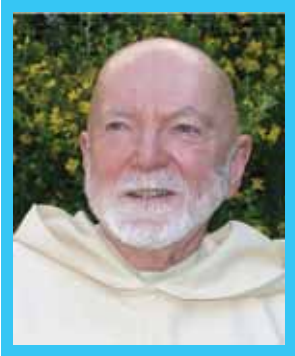


Terror Continued



Dear Mission Friends:

Thank you for your outpouring of prayers for our dear Fr. Tom Kraft, O.P. who, in January, at the age of 55, lost his courageous battle with cancer and is now at peace with Our Lord. Your contributions in his memory are being sent to a special fund to help build a chapel in Villa Zapata, the poorest area of our mission in Mexicali where Fr. Tom served with love and joy for many years.

This newsletter concludes the story behind the documentary, **“Red Terror on the Amber Coast,”** which finally exposes a little-known chapter of horrendous atrocities imposed on Baltic partisans during the Soviet occupation between 1939 and 1993. The film is a

collaboration between Fr. Ken Gumbert, O.P. of Providence College in Rhode Island and our Foundation’s own Fr. David O’Rourke, O.P., who has ministered at our mission in Vilnius, Lithuania since 1999. Following is the second half of an article, written by correspondent Gerald Korson for the *Catholic Voice* of the Diocese of Oakland, which first appeared in its November 3, 2008 edition, and is reprinted here with their permission. **We must remain vigilant in speaking out and helping eradicate—and prevent further--violations of the rights of our fellow human beings.**

In Christ’s Peace,
Fr. Martin de Porres Walsh, O.P.

If the elimination of cultural leaders and mass deportations by rail car are reminiscent of Nazi Germany’s tactics during World War II, it is no coincidence: Hitler learned how to carry out a genocide by observing Stalin’s methods over the previous decades in Russia.

“Hitler was very derivative. He was not very imaginative,” said Father O’Rourke. “Everything he did he learned from Stalin.”

Within a year of the Soviet occupation, nearly 125,000 Baltic men, women and children had been killed, conscripted into the Soviet military, or sent to the labor camps; among these there were



Anonymous victims of Stalin’s slave labor system, known only by a chance photograph that somehow survived.



It was a common saying among the slave laborers on the railroads that for each railroad tie that was laid, one slave laborer died.

approximately 60,000 Estonians, 35,000 Latvians, and 30,000 Lithuanians. By war's end, an estimated 780,000 Lithuanians had been killed, deported or displaced.

In June 1941, Hitler's Germany sent 4.5 million troops to attack Russia and took control of substantial territory, including the Baltic states. Some Lithuanians backed Germany for pushing out the Soviets but soon found that the Nazis also had genocidal designs. Most of the remaining Jews were killed or sent to concentration camps.

After the Soviet army repelled the Nazi forces and reoccupied the Baltics, there were further repercussions against Lithuanians suspected of having supported the Germans. This time, however, there was substantial resistance: A ragtag band of some 100,000 Lithuanian "partisans" called the Forest Brethren who operated out of a network of

forested bunkers waged an impressive rebellion against the Soviet army and the KGB secret police.

Although a fifth of these partisans were killed and most of the rest captured and deported, they gave inspiration and hope to Lithuanians longing for the return of their independence.

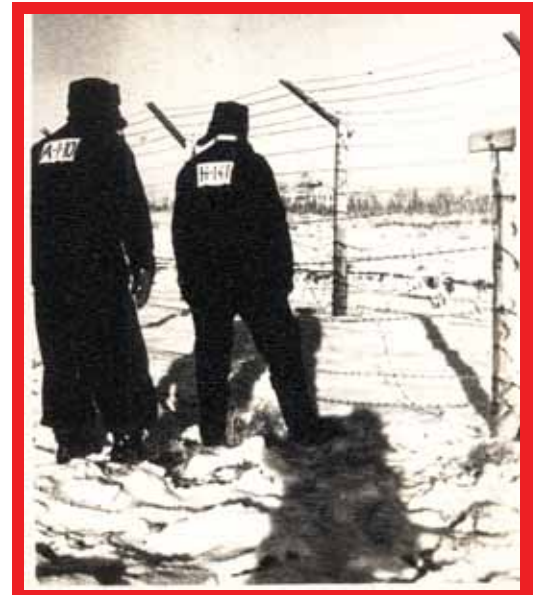
Religious and ethnic repression continued for decades, although little word of it went outside the country save for an underground magazine, "Chronicles of the Catholic Church in Lithuania," which was sent to a select mailing list at irregular intervals. It documented ongoing instances of arrests, human rights violations, deportations and atrocities.

The Soviet system collapsed in the late 1980's, and the Republic of Lithuania officially regained its independence in

March 1990. The Soviet occupation, however, continued: The last tank rolled out of the country in 1993.

Still, Father O'Rourke and many Lithuanians are concerned that those days of Russian dominance of the Baltic states could return. The recent Russian aggression against Georgia only serves to reinforce that concern.

"The Russian tanks are only 40 miles away from the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius," said the Dominican. "As [Russian President Vladimir] Putin has made clear, they want to come back, and there's talk of them reincorporating Belarus as well. Russian imperialism is not dead."



Exploiting Siberia's vast forest and mineral riches with slave labor became the foundation of Soviet economic development.



Lithuanian deportees.

Some fear the reversal could come from within as well. *“Lithuania has an election coming up in November, and the Russians have been pumping huge amounts of oil money to support pro-Soviet candidates,”* he said.

“There is a fear that they could elect a pro-Soviet candidate to be president. It happened once before, and he was impeached after two years.” That was Rolandas Paksas, who was voted out of office by parliament in 2004. Among the charges against him was his questionable ties and leaking of classified material to a Russian businessman who had heavily backed his presidential campaign.

The current president of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus, appears in *“Red Terror on the Amber Coast”* and has endorsed the film. He has said he would have it broadcast on national television.

Getting the program onto television in the United States is more challenging, but Fathers O’Rourke and Gumbert have made it available to PBS stations nationwide and hope at least to have it shown on public television in some of the major metropolitan areas – with the help of Lithuanian-Americans everywhere.

“The Lithuanian people I’ve shown the film to are very moved that their story is finally

being told,” said Father O’Rourke. *“They have the sense that no one knows what happened to them and no one cares.*

“They were abandoned and left alone, betrayed by the West,” he added. *“They’re afraid it will happen again, and they want people to know what’s happened to them, so as not to repeat it.”*

Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus, flanked by filmmakers Fr. Ken Gumbert, O.P. and Fr. David O’Rourke, O.P.





*If you or someone you know would like to receive a DVD of **“Red Terror on the Amber Coast,”** please so indicate on the return envelope and include a donation of **\$10.00 each.***

Easter Prayer

*God our Father, Creator of all,
today is the day of Easter joy.
This is the morning on which the Lord appeared to men
who had begun to lose their hope
and opened their eyes to what the scriptures foretold:
that first He must die, and then He would rise and ascend
into His Father's glorious presence.
May the risen Lord breathe on our minds and open our
eyes that we may know Him in the breaking of bread,
and follow Him in His risen life.
Grant this through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.*

