

The words "mums viska dave Lietuva" can easily be replaced by "musu sirdyse Lietuva". In discussing the second half of this phrase "vaduosim galva ja sava" we were in agreement to change it to "aukosim jai visas jegas."

Or would we prefer "Musu sirdyse Lietuva, mintys, darbai, karsta malda"?

Except for the mentioned omission of "plieno kardas", we stuck as close as possible to Mr. Aleksis' original version. The final phrase asked for several adjustments: by tradition, we end the last two notes an octave higher than written. Our commission supports the idea of our singing tradition. For this reason I had to make a minor rhythmical adjustment (which will not change our way of singing it!) in the printed music of the final phrase.

A minor pitch difference in the printed music appears on the second syllable of "ve-lia-va. Again, we believe this is the way our members presently sing it, and we want to stick with the tradition.

These few changes would most likely not strike our members with any great inconvenience, but even these few changes offend both authors' rights: the poet's and the composer's. Something to be concerned about!

VYČIŲ HIMNO PATAISŲ PROJEKTAS

(dėl 2000 m. Lietuvos Vyčių Seimo)

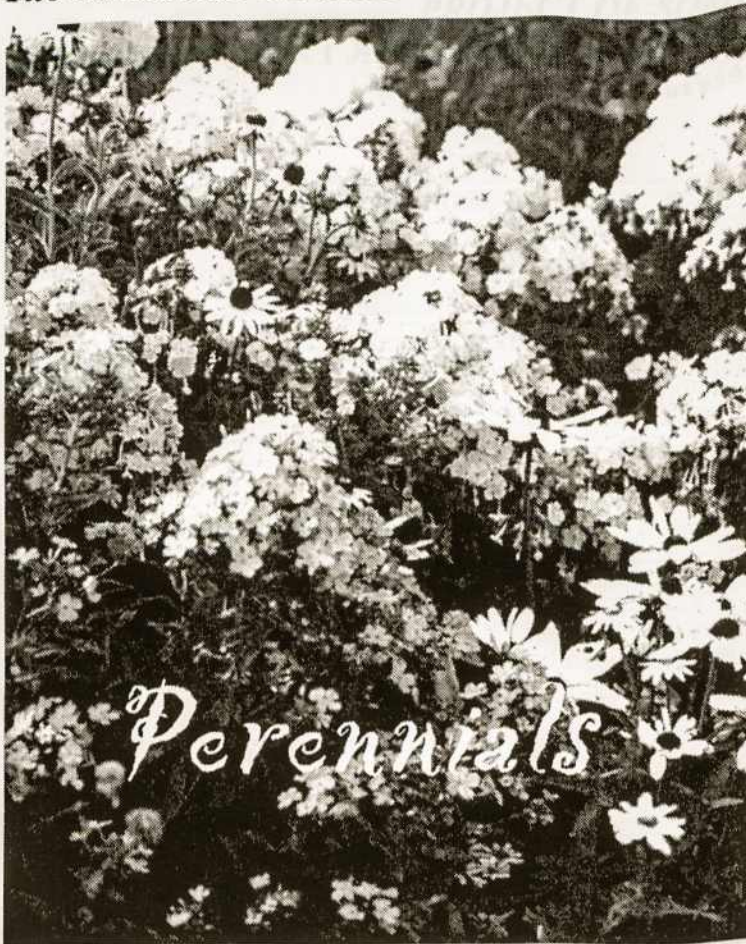
Kun.M.Gustaičio eilės

A.Aleksio muzika

TEMPO DI MARCIA

f Nu - žen - k, Ga - ly - be, iš dan - - gaus,
 su - stip - rink jau - ną Vy - čių dva - sią!
 mes už tei - sy - bę sto - sim drą - siai
 Tė - vy - nę gin - ti kuo nar - siau.
 Štai ple - vė - suo - ja vė - lia - va.
p *rall.* kal - ba jos žy - - mē? *f* *tempo* Ei, Vy - čiai,
 gy - ve - nam Tau - tai ir Baž - ny - - čiai!
 Mū - sy šir - dy - se Lie - tu - va
 au - ko - sim jai vi - sas jė - gas Ei, Vy - čiai,
 min - tys, dar - bai, karš - ta mal - da.
 gy - ve - nam Tau - tai ir *rit.* Baž - ny - - čiai!

The Lithuanian Gardener



by HM Frank Petrauskas

Spring is an excellent time for planting, and various perennials are some of my favorite flowers so I'm going to give you the how and the why and wherefore of planting a perennial bed. The planting operation is rather simple if you have the right information.

A perennial is any plant that lives for three or more years. They come up year after year with masses of flowers which can be extended from early Spring to late Fall with the proper planning. These ten easy steps should help you.

1. Selecting a Site

The ease and success of growing perennials depends upon selecting a suitable site. Light and drainage are the two most critical conditions to be considered. Most

perennials prefer bright sunlight for six to eight hours each day. The majority of perennials also require soil with good internal drainage, but at the same time need a soil able to supply adequate uniform moisture.

2. Soil Preparation

Soil preparation is extremely important since most perennials remain in place for many years. Dig or till the bed about ten inches deep. If the drainage is poor consider building raised beds. Add two to four inches of compost or peat moss and mix into the soil. Most perennials like a pH range of 6.0 to 6.8, so it would be a good idea to test your soil before planting and make the necessary adjustments if necessary. Your garden center can give you that information.

3. Planting

Nearly all perennials are grown in pots, so before planting give each a good shot of water. Next dig the hole about twice the size of the pot, remove the plant from the pot and hold the plant with one hand and back fill with the other. I like to add a few hand fulls of dried manure with the back fill. Keep the top of the root ball even with the top of the soil when finished. Allow some space for watering and after watering back fill the rest of the way.

4. Mulching

Most common mulch is shredded bark or bark chips, peat moss or pea stone. Mulching is an excellent way to control weeds, retain moisture, and provide protection from cold temperatures. For winter protection in cold climates, apply a layer directly over the plant crowns after the first frost but be sure to push it aside in the spring before new growth begins.

5. Watering

Keep the bed moist while the plants are getting established but avoid over watering. Early morning or late evening watering times are the best.

6. Fertilizing

The first year the manure around the plant is sufficient. In the second year and future years

use a general fertilizer and broadcast it over the plants and then water it in. This can be done in the Spring.

7. Protection

Most perennials are relatively pest and disease-free. If you see any mites or aphids just squash them with your hand or dust them with some dusting powder.

8. Grooming

Grooming and staking are often needed to keep the perennial garden looking its best. The removal of old flowers and seed pods can significantly extend the flowering period. Stakes support plants well and hoops can be used to support plants with heavy flowers such as Peonies. When tying stems to stakes, use soft string or flexible ties and tie loosely, in order not to restrict growth or injure delicate stems.

9. Preparing for Winter

In the fall, as the season's growth declines, prepare for winter by cutting back the fading stems of perennials to just above ground level. In colder areas, apply an organic mulch over the plant crowns after they go dormant.

10. Selecting the Right Plants

I'm giving you a large list of plants from which to choose for your perennial bed. They are grouped into blooming periods so if you want color from Spring until Fall you will select a few from each group. Some of the most popular, some of the old stand-bys are Iris, Peonies, Lilies, Daisies, Astilbes, Phlox, Anemone, Asters and Mums. Good luck to you in your gardening endeavors and if you follow my instructions, I know you'll be successful.

Spring plants:

Iris, Columbine, Oriental poppy, Geum, Jacob's Ladder, Sweet William, Armeria, Forget-Me-Not, Border pink

Late Spring plants:

Peony, Thermopsis, Delphinium, Anchusa, Lupine, Salvia, Bleeding Heart, Day Lily, Dame's Rocket, Honesty, Coral-Bells, English Daisy, Sweet Woodruff, Iberis

Early Summer plants :

Foxglove, Big Betony, Goatsbeard, Hollyhock, Bellflower, Coreopsis, Canterbury Bell, Painted Daisy, Penstemon, Campanula, Lychnis, Gaillardia

Mid Summer plants:

Red-Hot Poker, Bee Balm, Heliopsis, Astilbe, Fleabane,

Maltese Cross, Shasta Daisy, Cupid's-dart, Geranium, True Lavender, Yellow Corydalis


Late Summer plants:

Yarrow, Aconitum, Sidalcea, Helenium, Phlox, Carnation, Centrauthus, Mistflower, Scabiosa, Platycodon, Solidaster, Llinonium, Stachys

Fall plants:

Salvia, Physostegia, Anemone, Bugbane, Boltonia, Coneflower, Chrysanthemum, Plantain Lily, Chelone, Coreopsis, Cupflower, Aster, Hybrid Goldenrod, Leadwort



SIoux CITY ST. CASIMIR'S ( from page 15) status. The last pastor, Father Paul-Louis Arts was appointed in July, 1995 with the sad task of preparing the people for the closing of the parish by July 1, 1998. After celebrating eighty-three years of service and worship to the Lord, the final liturgy took place on June 24, 1998 with Bishop Lawrence D. Soens of Sioux City as the celebrant, with other pastors in attendance.

With the closing of the parish, many emotions that accompany any death have been experienced by St. Casimir's parishoners. The last year, the parish celebrated special rituals to help parishoners through the painful process of closing and blending into other parishes in the city. Several other ethnic parishes were closed, as well.

What does the future hold for a once beautiful Lithuanian church? The inside of the church has been gutted, all the artifacts have been sold to an antique dealer in Minneapolis, the pews are gone, and even the wood within the structure has been sold. No one seems to know what will become of the rest of the church, or the rectory, which is, for now, a residence-for several nuns.

The parishoners, children of another generation, can be proud of their cooperation and generous support to the church, and of their loyalty to their faith and Lithuanian traditions.

St. Casimir's Church played a very important part in the lives of the Lithuanian community in Sioux City. Now, with the passage of time, it seems to have outlived its usefulness, and unfortunately, sorry to say, today is nothing more than a relic of the past.

Acknowledgements: Fr. William Wolkovich-Valkavicius of St. George Parish, Norwood, Mass. for sending me copies of his files on St. Casimir's Church in Sioux City; to the Archivist of Diocese of Sioux City, and to Mrs. Agnes Donovan of Sioux City, and The Globe.

KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

What is the organization's future going into the next Millennium?

With the start of a new year and new era, it is an appropriate time for all of us to reflect on our organization. Please voice your opinion now. Your responses will provide input to a presentation to be made at the upcoming National Convention in Los Angeles in July/August 2000. If you have questions, please contact the Survey's Administrators - Robert Martin (219-861-0731) or Irena Gecas-McCarthy (516-746-0820).

PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY!!!!!!!!!! DEADLINE JUNE 30, 2000!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

1. Please rank the following types of activities in order of importance to you and which are considered the most rewarding to you and your family. Rank from 1 (most important) to 3 (least important) and please explain your answer with specific examples.

- Cultural: _____
- Social: _____
- Religious: _____
- Philanthropy/Charity/Humanitarianism: _____
- Other: Please explain: _____

2. In which events do you regularly participate? (Please answer Yes or No for each)

[If Yes, please explain what aspects of the events you like the most?]

[If No, please explain, what you like least about the events?]

Yes or No Council meetings and activities: _____

Yes or No District meetings and activities: _____

Yes or No National convention: _____

3. What changes would you recommend to the following processes/policies to encourage more active participation?

Membership Rules or Dues: _____

Meetings (Council, District): _____

Council, District, National Structure: _____

Committees and Ancillary Organizations: _____

Ritual/Point Process: _____

Vytis Magazine: _____

Other: _____

4. Regarding National Conventions:

Which city would you like to see host a future convention? _____

Would you suggest any changes to the format of the convention?

Number of Days? _____

Format/Number of Sessions? _____

Topics Discussed? _____

5. Is your spouse a member? _____ (Yes/No)

If no, why not?

Not Catholic No time

Not Lithuanian; little personal interest Other: _____

KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

What is the organization's future going into the next Millennium?

6. Are your children members of the organization? _____ (Yes/No)
 If you have adult children, are your grandchildren members of the organization? _____ (Yes/No)
 If yes to either question, why?

- ___ I would like my children to meet young Lithuanians.
 ___ I would like my children to learn about the Lithuanian culture, language, etc.
 ___ I want to have some activities that we can participate in as a family.
 ___ Because my parents encouraged me to join and membership is a family tradition.
 ___ Other _____

If no to either question, why?:

- ___ Not enough active members of the same age group (list age group: _____).
 ___ Too expensive.
 ___ Activities not interesting.
 ___ Too busy with other activities – school, sports, work, other groups. _____
 ___ Other _____

7. How much longer do you think the K of L will remain a viable organization ? (Please check one that applies.)

In 5 years? _____ In 10 years? _____ In 30 years? _____
 In 5-10 years? _____ In 20 years? _____

8. If under 10 years, why?
- _____
- _____

9. How do you view your activity and commitment to the organization? (Please check one.)

- ___ Committed and very active _____ Somewhat committed and not active
 ___ Committed and somewhat active _____ Not committed and not active
 ___ Committed but not active _____

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- a) How long have you been a member of the organization?

Under 2 years? _____ 2-5 years? _____ 5-10 years? _____
 10-20 years? _____ 20+ years? _____

- b) Have you ever served as an officer at any of the following levels? (Please answer Yes/No)

Council Level ___ Y ___ N
 District Level ___ Y ___ N
 National Level ___ Y ___ N

- c) Please check your appropriate age group:

20 or younger _____ 21-30 _____ 31-40 _____
 41-50 _____ 51-60 _____ 61-70 _____ 70+ _____

- d) Which District do you belong to?

Amber _____ New England _____ Mid-Central _____
 Mid-Atlantic _____ Mid-America _____

- e) On average, how many Council meetings do you attend each year? _____ (Number/Per Year)

- f) Have you regularly attended District meetings/functions each year? _____ (Yes/No)

PLEASE SEND YOUR CONFIDENTIAL RESPONSE TO:

ROBERT MARTIN
C/O K OF L SURVEY
133 SOUTH LAKE AVENUE
MICHIGAN CITY, IN 46360

*Survey Responses will be consolidated
 and summarized by the Survey's
 Coordinators (Robert Martin and Irena
 Gecas-McCarthy) for the Los Angeles
 National Convention.*



Lithuanian Chefs



Soups for the Soul

Ruth Fisher C-152

LEMON SOUP CITRININE SRIUBA .

3/4 cup rice
2 cups light cream
1 tbsp. butter
2 qts. soup stock (chicken is best)
4 egg yolks
juice of 1 lemon

In tightly covered pan cook washed rice with butter and several tablespoons of the soup stock. Beat egg yolks till light, adding cream. Pour warm soup stock slowly into egg. Add lemon juice. Heat, do not boil, add cooked rice. Serve hot with very thin lemon slices.

MILK SOUPS PIENINES SRIUBOS

Use any one of the following: Barley (gruce) Rice (ryziai) Wheat grits (kvietines kruopos) Home-made noodles

(kleckiukai, tarkainiukai, svilpikai) Potato balls (bulviniai kleckiakai) For first three cereals: use about 3/4 to 1 cup washed cereal, boil in salted water till done, then add 2 qts. scalded milk, salt to taste, and a spoon-full of butter.

Home-made noodles, use standard noodle dough, cook in same proportions and method as above.

Different type noodles are fashioned thus:

kleckinkai - soft egg-noodle dough,

dropped by spoonfulls into boiling water;

tarkamiukai - force dry noodle - dough through a potato grater; svilpikai - take small bits of noodle dough, flatten and shape by rolling gently over the surface of a vegetable grater.

Potato balls (bulviniai kleckiukai) - grate raw potato, drain off liquid, add enough flour to hold form. Salt to taste. Form into small balls. Drop in boiling water.



New York's Russian Tea Room's famous hot borscht

Preparing the beets:

5 cups of meat broth
3 whole medium sized beets, washed

1 tablespoon pickling spices
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar
1 bay leaf

1 tablespoon thyme

Preparing the vegetables:

1 ounce smoked bacon, cut into fine strips

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 Spanish onion, diced

1 carrot, peeled and julienned

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 of a small celery root, peeled and julienned

1 small head of white cabbage, sliced

1 leek, white and green parts only, minced

1/4 lbs. shitake mushrooms, cut in 1/2 in. cubes

1 cup canned tomatoes, crushed

with juices

1 tablespoon chopped tarragon

1 tablespoon chopped dill

sour cream to garnish

chopped dill to garnish

1. In a saucepan, cover the beets with cold water. Add the herbs, spices, vinegar and sugar. Cook until the beets are tender (about 45 minutes). Strain and reserve the beet broth. Peel and julienne the beets.

2. In a separate pan, bring the broth to a simmer and add salt and pepper as necessary.

3. Meanwhile, fry the bacon in a heavy stock pot. Pour off the fat. Add the butter, onion, carrot, garlic, mushrooms, celery root, cabbage and leeks. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and cook over low heat until soft. Add the tomatoes with their juices. Add half the dill and tarragon.

4. Pour into equal parts of the meat broth and beef stock (about 4 cups of each). Bring to a boil and simmer for 20 minutes. Add the cooked beets, along with the remaining tarragon and dill and simmer for 5 minutes. Swirl a little sour cream onto each serving and sprinkle with dill.

Chef's note: when working with beets, it is necessary to wash them, but do not scrub or peel off the skin. The beets will cook inside the skins, and when they are finished cooking, the outer layers should easily peel off. (Chef Fabrice Cannelle)

Article from the NY Post 3/5/2000



Thank You Dearest Mother

You are our guardian angel from heaven above,
 Thank you for teaching us about family, about love.
 Thank you dearest Mother for your love
 Care for Dad, Joe, Jonas, Onute and Mare.
 Thank you for First Communion dresses
 ...and golden tresses
 For wisdom and honest answers to our guesses.
 Pride in our religion and heritage as well,
 Of course we are Catholic and Lithuanian, can't you tell?
 For making us laugh and even cry,
 Most importantly you made us try.

For so much knowledge and lots of books,
 Oh, yes, those Lithuanian good looks.
 For loving spoonfuls of wisdom, guidance and advice
 Mother knows best don't even think twice.
 For holidays filled with Lithuanian traditional treats,
 For your delicious kugelis, raisin bread and sweets,
 For love of family through thick and thin
 So much laughter and joy your head could spin.
 For memories to fill three lifetimes and some other
 We will love you always, Dearest Mother

Maryte, Onute, Guozas and Jonas



✦ Letters continued from page 2

◆ For 10 years various activities have taken place in the sister cities of Klaipeda and Kuji. Both cities have one precious thing in common, amber. Recently the Lithuanian National Orchestra performed at Kuji, marking the 10th anniversary of the sister city relationship.

◆ The Lithuanian Embassy in Tokyo opened on March 16, 1999 during an official visit from Foreign Minister Algirdas Saudargas who welcomed His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince and Princess Masako for a performance of the Lithuanian National Folk Song and Dance Company Lietuva.

◆ Lithuania is earning a reputation as a world leader in specialized laser research, development and manufacturing. More than half the world's pulsed pico-second high-energy lasers are now produced in Lithuania. Japanese clients include Kyoto University, the Japan Atomic Energy and Research Institute and other institutions. Lithuanian lasers are used by Swiss watchmakers to engrave watch and clock crystals.

◆ Japan imports animal products, textiles, chemicals and glass products from Lithuania while Lithuania imports vehicles, machinery and equipment from Japan. In 1998, Lithuania's trade turnover totaled \$125 million, modest but growing.

Anne Leseman, C-26, Worcester, MA

Children's Poem

To the Editor:

This poem was performed by the children of St. George's Parish, Phila., at a parish dinner. St. George's is the home of Msgr. Joseph Anderlonis, our spiritual

advisor. Although we are heading towards summer, we thought the prayer was so lovely your readers would enjoy it too.

A Snowflake Prayer
 Thank You Creator God,
 For the Gift of Winter,
 For cold frosty air,
 Shimmering icicles,
 Frozen lakes and rivers,
 And most of all for snowflakes,
 Ever so beautiful, so special,
 So one of a kind.
 Let them remind me that
 I am like that in Your eyes-
 So beautiful, so special,
 So one of a kind.
 Thank You, God,
 For Snowflakes.
 Thank You, God,
 For me.

Submitted by Julie Kowrak, C-3

Rare Book

To the Editor:

How can I get a copy of Lithuanian Military Forces of WWII by Mr. Gaidis?

Possibly through the Balzakas Museum?

Another good source is a website called "The Little Lithuanian Bookshop" which has a great array of book and will research a title for you

<http://www.angelfire.com/ut/Lithuanian/index2.html>

Peter and Monica Tamuti
 Fort Myers Beach, F

Council News...

C-3, Philadelphia, PA **Victor Stepalovitch and** **Stephany Gutauskas**

Condolences go to Monsignor Joseph Anderlonis, HM, upon the passing, in February, of his pet dog, Nero, who was also the St. George parish mascot and upon the unexpected passing, in March, of his maternal aunt Lena Roman, a well-known St. George parishioner.

On March 4, C-3 lost Knight Raymond Pukis, Lithuanian Language Chairperson and basso profundo chorale singer. On March 11, C-3 members attended Ray's memorial mass at St. Joachim's Church where they conducted the Knights of Lithuania (Christian wake ritual for his remains. Ray was well respected and will be sorely missed by all. Condolences go to his sons and his sisters at this time of their loss.

Condolences also go to Margaret Petronis whose mother, Vera Gestite, passed away on March 24.

On March 4, several C-3 members attended the annual Pre-Lenten Parish Banquet at St. George which featured a catered smorgasbord buffet menu and entertainment by a live band.

On March 5, members attended a mass at St. Casimir's Church to commemorate the Feast Day of St. Casimir, patron saint of Lithuania. They also participated in the dedication of a Lithuanian Wayside Cross and enjoyed a buffet luncheon at St. Casimir's parish hall. President Irene Ozalis awarded Stephany Gutauskas the

First Degree, after the dedication ceremonies. Stephany is the first member of C-3 to receive the First Degree in the new millennium.

On March 12, Dianne Drumstas, Joseph Drumstas, Lillian Greymas, Leonard Kapochus, Agnes Mickunas, HM, John Mickunas, and Irene Ozalis traveled to St. Clair, PA to attend the Amber District meeting and participate in the Amber District's observance of St. Casimir's Feast Day.

On March 25 members held a spring dinner outing at Bistro Romano in Philadelphia, where they sampled hors d'oeuvres of chicken wings, popcorn shrimp, and batter-dipped little smokies, had their choice of chicken or salmon as their entree, ate salad, soup, and dessert, and watched a play entitled "Applause Please" in the mystery cafe. Waiters/waitresses doubled as actors/actresses in the play. Approximately ten per cent of the diners present in the cafe correctly identified the murderer in the whodunit.

C-6, Hartford, CT **Leona Sawka**

A regular meeting was held on April 11. Plans were completed and are underway for a church-wide tag sale to be held in the church hall of Holy Trinity Church, Hartford, on May 4, 5 and 6th. Saturday, May 6, will be the big sale day.

We had a new member join bringing our membership to 40 members. Eight delegates attended



C-3 Pres. Irene Ozalis awards Stephany Gutauskas the 1st Degree

the New England District Conference in South Boston on April 30th.

Plans are underway for Council 6 members to learn Lithuanian dances in the very near future. Everyone is eagerly looking forward to this fun event.

We also plan to cruise the Connecticut River on the Mark Twain while enjoying a buffet luncheon provided by the ship. This event will probably take place in June.

Additional offices were named at this meeting and are as follows:

Membership	Alyce Gegesky
Lith. Lang.	Jurgis Petkaitis
By-Laws	Gene Ziurys
Telephone	Frances Ambrose

Led by Jurgis Petkaitis at the piano, we are all learning the K of L Anthem. Thanks for your patience, Jurgis!

Judy Landers (Lithuanian Affairs) alerted members that the Director of the Milford Elderly Services released information that she once again is approaching members of the Connecticut State Legislation to arrange for legislation that would enable nursing homes and other facilities

to transfer unused and unneeded prescription drugs to a project in Lithuania.

Alex Yusinas, Lillian Joseph, June Grenier and Kaye Urban recently attended the New England District Board of Directors meeting. June is Secretary and Kaye is 2nd Vice-President of the Board of Directors.

June Grenier attended the Rome pilgrimage with Father Rikteraitis of St. Andrew's Church, New Britain. A Lithuanian delegation from Toronto and Lithuania also attended this pilgrimage.

Kaye Urban and her brother, Tom, recently spent two weeks in Malta and took a tour which followed in the footsteps of St. Paul.

C-10, Athol Gardner, MA **Vincukas**

Our council celebrated the feast of St. Casimir, on March 12th, with a mass for all of the K of L members, followed by breakfast at the Best Western. Nellie Melaika and Dr. Henry Gailiunas brought up the gifts at mass. David Lucas and Dr. Gailiunas were co-chairmen.

Congratulations are extended to Jim and Asta Kraskauskas on their February 12th wedding in Lithuania. Their marriage was blessed at the Bernadian Church in Vilnius. Wishing you many years of happiness.

Maryann Langlois has taken over the Ritual chairmanship of our council, replacing Howie Beaudette. Congratulations to the reactivated Hartford Council.

Brone Wisniauskas

presented a program of Lithuanian culture and traditions at the Wachuset Community College in Gardner. She shared her pride and what makes Lithuania so special to her. She also had a

Lithuanian Cultural display at the Multi Cultural Festival 2000 on March 31st, at the Lunenburg High School.

We extend our deepest sympathies to the Kraskauskas family on the recent death of their father, Anthony, at age 92. He was a long time successful businessman, and financial benefactor of the Lithuanian float entered in the Centennial Parade of the city of Gardner that won 1st prize.

Condolences are extended to the daughters of Ann (Matukas) Wilson, a former member who died in Kennebunkport, Maine.

Sympathy is extended to the Budwick and Wisniauskas families on the death of their brother, Anthony Wisneski, who died while spending the winter in Florida. Nellie Melaiks spent two weeks vacation in England, Scotland, and Wales.

Nellie that's what retirement is all about! Enjoy!

I would like to write about past deceased K of L greats! About ten years ago, we lost a fifty-year member, Frank Anoris. Only one member, Tina Shatas, outdid him,



C-10 Members at Kucios include guest of Mary McCallon, Brone Wisniauskas, Brone and Dick Qualters, Marie Calo and Mary McCallon

being a member for 84 years. Through the years, Frank seldom missed a meeting, and attended, as well as worked, at all of our local functions. His summer home on Whites Pond was the scene of our annual barbecue and he always was the warmest and perfect host. He was a kind, friendly neighbor and a fine example of a Christian gentleman. He loved his St. Francis parish and was ever so proud of his Lithuanian heritage and language. He lived up to the K of L motto "For God and country." Frank, we will all be re-united at some point in time. We all miss you.

Su dievu ir iki pasimatymo.

C-17, South Boston, MA **Balandis**

The annual St. Casimir Communion Breakfast was held at the St. Peter Church Hall following Lithuanian Mass, offered by New England District Spiritual Director, Fr. Peter Shakalis. C-17 Treasurer, Joseph White, read a detailed article by Professor Tomas Michalskas, Ph.D., on St. Casimir as focused in his times. He spoke of the Saint's life and times, his royal



C-72 members at Lithuanian Independence Day in Binghamton, NY

ancestry, and historical background. St. Eugenia mentioned that St. Casimir was buried with his favorite Latin hymn to Mary called "Omni die dic Mariae" which we know as "Per Kiekvieną Naktį Dieną, Garbink Varda Marija."

Pastor, Fr. Steve Zukas, reported upon the millennium celebration in Rome in honor of St. Casimir. The focal point and highlight was on March 4th, when all the bishops of Lithuania concelebrated Mass with the Holy Father in Saint Peter's Basilica. There were 2,200 Lithuanians present, including President Valdas Adamkus. During the Papal Audience that followed, Pope John Paul II spoke in excellent Lithuanian to all. It was a moving experience for all who attended. Fr. Zukas reported the Cardinal Law very generously donated towards the construction of a new church, St. Joseph's, to be built in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Alice Opanasets is already anticipating going to the LA National Convention where she will meet up with long-time C-17 member and old-time friend, Marion Matachinskis from Texas.

Best wishes for good health goes to convalescing members Anne Neviera, Mildred Daniels,

Ann Narkevich, and Helen Contons. Likite sveiki.

President Al Akule and his committee were energized to be hosts on Sunday, April 30, 2000, for the New England District Spring Convention. Welcome conventioners. Mieliai laukiame.

C-46, Forest City, PA *Blanche Motsko*

Although our Lithuanian Church has been closed and soon will be torn down, our Knights do hold a monthly meeting.

Many of our dedicated members have died, but we still maintain our heritage. We were saddened to hear of the death of our member, Frances Yavorsky. Frances was a 4th degree member, and Ritual Chairperson for many years. Member, John Morris lost his mother on January 24, 2000.

I will be moving to New Jersey to live with my daughter, Ruth, permanently on April 5, 2000. I will miss our friendly meetings and my friends. The K of L will go on, and a new writer will be assigned.

We held our St. Anthony mass on Sunday, March 5th, and had breakfast and socializing afterward.

C-72, Binghamton, NY

John R. Mankus

GERBIAMIEJI:

Elections were held at our November meeting. The officers for 2000 are Father John Mikalajunas, Spiritual Advisor; John R. Mankus, President, Vytis Correspondent, Lithuanian Culture and Lithuanian Language; Ralph Sadauskas, Vice President; Irene Grikenis, Ritual Chairperson; Arthur Stankevitz, Secretary; Barbara Miller, Treasurer; Robert Skiba, Financial Secretary and Trustee; Charles Almanas, Lithuanian Affairs and Sergeant at Arms; Ralph Sadauskas and Felix Svareika, Sergeants at Arms; Helen Svareika, Trustee and Public Relations; and Ed Radin, Trustee.

During 1999 our council, with the assistance of many parishioners and friends of St. Joseph's Church, has shipped over 120 packages of humanitarian aid shipments to convents, orphanages and needy families in Lithuania. Father John Mikalajunas is a very strong supporter of these shipments with donations, special collections, and 50/50 raffles.



Amber District officers include Della Zvirblis, Martha Brack, Liz Kaminskas, Mary Twardzik, Irene Petrauskas, Richard Laske, Marie Laske, president Frank Petrauskas and Nell Romanas

Individually, our council members have also shipped many packages of humanitarian supplies directly to families, orphanages and friends in Lithuania. Twenty-one packages were shipped to convents, orphanages, and needy families during the Christmas season. A number of thank you letters were already received and translated by John Mankus and shared with our benefactors, friends, and members.

Our Council commemorated Lithuanian Independence Day, on Sunday February 13th, with a Mass, celebrated by Father John Mikalajunas at Saint Joseph's Lithuanian Church. Binghamton Mayor Richard Bucci presented a Lithuanian Independence Day Proclamation to President John R. Mankus, Barbara Miller, and Junior member James Distin. After Mass, coffee and cake was served to approximately ninety guests at the Saint Joseph's Educational and Cultural Center.

Our Junior Council is very active under the direction of Barbara Miller. Barbara is looking into an Internet page for Junior activities and is also our council's financial secretary. After Sunday Mass, Barbara, and Irene Grikenis often visit council member Elizabeth Kunce at the River Mede Manor. Elizabeth continues to knit

articles for our humanitarian shipments. Charles Almanas, our Lithuanian Affairs Chair, gives us timely reports on current news and political activities in Lithuania.

John Mankus continues to write and translate letters from Lithuania for council members. On February 16th, as Nat. President, John participated at the Lithuanian Independence Day Commemoration in Washington, DC.

C-74, Scranton, PA

Marie Laske

We enjoyed the Amber District meeting at St. Clare. The sky was overcast and we had a few snowflakes, but traveling was pleasant. Sister Petcavage showed slides on Mother Maria Kaupas which was very informative. Food was plentiful and delicious and members worked hard. *Aciu del gera darba.*

Welcome to our newest member, my first cousin, Mary Globis Twardzik. This was her first council meeting.

Father Peter Aliauskas celebrated the Lithuanian Mass with Fr. Ronald Jankaitis. The Lithuanian songs were beautiful and the church filled. Many non-Lithuanians also attended and their comments were positive.

Phanas Shimkus, a wonderful 4th degree member was taken by God on March 30, 2000. Phanas told me when his parents, brother and sister were running from the Russians to hop a train, his sister was shot and killed. He added that if they had stopped to bury her, they would have all been killed. When he came to America, he became a draftsman-designer and worked another job on the side to provide well for his family. He said he still had nightmares of his sister being killed that haunted him always. *Amzina Atilsi, duok mirusiems Viespatie ir Amzinoji Sviesa tegul jiems sviecia!* Mary, Mother of God, You know our problems, Give us peace!

Coming up on July 26, St. Ann's Mass at St. Ann's Basilica, Scranton at 2:30 pm

C-96, Dayton, OH

Fran Petkus

March 5th was the day C-96 paid homage to our patron, St. Casimir, with a mass at Holy Cross Church, at 10:30 AM. We processed into church with our Sgt.-at-Arms, Henry Pant, carrying the council cross. Our Juniors were the Acolytes and Offertory Bearers. Following Mass, Stefanija Rastikis led us in the Litany to St. Casimir

in Lithuanian. Ritual Chair, Fran Petkus, and Eloise A. Berczelly awarded the Second Degree to Amy Berczelly and Linda Pant. Services ended with the singing of the Vyčiu Hymnas. Next, we all headed to the University of Dayton for lunch and our monthly meeting. Thanks go to Gary and JoAnn Thiele. This was their first opportunity, as new members, to chair a council project and they did a fine job. At the lunch, the Thieles had Lithuanian artifacts at each table, which were gifts and items brought back from their various trips to Lithuania.

On March 11th, fourteen of us headed to Urbana, Ohio (about a 45-minute drive from Dayton) in spite of snow, sleet and rainy conditions. The Champaign County Arts Council was holding a special program "Celebrating the Re-Establishment of Lithuania's Independence". Elinor Sluzas made the arrangements for us, including dinner at a hotel in Urbana. Elinor was given specific instructions that we be on time as this restaurant is very busy on Saturdays. Well, when we arrived in Urbana there were no lights! (We found out the next day that a car hit a utility pole). We ended up eating by candle light and very limited in choice of food. Only the deep fryer was working, it was on gas! We were the only guests at the restaurant!

Following dinner we headed to the Urbana United Methodist Church where the program was held. Again, no lights! The concert was held by candlelight! Our Juniors, Joseph Berger and Robert Petkus, helped with the lighting of the candles! The program was special with

Lithuanian Ambassador Sakalauskas being presented with the key to the city and other local dignitaries made presentations to the Ambassador. Pianist Rokas Zubovas, who teaches at St. Xavier University of Chicago in the music department, shared with us a presentation on the Art and Music of M.K. Ciurlionis. At the end of the program a reception was held for Ambassador Sakalauskas and Mr. Zubovas. The Ambassador was very complimentary on the works of the K of L.



C-100's members with most seniority include Gene Gobis, Sophie Olbie, Ed Baranauskas and Anne Beleckas

On Saturday, March 26th, Mark and Annamarie Sluzas-Berger hosted the Juniors at their home. With so many of our young people learning to play euchre, parents and grandparents were invited. It was a lot fun seeing the 'old' and the young sharing time together. Thanks must go to Mark and Annamarie for a wonderful fun filled evening and plenty to eat!!

Congratulations to Elaine Pacovsky who has stepped in to be president of the Sarysis Committee. Honorary Member Aldona Ryan held that position for many years, until she passed away in February. One of the main items of this committee is planning the yearly Lithuanian Independence Day

program.

We are happy to write that two of our members recently involved in automobile accidents, Fr. Mike Holloran and Janet Veigel-Birt, came through with no major problems. Neither one was at fault! Happy Summer!! See you all in LA!!

C-100, Amsterdam, NY

Reggie

St. Casimir's yearly brunch was held at Valentino's restaurant after a mass at St. Casimir's Church. Lithuanian, American and Vyčiu Hymnas were sung. Our guest speaker, Ed Baranauskas, gave us an insight on "Family Roots" and where to go to obtain information.

Our President, Mirga Bablin, spoke about the life of St. Casimir. She also read a thank you note from Bishop Baltakis, for the \$316 check sent from our council for religious books for Lithuanian children.

Our committee chairpersons, Sophie Olbie and Sophie Malkowicz, did some research and presented gifts to the four members with the longest membership with the council. They were Ed Baranauskas, Genevieve Gobis, Anne Beleckas, and Sophie Olbie.

Susan Lekutis won the 50/50 raffle. As an ending to a pleasant afternoon, and seeing that we were in a private room at the restaurant, Betty Kusmich passed some Lithuanian music sheets around, and we all had a lovely time singing songs.

C-102, Detroit

Doynuke

Sixteen of us ventured out to attend the February Mass and



(left) C-141 popular emcee and raffle director, Peter Balcius, C-141's Alfred Marlin family at St. Casimir's brunch

meeting that followed. Theresa and Michael Shea were accompanied by their houseguest, Dr. Laimutis Paskevicius, who was visiting from Vilnius to attend an Administration Training Program at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Pontiac. Dr. Paskevicius was delighted when his name was drawn to win the 50/50 raffle.

The Sheas mentioned that they had seen HM Robert Boris recently while vacationing in Florida. He's looking very fit and well rested, sending his best wishes to all.

What a trooper Fr. Stanievich is. While on his way to attend an 80th birthday celebration in his honor, he had fallen and wound up in the emergency room. Fortunately, he had only received some bruising, and then he returned to the festivities.

John Zyren will also be celebrating his 80th year in the near future. Congratulations! We wish you both "Ilgiausu, Laimingu, Sveiku Metu!"

We've had several of our members undergo lengthy hospital stays. Ray Medonis underwent his second aortic valve replacement. Maryanne Guerriero has undergone a skin graft on her leg due to an infection. Marie Yokin also had foot surgery done in Florida. We are happy to report that they are all on the mend, and continue to keep

them in our prayers.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Ann Salas and family upon the death of her beloved husband, Edward, of council 79. Ed was a lifelong friend to many of our council members, and an avid bowler who will be missed by his teammates as well. May he rest peacefully in God's heavenly kingdom.

Cultural Chairlady, Donna Stanievich, continues to delight us with many interesting articles at our meetings. The latest one is about the first drama in Lithuania, Amerika Pirtyje, dating back to August 20, 1899. Great job Donna! Just heard through the grapevine that hubby John is the First Violinist in the Redford Civic Symphony Orchestra. Way to go John!

The Hofner household is buzzing with excitement these days, in preparation of their son, Kurt's, marriage to Michael Ann Wolf, Channel 4's News Anchorwoman. Their entire family will be flying out to California for the March 18th wedding. Lorry and Merri will then vacation on the Hawaiian Islands. Wishing them a safe and fun-filled vacation.

Another snowbird, Helen Smolek, is enjoying her winter stay at son Anthony's home in Texas. Hopefully, she'll return to springlike weather.

We can't forget to applaud the Starks for hosting our annual potluck "Kučios". We thank Father Stan, as well, for officiating at Mass preceding dinner. It is one event that many members look forward to attending. Eve and Joe help to make it an enjoyable one. Ačiū širdinai!

The Commemoration of Lithuanian Independence Day was held at Divine Providence Church on February 6th. Council members Regina Juska-Svoba, Michael and Theresa Shea, Della and Patricia Zyren, Bill Zager, Dr. Laimutis Paskevicius, Mrs. Juska, and guest of honor Ambassador Sakalauskas pitched in to peel potatoes. The kugelis and zepelinai were "Labai skanus".

We returned to Divine Providence on March 5th to attend Mass with council 79 members commemorating St. Casimir. Another traditional meal was enjoyed by all, along with the camaraderie with our brother and sister knights. Su Diev!

C-110, Maspeth, NY

Elena

What does a stockholder do with his morning paper? Of course, the answer is "he screens it" to see how his stock did the previous day. So, like the stockholder, I too screen VYTIS

and turn to the news of councils, particularly my own.

Our council has hosted many MAD meetings and the latest on March 26, 2000, was the smallest in attendance. It is quite obvious that the interest is waning since out of 13 councils, we only had 7 represented. No longer do we have many clergy present, but we were fortunate to have our present District Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Vytautas Volertas in attendance. The guest speaker was our staunch Lithuanian supporter, Judge Fred Schmidt, and a few words were also spoken by our member, Dr. Paul Michael Kazas, who is a director with the NYC Dept of Transportation.

It is important to note that, although we are not a parish organization, our Knights do participate in the Transfiguration Church and other Lithuanian projects. The latest project of great interest was the renaming of a block of Perry Avenue to bear the name of Msgr. Frank Bulovas, our late beloved pastor and spiritual advisor. On his behalf, I (Helen Matulonis) testified at a public hearing at City Hall. Shortly thereafter, Mayor Guiliani proclaimed the block to be renamed Msgr. Frank Bulovas.

Although profits are small, we continue to enjoy our monthly trips to Atlantic City. Due to many unexpected illnesses and deaths, we will not be sponsoring a Spring dinner dance. Hopefully, our future will be brighter and stronger so that we'll be able to host a dinner dance in the Fall.

In the meantime, let us keep each other in our daily prayers to build a strong, lasting love for God and Lithuania.

C-136, Hudson Mohawk Dorothy Richmire

At our recent meeting we were fortunate to have two interesting visitors; Robert Duda, Retired Lt. Colonel, U.S. National Guard; and Ginger Houghton, former Chief Nurse at Stratton VA Hospital in Albany, NY,



C-144's Luschas family include Al, Elaine, Carol and Chrissy presented gifts at Amber District St. Casimir Day meeting in St. Clair, PA

specializing in anesthesiology. They enlightened us as to conditions in Lithuania, as they are strategically involved in providing some real help there. They are instrumental in working with Lithuanian military and civilian doctors. On their next two-week visit to the country, they are hoping to teach triage, mass casualty training, bandaging, splinting, CPR, and lecturing on techniques. They are trying to arrange for one doctor to come to the U.S. every quarter for two weeks to train. The doctor will need places to stay and volunteers willing to invite them for a meal and/or an evening of

entertainment. On April 15, three 40-ft. trailers filled with donations of medical equipment will be transported to the Kaunus area. Additionally, articles of clothing from children's sizes to adult, thread, needles, crayons, paper, pen and pencils for the children are also needed. Members expressed willingness to contribute in one way or another.

Now that the weather is beginning to feel more like Spring, it was so good to see more of our members able to make the last meeting. Hope it continues.

On the sick list, please pray for Stephanie Dwillit, Helen La Pierre, Anna Morgalis, Betty Parker, Stella White, Cathy Westerling, and Frank Zebuda. Our good wishes and prayers go out to each one of you. Remember one smile begins a friendship, so keep smiling.

C-141, Bridgeport, CT Aldona Marcavage

The hi-lite of March was the St. Casimir Brunch, March 19th. The committee was happy to see so many members and friends enjoying the delicious food in a beautifully decorated hall in honor of the patron saint of Lithuania.

May I introduce a praiseworthy family in our midst. They prove that "mixed marriages" can and do work when GOD is at the head of the family. Frances Yankus Marlin and Alfred "Cappy" Marlin are celebrating 53 years of wedded bliss. They are parents of daughters: Margaret, Elaine, and twins Elizabeth and Nancy--and four grandchildren. Fran and Cappy are members of C-141 and attend most meetings. Whenever we have social functions the Marlins attend

as a family—and all from out of town. That is why we feel they are special.

Celebrating March birthdays were: Aldona Marcavage who was feted by her son Robert and his family on March 3rd. Stella Marcinauskis, who, despite pouring rain had a lovely party given by her friends on March 11th. On March 12th Kathleen Balcius was given a surprise party by her son, Peter. Last but not least, our Monsignor was feted on March 24th by his many friends. Ilgiausiu metu -- and God's blessings. On our sick list we had: Victor Miller, Anne Geceвич, and "Chris"-Evelyn Christian. May springtime bring only sunny days to you.

Peter Peters and "Bob" Marcavage co-chaired a very special luncheon. Our April meeting on Palm Sunday, was hosted by all male members of our council. Bon appetite!

C-144 Anthracite, PA

Ona

Thanks to Anne Bendrick and her committee, we hosted a very nice Amber District St. Casimir's Day Meeting, with 126 members and guests attending. Mass was held at St. Casimir's Church in St. Clair with Bob Yanaitis, organist, playing the Lithuanian hymns. The Offertory gifts were presented by the Al Luscius family. It is so nice to see a young family participating in our affairs. Lecter for the Mass was Anne Wargo with Father Ron Jankaitis, C 144 Spiritual Advisor and Rev. Peter Alisaukas, Amber District Spiritual Advisor, concelebrating. Father Ron gave a beautiful homily praising the

Knights for all the good they do for the Lithuanian cause.

Speaker at the luncheon was Sister Margaret Petcavage, SSC, from Chicago who presented a slide presentation on the Cause for the Beatification of Mother Maria Kaupas. It was excellent and everyone enjoyed it.

Spring has finally arrived but the winter has been a bad one. Since January 1st, we lost 5



*C-147, St. Petersburg
4th degree
members,
Alfas
Shukis and
Dr. Aldona
Valis
installed at
Holy Name
Church in
Gulfport,
FL on
Mar. 5,
2000*

members. Mary Gustus, Dr. Vincent Mikatavage, Ann Milbut Nardini, Marge Rozmerski and Mary Matunis. Our hearts go out to their families. Amzina Atsilsi broliai ir seserai Vyciai.

Our good member Helen Chesko has been ill since October and is currently in the Shenandoah Manor Nursing Home in Shenandoah, Pa. Many of our good members are currently in Nursing Homes and we pray for them all.

Our Humanitarian Aid Committee is still working very hard and sent out many more boxes at the beginning of March. Many letters of thanks have been received from the various places that received our packages. This is a

hard working committee and the mailing of the packages is paid for from our Lithuanian Day profits. We hope to continue this project for many years.

We now have a Website thanks to Jim and Raimonda Mikatavage. Log in on: <http://www.geocities.com/knights144/>

Anna Helen and Tom McDonald represented the Knights of Lithuania at the Schuylkill County Court House for Lithuanian Independence Day. Thanks to Tom and Anna Helen for continuing this tradition.

C-147 St. Petersburg Dolores Jonaitis

Our St. Casimir's Day Celebration was especially beautiful this year. It was St. Casimir Mission "Rekolekcijų" Weekend with His Excellency, Bishop Augenijus Bartulis from Kretinga, Lithuania. He was the main celebrant at holy mass that was requested by our council for our ill and deceased members. Assisting him, as co-celebrants, were Brother Austijus Kurgys OFM, also from Kretinga, and Rev. Father Matas Čyvas, our Spiritual Advisor. The Council flag was carried in by John Jonaitis and placed inside the altar, where it remained throughout the mass.

Flag attendants were Aldona Oliene and Valeria Lescinskas. Our two 4th Degree recipients, Dr. Aldona Valis and Alfas Shukis, carried candles, and recited 4th Degree Prayers at the altar. Father Čyvas blessed and presented their medals, being assisted by President John Jonaitis. Our new members, Rasa Petraitis, Aukse Kronas and Stase



Baltic American Freedom League's Award's Banquet on March 25, 2000 in Los Angeles honoring Congressman Knollenberg (R-Michigan 2nd from left) with C-133 members

Jančauskas, took their membership oath in church, administered by Father Cyvas. After a very inspiring homily by His Excellency Bishop Bartulis, Aldona Oliene and Valeria Lescinkas, in Lithuanian outfits, presented the gifts.

All three celebrants attended dinner at the Lithuanian American Club. John Jonaitis spoke briefly about the Knights of Lithuania and St. Casimir. He then introduced His Excellency, Bishop Bartulis, who went into more detail about our Patron Saint. Our sincere congratulations to our two 4th Degree members, and our three new members.

The Užgaveniu Blynu Balius at the Lithuanian Club, on March 7th, was well attended by many of our members. Special guests were His Excellency Bishop Bartulis, Father Matas Čyvas, and Brother Antanas Grabnickas OFM, who is with our Mission again. We are certainly glad to have Brother Antanas back with us. Wish you well ; good luck in your endeavors.

A day of fishing at John's Pass was just a fun day. The fish were just not biting. The total catch for our three fishermen, John Jonaitis, Brother Austijus Kurgys

OFM and Provinciolas Benedictas Jurčys, OFM was zero. Better luck next time fellas!

C-152, E. Long Island Julie M. Lott

When you read this issue of Vytis you'll most likely be in the midst of spring. What a glorious time of the year. The daffodils, tulips, crocus and all the other forms of life are coming back. The trees and shrubs are budding, the robins are hopping around and our "snowbirds" are back. How nice to see them at the meetings again.

Our St. Casimir's celebration on March 12th was a great success. After mass, which was attended by about 20 members, we gathered together for a covered dish luncheon. What a spread of Lithuanian cuisine:

C-157 Lemont, IL chartered. Bernice Aviza, Robert Martin, Ben Nauseda (council pres.), John Mankus, Maryte Sepikas and John Baltrus



kugelis, koseliena (jellied pigs feet), cepelinai (potato dumplings), desros, and sauerkraut to name a few of the delicious dishes. Fellow Knights never fail to outdo themselves when it comes to preparing food. When the festivities were over they all pitched in to help the refreshment committee clean up. Thank you Knights!

President Muriel Lofmark proceeded with the council meeting, discussing old business, new business, and reports from the treasurer, secretary, ritual, and financial secretaries. We also had the officers for the year 2000 sworn in. They certainly do their work in keeping the council going and deserve a big hand of applause for such dedication to the K of L. I'm sure they'll make this Jubilee year very productive.

Do hope everyone had a Blessed Happy Easter. There are many traditions we try to keep up, especially the egg decorating and coloring with the many dyes. The second Sunday in May is Mother's Day. That's our usual meeting day but we like members to be with their families that day so we will skip that month's meeting.

Food for thought: Ideas are a dime a dozen, people who put them into action are priceless.



California Knights**RUTA LEE KLIMONIS**

Our glamorous Lithuanian American star of stage, screen and television, Ruta Lee Klimonis, welcomes you to attend the 87th National convention to be held in the Hollywood Hills July 27-30, 2000.

The elegant star of more than 2,500 performances on television, the stage and in the movies has always been proud of her Lithuanian heritage. In spite of her demanding show biz and charity schedules, she still manages to be extremely hospitable to her dear Lithuanian friends.

Like the beautiful Lithuanian flower she is named for, Ruta Lee is more beautiful, vibrant, charitable and lovely as ever.

Ruta Lee not only says thank you to the Knights who have supported her in the past, her actions speak louder than words. Twice in the past two years she was asked if she could greet Knights attending the first Mid-America District Meeting and then the first Supreme Council meeting in Los Angeles at Lithuanian Days. She simply replied, "Why don't they come over to my place for cocktails and a light bite, instead." Upon arrival, she gave the visiting Knights not only a tour of her Hollywood mansion, but entertained us with her stories of so many "Knight" adventures as well. Ruta Lee is most grateful for the support the Knights have given her over the years.

Time to pay Ruta and your friends in California a visit.

Marytė Sepikas



It's not too late to come to the California Convention!

Remember the hotel [Sheraton Universal in Hollywood Hills (818) 509-2755] will honor the \$105 rate per night the weekend before and two days after the convention.

There is so much to see in the Los Angeles and San Diego areas it is worth the extra few days stay. If you would like to pay less for a hotel before or after the convention, there is another hotel that is approximately \$70 per night.

The airlines still have several good flight offers. There are companion fares and senior citizen rates. Check with Cheapseats at (800) 451-7200 and ask for Mary at extension 388 or www.cheapseatstravel.com. Also check the Internet at Global or Priceline for lower rates.

There are several shuttles including Prime Time vans (800) 473-3743 that go to and from the airport to the hotel. Please make your reservations in advance. If you fly into Burbank airport, the shuttle to the hotel is free.

Remember to bring a light jacket, because Los Angeles can get cooler at night even in the summer!

If you have any further questions, don't forget to call Maryte at (818) 782-1248 or contact Adele at Relaityte@aol.com.

Time for a Second Honeymoon!

The California Knights have heard that several couples got engaged at the last two conventions held in Los Angeles in 1957 and 1963. Please let us know if you are coming to this convention!

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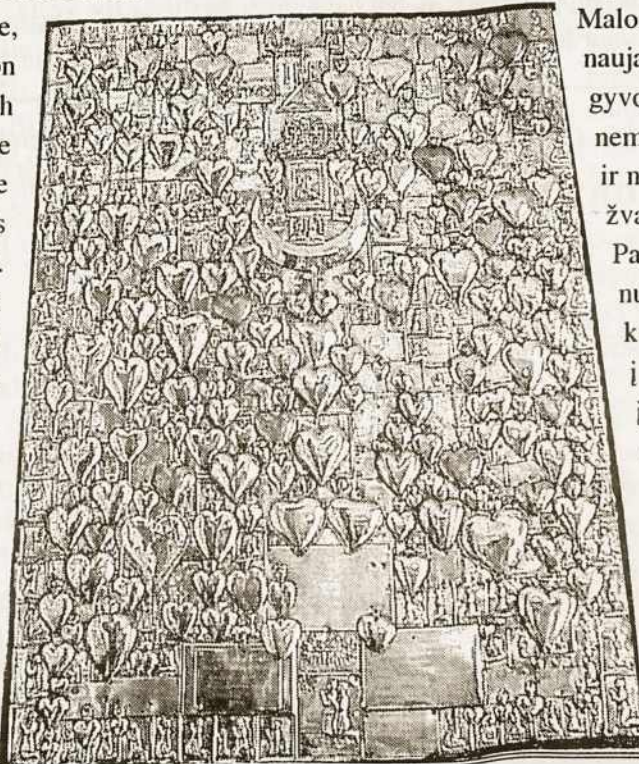
A Prayer to the ever-pleasing Mediator

We've grown weary,
 our feelings are non-existent,
 hearts have become hardened,
 our minds have become confused.

Blessed Virgin Mary,
 ever-pleasing Mediator,
 our hearts filled with sorrow
 we are extending to you
 our hands in prayer,
 refresh our spirits,
 making us aware
 of what is desired
 of your beloved Son.

We long to be
 ever obedient to His will.

Ever pleasing one,
 show us in a new revelation
 renewing our faith
 with fullness of hope
 and never ending love
 which is
 beyond all limits.
 Provide to me and
 my native land
 The ability to overcome
 all hardships,
 which have become
 like roadblocks,
 to your Son's
 ever-loving care,
 to the total richness
 of His caring heart.
 Amen.

**Malda į visų malonių Tarpininke**

Nuvargom,
 apmire mūsų jausmai,
 sustingo širdys,
 nebesusigaudom savo mintyse.

Marija Malonės Pilnoji,
 Tu Visų Malonių Tarpininke,
 sugraudinta širdimi
 Keliame į tave
 savo maldavimo rankas,
 atgaivinki mus,
 sakyki mums
 ko trokšta iš mūsų
 tavo numylėtas Sūnus.

Mes trokštame
 visiškai paklusti Jo valiai.

Maloningoji, parodyki mums
 naujame spindėjime
 gyvo tikėjimo,
 nemiršamos vilties
 ir nežinančios ribų meilės
 žvaigždes.
 Padeiki man ir mano Tautai
 nugalėti visas kliūtis,
 kurios užstoja kelią
 į tavo Sūnaus glėbį,
 į Švč. Širdies turtų gausybę.
 Amen.

*Translated from the
 Lithuanian by Fr. Vytas
 Volertas, C-110
 Photo from Aušros Vartai
 Shrine in Vilnius, 8/99
 by JJA*