

EVENTS ACCORDING TO THE LITURGICAL

# CALENDAR



RENKINIAI  
PAGAL LITURGINĮ  
KALENDORIŲ

# BETWEEN LITURGY AND NATIONALITY

There are two interrelated parts between Christian traditional holidays: religious and folk. The first is based on the liturgy, which is historically associated with the New Testament, the second – on nationality; thus, festivals can be presented as a unique ethno-cultural phenomenon. Religious consistency plays an important role here.

The liturgical calendar includes the church's instructions regarding the time of speaking or chanting of liturgical hours, the order of Mass and other services every day of the year, from January 1 till 31 December. Believers are well aware that in the liturgical year of the church, festivals are associated with either the days of the week or the days of the month, resulting in two mutually intertwined cycles of feasts – the cycle of liturgical times and the cycle of festivals.

One of the most important roles in shaping the annual calendar and including the holidays, was played by religion and it still plays it until today. Therefore, one of the most significant intention of the annual holidays is to perform religious duties and rituals. In the context of contemporary trends, the annual festivals we are now celebrating, have become as they are over time, and their respective perceptions and understanding have been determined by many historical, social, and cultural factors.

The Christian faith presupposed that religious holidays became the most popular holidays, while various liturgical holidays encouraged the association of Christian holidays with nationality. According to the liturgical calendar, the events of the intangible cultural heritage of Trakai district comprise the largest part of all the events of intangible cultural heritage, which proves once again how abundant the religious array is still relevant for today's people.







# LITTLE PARISH OF VYTAUTAVA AND INDULGENCES OF ST. ANTHONY

**EVENT:** ŠINDULGENCES OF ST. ANTHONY IN THE CHURCH OF ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA IN VYTAUTAVA

**DATE:** THE MONTH OF JUNE

**LOCATION:** VYTAUTAVA

In 1930, Donatas Malinauskas, the owner of the manor, a signatory of the February 16th Act, donated the land and the houses of Paulinava farm to the future church of Vytautava. Built in 1939, a new one-tower cozy wooden church has three naves inside. Priest Nikodemus Švogžlys-the Giant took care of the construction. There was a

plan to establish a town in this place, however, this idea wasn't implemented. It was decided to name the parish Vytautava in the honor of Vytautas the Great. This is how the church of Vytautava named after Anthony of Padua has survived to this day. In 2009, the church was repaired along with replacing its tin roof.

Every year the priest of Onuškis parish of St. Apostles Philip and James Algimantas Gaidukevičius announces the annual grand indulgences of St. Anthony. St. Anthony of Padua is a great wonder-worker whose help is asked in prayers on any occasion. He is asked to help either find lost or to recover stolen items. Infertile families

pray to him as well. Lisbon, where he was born, and Padua, where he died are having disputes over him. These cities are arguing over whose name must be the extension of the Saint.

Impressions and memories of childhood indulgences still remain in the memory of many. Some were led by their grandmother's hand as she wore a white scarf and a dress for special occasions or a grandfather who dressed up for this occasion as well. For others, it was a regular family and entire believers' community celebration, after which one was always rewarded with candy bought near the church.

Church indulgences is the day when believers i.e. those who performed the liturgical ceremonies established by the church, can receive forgiveness for their sins and, therefore, earn for-

givenness for themselves and the dead. Old parishioners and guests from the whole region of Trakai and beyond come to Vytautava for the indulgences of St. Anthony every year. During Mass, the choristers are singing, the organ is playing, and all those gathered are invited to pray together. After Mass, an artistic program takes place in the churchyard, people taste various treats and communicate.

Having become a small rural area after the Second World War, Vytautava's parish has managed to survive to this day while fostering traditions. It's a treasure not only for the parishioners of Vytautava but also for the entire Lithuania. After all, like a mosaic, consisting of many tiny different and colored pieces, it hides its true power in community spirit and unity.







# THE ASSUMPTION - TO THANK THE SKY AND EARTH

**EVENT: THE CELEBRATION OF THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY INTO HEAVEN, THE SERVICE IN TRAKAI BASILICA OF THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (IN AUGUST)**

**DATE: 15TH OF AUGUST**

**LOCATION: THE ASSUMPTION DAY INDULGENCIES IN TRAKAI BASILICA OF THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

Having cut the grain crops, brought the grain to the barns, filled the stack-yards with goodies for the winter and boiled enough jam, then it's possible to take a breath and thank the earth for

the harvest and beauty of the provided goods. On the Assumption Day, women used to pick herbs, various flowers, make a bouquet and take it to an altar or a church.

Having introduced Christianity, the day is identified with the Assumption of Mary into Heaven. It's said that when Jesus' mother Mary died, the Apostles were guarding her tomb. While the apostle Peter was on guard duty, he saw how Mary resurrected, and the Lord took her to heaven. Having opened the coffin, the Apostles didn't find the body. Only many beautiful flowers were there. In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John described the image in his vision as follows: "And there appeared a great sign in the sky: a woman clothed with

the sun, and the moon beneath her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her head”(Rev 12: 1). Although Pope Pius XII proclaimed the belief that Mary was taken into heaven with soul and body as dogma of the Church in 1950, the liturgical commemoration of this event has been known since the 5th century.

The Assumption Day indulgences taking place in the parish of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary gather many people every year. During the indulgences not only Mass is held but also the ornate painting of Madonna of Trakai is carried in a solemn procession through the streets and squares of Trakai. This beautiful idea was brought by the priest Jonas Varaneckas, who came to work in the parish. The joyful procession is a symbolic confirmation that Mary is the queen of this nook, and all the believers are her children.

During the procession, flowers are



scattered and processional flags are carried. Medicinal herbs, flowers, grain and vegetables are consecrated during Mass. Later, the assumption day festivities move on to the Cabbage fair, which is usually bustling on Crimean Karaites (Cabbage) island.

The Assumption Day indulgences in Trakai is a celebration full of sacredness, community spirit and appreciation. It's a time when people full of optimism and inner joy come together for a common goal i.e. to be, to appreciate, and to celebrate busy summer.







## INDULGENCIES OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY AND ITALY-LIKE CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY IN LENTVARIS

**EVENT:** THE DAY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY IN LENTVARIS CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY  
**DATE:** THE 25TH OF MARCH  
**LOCATION:** LENTVARIS

Every year on March 25th, the parishioners of Lentvaris and the guests of the city rush to the Church of the Annunciation of the Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary with flowers in their hands singing the blossoming earth chants to

the Lord. There they celebrate the day of the Annunciation of the Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the title indulgences of the church.

The occasion solemnly celebrated as the Archangel Gabriel of God manifested to the Virgin Mary and announced the plan of God's Mercy to mankind i.e. from her Jesus the Redeemer would be born. The purpose of the celebration: Just as Mary answers "Yes" to God, likewise the believers have to say "Yes" to God not only with words but also with their lives.

In Lentvaris Church of Italian architectural beauty, a guest priest holds solemn Mass followed by a festive Eucharistic procession of believers

around the church, if the weather allows it. During both before and after Mass, a distinguished choir sings, creating a prayerful festive atmosphere.

More than two thousand kilometers separate Lentvaris and the Italian city of Milan, but the distance to the Counts Kristina Maria and Vladislovas Tiškevičius was not an obstacle to the integration of Italian and Milan architectural elements into Lentvaris Church. According to the primary project, the Church of the Annunciation of the Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary, also called the pearl of Lentvaris had to be a copy of Santa Maria delle Grazie church in Milan. The wars have greatly altered the plans, therefore Lentvaris Church is only similar to the Basilica in Milan, which still houses Leonardo da Vinci's painting "The Last Supper".

The Italian Pope Pius XI sent a blessing to this church and a sculpture of the Crucifix created in the 17th cen-

tury, which is mounted above the altar. The entire decor of Lentvaris Church deserves special attention. A special graphite method (primarily, plaster of several different colors is applied, a drawing is carved in the upper layer, and then the colors hidden in the lower layers are exposed while shaving the plaster) and walls decorated with frescoes is a great exception throughout Lithuania.

The day of the Annunciation of the Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary in Lentvaris brings together the people of the town and the arriving guests for a common prayer, concentration, and appreciation. It's the day when we say thank you to the Blessed Virgin Mary – mediator of God's graces and God for all that we received from him and brought to the celebration in our hearts.







# RECEIVE FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND EXPERIENCE COMMUNALITY

**EVENT: THE INDULGENCIES  
OF THE REVELATION OF  
THE LORD TO THE BLESSED  
VIRGIN MARY AND ST. BENEDICT  
IN OLD TRAKAI**

**DATE:**

**LOCATION: OLD TRAKAI**

The pride of Old Trakai is its architectural monument, a neo-Gothic church of God's Revelation to the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Benedict, located near Trakai itself, in a village near the railway station. The current church was restored at the end of the 19th century, when a former monastery was transformed into the current house of prayer by implementing

a project proposed by technician A. Mikulskis. Having suffered losses as a result of historical circumstances, the church was completely restored in 1921.

Every scorching July midsummer, all the locals and guests are invited to the solemn indulgences of St. Benedict and škaplierinė. St. Benedict was famous for his wonders and enduring struggle with temptations. The saint has become a patron of many: farmers, engineers, architects, chemists, pupils, and others. His patronage is asked through prayers for protection from temptations of the devil. The only church of Old Trakai in Vilnius Archdiocese is dedicated to the patron of Europe – St. Benedict.

St. Benedict and his twin sister Scholastika were born in 480 in a wealthy fami-

ly of the city of Norcia. He studied law and literature in Rome, but quickly left the city and moved to more remote areas. While searching a closer connection with God, he settled in the cave of Subiaco, later called the Sacro Speco (Holy Cave). St. Benedict had many followers. He founded 12 monasteries in the suburbs of Subiaco, they were inhabited by twelve monks each. Benedictine monasteries spread throughout Europe in the Middle Ages. This way of religious life was so fruitful that in 1964 Pope Paul VI proclaimed Benedict the patron of Europe.

During the indulgences in Old Trakai, Mass is held by the priests of the city of Trakai, Old Trakai parishes and distinguished priests of neighboring parishes. The audience sings psalms, songs of worship and praise of God, the priests solemnly read the liturgy of the sacrifice,

the traditional procession of offerings takes place. When the church procession of indulgences ends, the parishioners and guests are invited to gather in the historical castle site of the Monastery of the Revelation of the Lord in Old Trakai. Everyone is invited to listen to a music program, prepared specifically for the celebration, and visit art workshops as well as craftsmen fair. The youngest participants of the celebration are not forgotten either – fun and entertainment is waiting for them. The celebration unites everyone – young and old – into one large, warm community of believers. After all, the indulgences is the largest celebration of the parish, where believers can not only receive forgiveness of sins but also experience a connection with God, man, and themselves.







## INDULGENCES OF TRAKINĖS AND A MIRACULOUS PAINTING OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

**EVENT:** INDULGENCIES OF TRAKINĖS  
**DATE:** 15TH OF AUGUST  
**LOCATION:** TRAKAI CHURCH OF  
THE VISITATION OF THE  
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Trumpets, cannons and drums. The ornate gates of triumph with the letters of Mary's name, two hundred noblemen with naked swords, an altar decorated with precious gemstones, hundreds of priests, a crowd of worshipers and a continuous prayer – this is how the painting of the Mother of God with crowns sent from Rome was surmounted in Trakai in 1718. The Madonna of Trakai was awarded with

the title of the Advocate of the Sick, and people proclaimed it the patron of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

What's the origin story behind a painting famous for its miracles? The legend about the painting's origin was written on the other side of it in the 18th century. It says that after Vytautas accepted his baptism, the Byzantine emperor Emmanuel II Paleologist presented him with the picture of Mary, painted by an evangelist Luke who once helped his predecessors defeat Huns and Persians. The painting of Mary in Trakai attracted attention not only because of its miracles but also because it reminded Vytautas and his glorious times. The highest state officials, rulers, nobles, and many pro-

cessions from various places used to come to pray at the painting.

The testimonies of contemporaries state that, at the time, in Rome when Pope Clement XI was asked to surmount this painting, there were more than forty trustees from Lithuania and Poland who swore about the truthfulness of the graces of this painting. The eight-day coronation ceremony marked the beginning of Trakinės indulgences, which is celebrated to this day.

History is remembered, patronage and health for the sick is asked during these indulgences. Every year, a 35 kilometer-long youth pilgrimage hike Gate of Dawn–Lentvaris–Trakai is organized, the believers from all over Lithuania join it as well. The pilgrimage from the Sanctuary of the Mother of Mercy at the Gate of Dawn to the Sanctuary of the Mother of God of Trakai, the Patron of Lithuania, has deep traditions. The first trip from Vil-

nius to Trakai in 1604 was organized by Bishop Benediktas Vaina of Vilnius and the priest of Trakai, asking for the patronage of the Mother of God in their prayers, so that she would keep the famine and plague raging in the country at bay. Contemporaries testify that Bishop Vaina walked barefoot all the way, and the procession stopped for a prayer every mile. The plague stopped raging, and this first journey gave the initiative to the pilgrimages of worshipers.

Indulgences of Trakinės have always been a significant event for all the people of Trakai and neighboring parishes. The current indulgences last for a whole week, which eventually become more and more important for all the Lithuanian Catholics, because it's a spiritual and historical heritage.

