

NEEDED INVENTORY

LCRA often receives requests to help purchase new items or to replace old and outdated items. **The J. Urbšis Catholic Middle School** in Kaunas asked for help to purchase an inventory of chairs and benches for the newly completed school chapel. LCRA did not grant the entire request but the school hopes that they will find a generous donor who will make up the difference.



The students in the J. Urbšis school chapel present a lecture about the "Pensive Christ"

The **Middle School in Kulautuva** also needed some help to renovate the Religion department's facilities and Chapel. LCRA provided some assistance for this purpose.

The **parish of Mary, Queen of the Holy Rosary in Balbieriškis** and the parish of Blessed Mary in Drasūniškis both needed audio systems for their churches. LCRA felt that these requests were worthy of grants. The parishes are very grateful for the financial aid to help the spoken word have a more meaningful impact on the faithful.

IN MEMORIAM

A big shock reverberated through the Lithuanian American Community in the spring of 2011. A very talented, beloved priest, Arvydas Žygas was called home by the Heavenly Father. His death left a great void in the spiritual life of the Lithuanian Community. May you rest peacefully in the arms of the angels beloved priest!

St. John's Church in Plungė needed to purchase computer technology to help with the pastoral work in the parish. The equipment is used prior to Mass on Sunday to help parishioners better understand and appreciate the Holy Mass.



The Church in Plungė

The parish of **Sts. Apostles Simon and Judas Tadas**, under the leadership of rev. Tomas Žlibinas, received a grant of \$5,000.00 to purchase a new heating system for the parish house. It gets very cold in the winter in Lithuania! Father Tomas is very grateful for the generous grant and he and the parishioners offer prayers for LCRA and its benefactors.

The **Children's Homestead** near Marijampolė received \$14,000 to purchase much needed beds for the children under their care. The administration is very grateful for this generous gift.

The nuns that will be teaching in the newly established **kindergarten "Mažuteliai"** in Vilnius received aid to purchase some new technology, landscaping equipment, and administrative essentials. Everyone is extremely excited to have a new Catholic kindergarten opening in Vilnius.



Cardinal A. Bačkis blesses the quarters of the new kindergarten

A TEARFUL GOODBYE

In the small city of Utena, Lithuania, a very special Franciscan nun, now 89 years old, has worked tirelessly on behalf of the people because she loves Lithuania and the people there. Her name is **Sister Dolorita Butkus**. There was no job too big or too small for sister. In Utena she did great work, established a food pantry program that fed the hungry and destitute. She wrote to LCRA- "I was hungry, you gave me to eat", how could it be otherwise? She worked miracles by getting funding for special projects in her beloved St. Clare's Hospice in Utena where she worked. She could not imagine life elsewhere. But a tragic accident changed everything. A revolving door injured sister severely, and although she recovered somewhat, the time came for sister to return to the Mother house in Pittsburgh, PA. It was a traumatic time which left sister and everyone whose life sister touched, in tears. She is now home for a truly deserved rest. However, even at home she worries about her Food Pantry program. There was not much money left to purchase needed supplies. Who will feed her beloved people? In 2011 LCRA gave a grant to the food pantry of \$10,000 but that will last only through the beginning of the New Year. Our faith proclaims that God will provide, so rest dear sister and may God bless you for all you have done!



A blessed, joyous Christmas and a truly rewarding, uplifting, inspiring New Year to all our dear friends and benefactors.

– Msgr. Edmundas Putrimas, LCRA President, the Board of Directors and staff

Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid
64-25 Perry Avenue
Maspeth, NY 11378-2441

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

PRSRT STD
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 135
Williston Park, NY

LCRA NEWS

Newsletter of Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid
Winter 2011/2012

Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid

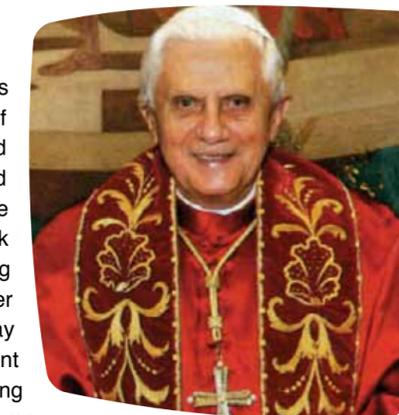
2011 WORLD YOUTH DAYS

For many years the Catholic youth of the world has gathered in various friendly places to celebrate World Youth Days. Since the reestablishment of Lithuanian Independence in 1990, Lithuanian youth have also participated and joined in the celebration and this year as always, they eagerly awaited and planned for their trip to the chosen site in Madrid, Spain. This year the contingent of approximately 1300 Lithuanians that participated in the week



Participants in the lectures of the Lithuanian Bishops

long events, enjoyed making new acquaintances from other countries, learned to pray together, attended excellent lectures prepared by two young bishops from Lithuania, Gintaras Grušas and Arūnas Poniškaitis who were the team leaders, and had the pleasure of hearing and seeing their beloved Pope Benedict XVI. For many, this was a truly an outstanding moment, one that left an indelible impression on the minds and hearts of those in attendance. It is not possible to have an event of such magnitude for young people without some type of musical interlude and so it was in Madrid. The Lithuanians were well represented by the Christian rock group "GYVAI" (Lively). Everything went beautifully, leaving a sense of deep spiritual commitment and wonder in the minds and hearts of those who participated in the magnificent event. Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid provided financial assistance for the Lithuanians who attended and also paid for the travel expenses of the rock group. May the experiences of those days help the young people come and remain close to God throughout their lives.



Pope Benedict XVI



Participants from Kaunas archdiocese

SUMMER CAMPS

Summer's most rewarding moments are the time spent relaxing, enjoying nature, and interacting with other campers. LCRA realizes the need for these camps, the accompanying fun, as well as the attendant learning that goes on. Since the restoration of independence LCRA has provided financial aid for innumerable summer camps and will continue to do so. In 2011, 48 financial aid requests from summer camps were received and all, to some degree, were granted. All the recipients were overjoyed with the assistance. The question on all campers' minds is always: Will we also be able to go to camp next year?

FRANCISCAN YOUTH MINISTRY (FYM) of Kretinga is very successful in organizing summer camps. Their family camps are well attended (usually 300+) and in 2011, FYM also organized a camp for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, as well as a camp for Renewal through the Holy Ghost. Toward the end of the summer of 2010 they even organized a camp for dancers. They are very lucky to have beautiful campgrounds

FINANCIAL AID FOR THE WRITTEN WORD

In Lithuania the Catholic\Christian press is encountering difficult times. Publishing prices keep going up and the number of subscribers truly does not. Having received two requests for financial aid in 2011, LCRA felt that additional help had to be provided, because the prospect of having only the secular press, intent on sensationalism and not necessarily the truth, is an option that can not be tolerated. Thus financial aid was provided not only to **XXI Amžius** but also to a new newspaper entitled "**Katalikas**" (The Catholic) published also by them. As has been the case in

the past several years, LCRA is committed to the internet newspaper **bernardinai.lt** and will provide financial aid as is deemed necessary. Thus with a grant of \$80,000, bernardinai will be able to offset the onslaught of secular internet papers. Andrius Navickas is the editor in chief of bernardinai.lt and needs as much help as we can give him. Let us all make a promise to donate to this worthy cause. Other grants were given as follows: the **Catholic Internet Service**, under the direction of Dale Šmerauskaitė a grant of \$10,000; The Catholic monthly magazine "**Artuma**", received a grant so that free copies of the magazine

in Pakutuvenai for campers. All campers enjoyed themselves immensely and wowed to return again next year.

St Anthony's day care center campers from Kretinga "baked" a cake from sand at the seashore



Fr. Antanas Blužas, OFM, and Sr. Dominyka Marija (a former LCRA scholarship recipient and now member of the congregation of St. John) were lecturers at the Family camp.

During the last several years' **campers for altar servers** have become very popular. Boys from various parishes

(separated by age into groups) have an opportunity to interact and form friendships in an atmosphere conducive for altar boys. Vilnius and Kaunas arch-dioceses as well as Telšiai diocese organized several of these camps in 2011. It is hoped that this type of experience may lead some of the boys to choose a religious vocation.

Fr. Jaugelis Youth Center of Kybartai has organized successful, innovative summer camps. Without the help from LCRA they would have had to curtail the number of their campers, which would be difficult. This year the camp was titled "I can do that" and in cooperation with a neighboring

could be sent to the poor; the monthly magazine "**Naujasis Židynys/Aidai**" received a grant for purchase of two new computers and pay their rent; and Marija Šaknienė, the editor of the monthly newspaper "**Lietuvių Godos**," was very grateful for her grant of \$10,000 or otherwise it may have been the end of the newspaper that is distributed free of charge to the Lithuanian population in Belarus. The most significant grants went to the publisher "**Kataliku pasaulio leidiniai**", \$29,000 to provide the Holy Bible for the Catholic Religion departments of public schools and \$20,000 to finish a project started a few years ago to provide Catholic and other quality books for small town and rural libraries.



After conferences in the Family camp, work continues in small groups that allow for exchanging ideas, life enrichment moments and prayer.

The Parish of Mary, Queen of Peace in Klaipėda organized their

parish summer camp in a nearby youth homestead belonging to missionary priest father H. Šulcas. Children and young people from the parish gathered there for their sixth camp. The camp acquaints youngsters with Lithuanian feasts and traditions, trains new leaders, narrows the gap between social groups, strengthens community bonds, supports volunteerism as a responsibility and purpose, and imbues moral ideas based on



The Mass is a very special part of camp time

MEANINGFUL ACTIVITIES

The well-known charitable organization **Caritas** has chapters scattered throughout Lithuania. The main chapter, in Vilnius, requested some funds for their new project called "Prisoner care and their reintegration into society". The government's programs have not been very successful because prisoners are wary of the sincerity of the workers involved, so they continue in their immoral ways. Caritas of Lithuania associates with other volunteer groups to implement more successful programs. They have chosen a very popular evangelization program and began their initial attempt for spiritual revitalization in Lukiškės prison. It took the workers over a month and a half to earn the prisoner's trust. This program was considered success-



A hymn of praise to the Lord is sung in the Lukiškės prison

a Christian lifestyle. When the time came to return home almost all the campers wanted to remain at the camp!



Even Santa Claus visited the youth homestead camp!

Once again the children from the **BLESSED GEORGE**

MATULAITIS parish in Vilnius had the opportunity to go to a summer camp. Fifty youngsters 9-15 years and 12 leaders made up the group. Since the Lithuanian Bishops had designated 2011 as the Year of the Divine Mercy, it was very fitting that the leaders named the camp "Be merciful" and the programs focused on this premise.



Playing a game of "Tug of War"

ful as these prisoners began a spiritual rebirth. The next location chosen the Marijampole detention home. Here too the workers met with success.

The children's and teenager's center of Sts. Peter and Paul parish in Babtai is named "Happily for Jesus". Here the children carry on a variety of activities. They attend Mass every Sunday, sing in evangelization programs and pilgrimages, attend and sing at summer camps, and practice three times a week. This is the first time that any group from Babtai parish turned to LCRA for financial aid. They received \$4,000 to fund their activities.



A retreat for Babtai center teenage boys

LCRA'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Unable to make formulate concrete plans in the autumn of 2011, the year of the anniversary, the date of April 22, 2012 was finally chosen for the celebration of LCRA's 50th Anniversary. To help with the celebration, LCRA has engaged a men's musical group from Chicago under the direction of musician/singer Darius Polikaitis to perform for this event. It has been some time since they performed in New York, and thus this concert will surely wow everyone. Not only will they sing in concert but also at the Thanksgiving Mass that will be celebrated that morning at the Lithuanian church of Transfiguration in Maspeth. In the early afternoon and prior to the concert, a short program will present the literary work of Monika Paulavičiūtė-Kungienė, detailing the many great charitable works done by LCRA for the past 50 years on behalf of the Catholic Church and its struggling faithful in Lithuania. This short program will be followed by the concert, then a sit down dinner. More detailed information will appear on LCRA's website: www.LKRSalpa.org. Everyone is most cordially invited to attend and help LCRA celebrate its 50th Anniversary, thus showing your appreciation for everything that LCRA has accomplished in the past and the tremendous effects it has had and will continue to have on the Lithuanian Church and its people in the future.

From Nov. 1, 2010 through Oct.31, 2011 over \$1,500,000 was sent to Lithuania.

The financial report for 2011 fiscal year (2/1/2010- 1/31/2011) is available at the LCRA office.

Please remember LCRA in your Last Will and Testament. LCRA's Tax ID # is 11-2326652

SCHOLARSHIPS

LCRA awards \$500/year scholarships to qualifying Catholic students studying at higher education institutions in Lithuania. There are exceptions and some students receive larger scholarships for studies primarily in Rome or studies involving religious themes in non-Lithuanian universities. In 2011 a scholarship of \$10,000 was awarded to **Saulius Matulevičius**, the director of Kaunas Family Center for studies at Cambridge in England. During the reportable period for this newsletter LCRA awarded 82 / \$500 scholarships, valued at \$41,000 and 10 scholarship valued at \$69,500. Your donations make all this possible.

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU

A most amazing gentleman in Cleveland, OH **Zenonas Obelenis**, has been volunteering in fundraising for LCRA since 1964 and for all this time has been the chairman of this auxiliary LCRA Committee. However, at this time (he's in his 90's) he feels that it is time to close the Cleveland branch, since it has been impossible to find people who would take over. Thus, beginning with the New Year, the office in Cleveland, OH is closed. LCRA is deeply grateful to Mr. Obelenis for all the beneficial time spent on behalf of LCRA, and together with Mr. Obelenis, LCRA thanks the many wonderful donors who heard his requests and gave generously through the years to LCRA. May God bless Mr. Zenonas and his many friends and associates, and give them all joyous golden days in the twilight of their lives.

LCRA'S NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

On June 2, 2011 Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid had its annual meeting and after that a meeting of the new Board of Directors. Several weeks prior to the meeting the then president of LCRA, Msgr. Algimantas Bartkus, informed the Board by mail that he was resigning as president. Thus when the new Board met, they had to choose a new president. **Msgr. Edmundas Putrimas** was chosen to be the new president of LCRA. Following is a list of the new Board of Directors of LCRA: Bishop Paul. A. Baltakis, OFM, Bishop Gintaras Grušas, Msgr. Algimantas Bartkus, Gintaras Čepas, Rev. Aurelijus Gričius, OFM, Salvijus Kungys, Ilona Laucius, Aldona Lingertat, sr. Eugenia Lukoshius;, Vita Matusaitis, Monika Sabalis, Rev. Jonas Šileika, OFM, Rev. Augustinas Simanavičius, OFM and Rev. Stephen Žukas. Trustee: Rev. Vytautas Volertas.