

March 4th

LITHUANIA

LITHUANIA'S PATRON SAINT KAZIMIER'S DAY



Saint Casimir Jagiellon

Saint Casimir's Day is celebrated on the anniversary of the death of Saint Casimir, the patron saint of Lithuania and Poland, **on March 4**. St. Casimir's Day in Roman Catholic parishes is marked with a special Mass said in his honor.

Saint Casimir Jagiellon (October 3, 1458 - March 4, 1484), was a Polish-Lithuanian prince from the Jagiellon dynasty who became a patron saint of Poland, Lithuania, and youth. A member of the Jagiellon dynasty, Casimir was born at Wawel, the royal palace in Kraków, and died at Hrodna.

St. Casimir was the grandson of Jogaila and was the second son of king of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Casimir IV and Queen Elisabeth of Austria. His grandfather was Albert II Habsburg, king of Bohemia, king of Hungary, and "King of the Romans" in the Holy Roman Empire. From the age of nine, St. Casimir received his education from Fr. Jan Długosz and Filippo Buonaccorsi (also known as Filip Callimachus). When Casimir was 13, he was offered the throne of Hungary. Casimir accepted the call and went to Hungary to receive the crown. Casimir was unsuccessful in his undertaking and returned as a fugitive. His father, King Casimir IV, had initiated him well into public affairs and when his brother Władysław, ascended to the Bohemian throne, Casimir became heir-apparent to the throne of Poland. In 1479, the king went to Lithuania for five years, and Casimir was left in charge of Poland. From 1481-1483 he administered the state with great prudence and justice. His father tried to arrange a marriage with a daughter of Emperor Frederick III, but Casimir preferred to remain single. Weakened by excessive fasting, he developed severe lung problems, possibly tuberculosis. On a journey to Lithuania in 1484, he died

at Hrodna, Belarus. His remains were interred in Vilnius, Grand Duchy of Lithuania. There is a Chapel of Saint Casimir in Vilnius Cathedral where his remains rest. He was canonized by Pope Adrian VI in 1522 and is the patron saint of Lithuania. On June 11, 1948, Pope Pius XII named Saint Casimir the special patron of all youth.

Kaziukas Fair (in Lithuanian, *Kaziukio mugė* means "Little Casimir's" Fair) is traditionally held on the Sunday nearest to St. Casimir's Day, March 4, the day Saint Casimir Jagiellon died. It is a large annual Polish and Lithuanian folk arts and crafts fair dating to the beginning of the 17th century. It was originally held at the two main markets in Vilnius, Lithuania, as well as in the city streets. Today, Kaziukas fair also features music and dance; it attracts thousands of visitors and many craftsmen from all over the country as well as from neighbouring states such as Latvia, Russia, and Poland.



Kaziukas Fair