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For example, the following emerged from an investigation conducted in the town of Wloclawek among 572 believing young men and girls. Only 26.4% of them supposed that man was created by God, while 72.9% thought that man was formed as a result of the evolution of species, that is, they upheld the materialist view of his origin. Only 26% of those questioned believed that God created the world and half gave a negative answer to this question. Even less – 20% – believed God was the creator of history; 70.9% of those examined said man created history. The majority of them admitted that their faith had weakened significantly in comparison with their early years. For 39.7% this had happened when they learned about the achievements of science, for 34.8% under the influence of teachers, for 19.9% as a result of participating in the activities of socialist young people's organizations and only for 3.3% under the influence of their parents. This last is easy to explain, because the basic source of religious conviction in young people in socialist conditions is a believing family.

In 1972 the Marxist sociologist T. Sozanski investigated the religious conviction of students in Jagellonian University and the polytechnic in Krakow. Of 236 examined, 21.6% did not believe in God. In answer to the question: "Do you agree with the view that the progress of science confirms the correctness of materialist philosophy?" 21.3% of believers replied affirmatively, and only 22.6% decisively said "No". Now Catholic investigators also admit these changes in the attitude of young people to religion.

Under the influence of socialist reality and thanks to the single-minded, all-embracing system of communist education, young people in search of the meaning of life and spiritual values are no longer turning to religion, but to that which is purely scientific – to the Marxist-Leninist world outlook.

Sermon by Cardinal Wyszynski

As a contrast to the previous document, we print below an extract from an outspoken sermon delivered on 9 April 1974 by Cardinal Wyszynski to Polish students. The sermon originally appeared in the Mirror, July 1974 (entitled "The False and the True Church") and is reprinted with kind permission of "Aid to the Church in Need".

Do not think, men and women students, that your identity card and your academic degree determine who you are. Who you are and whence you have come can only be told by the Spirit of God who is working in you, moving your conscience and irradiating your heart. The time has come to speak out fearlessly. For mankind becomes degraded and of less and less value if he does not respect himself, if he does not defend his human worth and his rights. The time has come in the confusion of the intellectual, moral, social and cultural life for you to raise your voices at last and to say courageously to your fellow students: Respect your dignity for you are made by the hand of the Heavenly Father.

The time has come to say to each other: Colleagues, respect our girl-students for they are the future mothers of the new Poland. We want Poles to be born of pure mothers who keep themselves immaculate and by their behaviour command

the respect of their surroundings. The time has come for you to say to your educators and professors: Teach us the truth and do not destroy us. Do not rob us of our faith. Do not destroy our Christian and moral way of life by a foolish laicism understood by nobody and for which so much money is spent. Do not deprive us of our faith in the living God. For you will make us into slaves of idols – like once in ancient Israel and like Judas, who went out into the night when he left the Last Supper to betray the Lord.

The time has come for you, young people in the universities and students' hostels, to dare to demand: Respect us! Respect each other! We are people. Do not snatch away our faith for you cannot give us anything more valuable.

The time has come for you to say even to your parents: If you cannot raise us as Christians either because you do not understand it or because you have no time, do not at least out of mere opportunism undermine our courage to confess the faith. Do not make us sell our inheritance, the dignity that God has given us, for a mess of pottage.

The greatest sin is not unbelief, which may be a personal accident, a malformation or even human ignorance, but organized anti-faith, the setting up of atheistic programmes, the support of the atheistic system with administrative and public means. These means have not been entrusted to the State to destroy the faith in God but to maintain law and order: not for destruction but for construction.

The time has come to say courageously to us, priests and bishops: We do not like your indulgence in regard to laxity of morals. We do not accept the fact that you have not the courage to require anything of us. If you discover faults in us, point them out to us – because that is what you are for.

We do not want pastors who do not dare to appeal to our generosity.

The Life of Roman Catholics in Lithuania

The Roman Catholic Church in Lithuania continues to live despite the many difficulties placed in its way. RCL has already published extracts from various issues of the Lithuanian Catholic Chronicle – hereafter LCC – (see RCL Vol 1, Nos. 4-5, pp. 47-54 and Vol. 2, Nos. 4-5, pp. 39-42) and now gives extracts from LCC Nos. 12, 14, 15 and 16. (The page numbers given below refer to the Russian version in typescript available from the CSRC.)

Children who are brought up as believers face problems at school, priests who give children religious instruction are fined and yet the number of children who receive First Communion remains extremely high.

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On the 27 May, 1974 Leonas Sileikis, a seventh grade pupil at Siauliai Secondary School No. 5, was summoned for an interview with the head teacher, at which his religious beliefs were to be discussed. The boy's father came to the interview, although he was not invited. The following teachers were present: Mrs. Misiuniene, the deputy headmistress Mrs. Jakimciene and five others.

L. Sileikis was first asked whether he had read the atheist books which the school had asked him to read. The schoolboy answered that he had read all six.