

## Let Us Chat

December 2025

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5 Resurrection Rd.,  
Toronto, ON. M9A 5G1

## MERRY CHRISTMAS



*Dear Residents, Families, Staff, and Friends of Labdara,*

*We extend our sincere wishes for a Christmas filled with warmth, love, and the comfort of cherished memories. May 2026 be filled with good health and happiness for you and your families!*

*Laura Puteris*  
*Administrator*





## Christmas a Season of Giving

Dear Residents, Families, Staff, Volunteers, and Friends of Labdara



During this season of giving, I invite you to join us in supporting Labdara Lithuanian Nursing Home. Your contributions through donations, volunteering, or simple acts of kindness help to enhance the lives of our residents. With your help, we can provide comforting amenities, engaging activities, and essential care to those who call Labdara their home. Every gift, big or small, has a profound impact. From funding new equipment to enhancing organized events, your support ensures that residents feel valued and connected. Consider making a donation, sharing your time, visiting, or reaching out to see how you can help. Together, we can provide a warmer, more caring environment for our residents.

For information about volunteering please contact the Activities Team at 416-232-2112 ext. 412, or by email at [volunteering@labdara.ca](mailto:volunteering@labdara.ca). Financial contributions can be made at Labdara or through Canada Helps using the following link: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/29084>. Visit our website, [labdara.ca](http://labdara.ca) for more information.

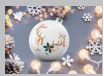
Thank you for helping us make a difference in the lives of our cherished residents.

**Zita Bersenas-Cers, Board Chair**



**From left to right: Dalia Rocca - Secretary, Ramunė Čygas and Algimantas Nakrošius - members, Zita Bersėnas-Cers - Chair, Daina Kalendra - Vice-Chair, Audronė Butrimas - Treasurer.**

**Absent - Gabrielė Zitikytė, Rasa Šiaučiūnas**





## Christmas Eve Traditions in Lithuania

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When preparing for Christmas Eve dinner, it is very important to sit at the table only when the house has been tidied and cleaned. The family, having returned from the sauna, would change into fresh festive clothes. In addition to being cleaned, the house was decorated: the windows and shelves were decorated with white paper cutouts, and the "sodas" – a rotating straw creation of geometric shapes was hung above the table. The Christmas tree was decorated with apples, nuts, straw toys, paper cutouts, baked goods, and candles. The Christmas tree was kept until the Feast of the Three Kings in January.

People came to the table when the Evening Star appeared in the sky. If you were not late for seating at the Christmas Eve table, then you would finish all of your work early in the next year. Hay was placed under the white tablecloth and when the meal was completed it was given to the livestock. A cross, Christmas wafers and a lit candle – a symbol of the birth of Jesus and the hope of the renewal of the world were placed on the table. For relatives who are abroad, far from home, a plate was also placed on the table in remembrance of them. While sharing the Christmas wafer, the relatives expressed their love, gratitude and joy to each other, wishing each other health, peace, peace, and success in their endeavours.

Christmas gifts were the same as Christmas tree decorations – nuts, baked goods and apples.

*(from the "We Love Lithuania" website, online)*





## Christmas Eve Traditions in Lithuania(continued)

### DZŪKIJA (Alytus)

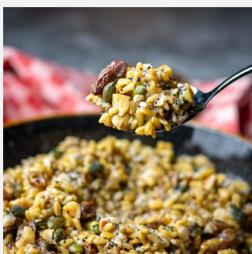


The Christmas Eve table was laden with local dishes made from beets, cabbage, potatoes, carrots, beans and mushrooms. The Christmas Eve table was not complete without apples, peas, various grains, honey, herring, fish, cranberries, black bread, nuts, Christmas wafers, poppy milk and cranberry pudding ("kisielius"). Every single table in Dzūkija featured dishes made with dried mushrooms. Sauerkraut was made with dried mushrooms, herring was covered in a bed of mushrooms, dumplings were stuffed with mushrooms. Black bread, nuts and apples were also on the table. It was also a requirement to have fish with a beetroot and bean salad.

### ŽEMAITIJA (Telšiai)

A traditional Samogitian dish for Christmas and other holidays is "kastinis" (made from fermented dairy) served with potatoes. The Samogitian Christmas Eve table featured hemp porridge or "spirginė" - a porridge with bacon topped with crispy golden fried onions. To make the hemp porridge, you would grind it coarsely and cook it. For "spirginė", you would fry hemp, flaxseed and sunflower separately, then cook into a porridge and top with crispy fried onions.

### AUKŠTAITIJA (Panevėžys)



The region of Aukštaitija (the Highlanders) has always been fertile, so the people of that region eat a lot of products made from grain. On the table of the Highlanders, we find "skryliai" or dumplings stuffed with vegetables and mushrooms. Dumpling dough is made from flour and water. Dumplings are boiled in water or fried in oil. Puddies made from grains and sweetened with honey were also eaten. One important dish from Aukštaitija is "vėdarai" - a potato sausage stuffed with buckwheat. An exclusive dish from this region is "fish cheese", which is made from fresh fish, eggs, cream and fried vegetables: carrots, onions and garlic. The traditional Christmas Eve dish "Kūčia" is also featured - it is made from boiled wheat, barley, oats and rye. Sometimes beans and peas are added and it is sweetened with honey. This was considered to be a special meal for the ghosts of the ancestors.

## Christmas Eve Traditions in Lithuania(continued)

### SUVALKIJA (Marijampolė)



In Suvalkija, kūčiukai or šližikai are cooked like pasta – it is the main dish of Christmas Eve. In the past, when people lived in more difficult times and folks had very little, everyone still had flour and salt. Baked “kūčiukai” - special Christmas Eve biscuits, needed yeast, oil, and even milk – all of which were hard to come by. It was easier to make cooked “kūčiukai” that were called “šližikai”. It was a must to have an apple on the table, which was cut into slices that were then shared by the whole family. Oat kissel or pudding was also boiled – oats were fermented with black bread crusts, boiled until thickened and seasoned with cranberries or sugar. The apple symbolized love and health, and oats were needed to ensure that the farm would be productive and the livestock would be healthy. Every table also had to have herring, dried apples served with herring, boiled beans with fried onions, beets and sauerkraut.

(Alkas.lt from the Internet)





## KOSTAS' MEMORIES OF WINTER

Winter is the longest part of the year, much loved by children and adults. Children love to play and participate in sports in the snow. Although Lithuania does not have high mountains, winter sports are really popular here: such as ice hockey, figure skating, biathlon.

I remember the times when the days were too short not to take advantage of the moonlight while playing in the snow. Of course, this was not always to the liking of our parents, who sometimes applied the traditional good parenting requirement to be home after dark.

When it comes to sports, figure skating and hockey require systematic training year after year in order to achieve great results. My favorite winter sport was ice hockey. It reminds me of an artistic dance on ice, in which Lithuania has reached a really high level in the European Championships.

I also enjoyed skiing from the hills or on the cross-country skiing paths made on the plains, winding through fields and forests, interacting with nature. I have to admit that I had achieved really good results at the school level in cross-country skiing.

In my teens, one beautiful winter day, my high-school physical education teacher organized a ski competition for us, the students, from the highest hill in the area. We had to wait for our teacher to be the first to try the ski slope coming down from the top of the mountain. But our instructor suddenly disappeared somewhere. We could only see fallen snow and fresh ruts, but no teacher. Then we heard him shouting that we should not go there because it was too dangerous.

Nonetheless, my ambition could not hold me back and disregarding the warning, I successfully skied at high speed past our teacher "instructor" who had fallen into the snow. Six or seven students witnessed my feat as I won the competition!

I realized that the risk was twofold. One was that nature itself can "put its foot in the door", and the other was the unknown reaction of my teacher to my "trick". But still, that wasn't enough to prevent me from pursuing my ambition.

When you think about it, people say: "If you don't take risks, you don't drink champagne". And: "To achieve something, you need to be brave and stubborn." Although the teacher did not like this "adventure" of mine, I now have a wonderful memory to share!

Have a nice winter ahead for you, dear ones.

Happy holidays!  
*Your friend Kostas*



## Craft and Bake Sale



The event took place on November 16 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the café of the Resurrection Parish. 6 vendors participated: Indrė Patkačiūnienė with pickled delicacies, buns, cakes and Lithuanian cheese; Birutė Batraks with Lithuanian wrist warmers and jewelry; Akvilė Minkevičius with natural honey and paraffin candles; Adrianna Verstiuk with tortes and cakes; Algimantas Nakrošius with stained glass artworks and, Viktorija Birutė Lapinskienė with Lithuanian knitwear and lace.



Tireless volunteers Regina Stauskienė, Diana Wiese and Yoly Tomasic managed sales at the cake table. Virginija Puzerienė and Julija Yčas were on duty at the coffee table. A 50/50 draw and a lottery for tickets to a Toronto Raptors basketball game were held.

A special thank you to Regina Stauskienė who baked 6 cakes, 100 bacon buns and many sweet mushroom gingerbreads. A special thank you to Leo Rautinš for donating two tickets to the Raptors basketball game for the lottery; Universal Care Inc. donated Blue Jays T-shirts and Head of Nutrition: Tamara and Chef Danutė prepared delicious coffee and scrumptious sandwiches.

## Craft and Bake Sale (continued)

We thank everyone who attended and supported LABDARA. The earnings from this annual sale will benefit our residents directly through our activation program.

Nerijus Augutis



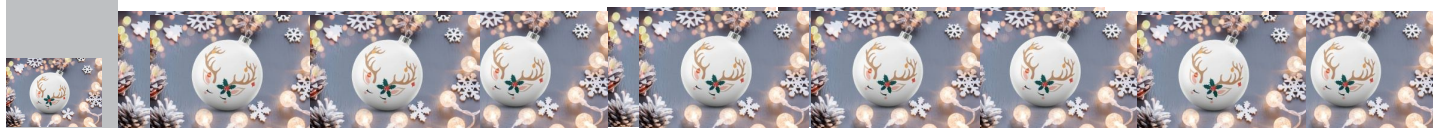




## Word Puzzles

1. Everyone can hold me, even without hands, but not for long. What am I?
2. I'm always there, but always in the distance, somewhere between earth and sky. You can get close to me, but I'll keep my distance. Who am I?
3. I'm not alive, but I'm growing. I don't have lungs, but I need air. What am I?
4. Before discovering Everest, what was the highest mountain in the world?
5. What belongs to you, but is most often used by others?
6. What keeps increasing, but never decreases?
7. The more there is of it, the less you see. What is it?
8. What is full of holes, but retains water?
9. What is black when you buy it, red when you use it, and gray when you throw it away?
10. It can't speak, but will always answer when you talk to it? What is it?

10	Echo
9	Coal
8	A sponge
7	Darkness
6	Your Age
5	Your Name
4	Always Everest
3	Fire
2	The horizon
1	My breath



## THE SPIRIT OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Through baptism, we were integrated into a new family - our Christian family. By becoming members of the Mystical Body of Christ, we have become sisters and brothers in Christ within our parish community. Here we are never abandoned or left alone.

God does not judge us by our accumulated wealth or career accomplishments. He cherishes and loves us as we are, and according to "what we have done to one of the least of us," because we have done it to Him... This is evidenced by our actions: when we reached out to a neighbor, when we gave of our time, when we sympathized, comforted, listened, reassured and gave hope.

May Christ cultivate hope, peace, joy and unconditional love in our families.

*Deacon Dr. Kazimieras Ambrozaitis*