

Research Project Description.....

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The Catholic Church in Lithuania during post soviet period 1990-2010

The aim of my research is to offer a freedom of investigation into the life of the Church in

the name and the aim of my research demand a specific structure and method. I have

related to the Church but to analyze and interpret it theologically and to provide an insight into the

Christian, and, at the same time, the activity and the perspective of the Church during a specific period of time.

Every religion and every church exists and functions in a specific historical time, political and cultural milieu. There is no exception to the Catholic Church anywhere in the world or

attention of my research is offered to the life of the Church during the two decades of the post communist period 1990-2010. However to understand properly the processes in the Church of this

time it is necessary to take at least a short look at its background. In my case it is a very specific and

much longer period of the totalitarian atheistic regime from the II World War (in Lithuania) until the

period of the soviet dictatorship); 2. The main part of my research spans during the two post communistic decades (a period of democracy). 3. I will end with a short summary.

From the end of the II World War until 1990 Lithuania was part of the Soviet Union.

87% of the population is Roman Catholic. Officially there was a declared freedom of religion but

entirely forbidden. It was cast out of the public domain, restricted to the private religious practices and liturgy in the church. According to the constitution of the Soviet Union the Church was separated from the state, but in fact the state took control of the Church. State institutions decided which activities they would allow in the Church. For instance, they would not allow the Church to

Religious orders were suppressed and the number of seminarians drastically restricted.

consequences in the Lithuanian society and in the Church as well. During the years of the regime some of the Christian traditions were destroyed, the sense of the community and badly affected the mentality of the people that as a result emerged a so-called "home secularism". As a basis for this

strong and weak points during this period.

The important theme of my research is the life of the Church after the totalitarian

occurred very rapidly. The society of Lithuania and the Church as well was not prepared for a new situation. To understand and evaluate this period properly it is necessary to look at it from a longer distance of time. I hope that the above mentioned fourfold theological approach, which I apply to this part of the research as well, will serve as a useful structure that will help to get a deeper insight into the life of the Church. As a data source for the research of the life of the Church during this period I use a double source: 1. The press of the Lithuanian Church (letters of the bishops' conference, Church newspapers); and 2. The secular public press publications about the Church during this period.

Theological approach:

... (service of love to one's neighbor) and Liturgy (worship). I analyze important historical events and phenomena in either of the periods and interpret them using the above mentioned fourfold scheme

democratic era, how the Church understands and cherishes its dynamic identity and so remains the authentic Church of Christ in the changing world of today. It is also related to the questions of how

new challenges such as open borders, freedom of speech and the press, secularization and pluralization

in a democratic context and the world that changes quickly

During the past two decades in Lithuania there was published many articles and some

Church but there are few theological researches. I hope my study will bring a proper contribution to

the development of ecclesiology and theology of the Lithuanian Church

I would expect my completed research to publish in: The Annual of Lietuvių Kataliku

VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO IŠTYTINIŲ TARPINIAI 2014 M. VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETAS