

Dear Friends and Family,

Greetings and God bless you! As many of you know, I received my new assignment to be a missionary in Panevėžys, Lithuania after I finished my studies in Italy. I arrived about a month ago and so far, I'm having a smooth transition into my new home, community and becoming somewhat familiar with the language, if I can even say that. ☺

Before moving on, I wanted to express my deep gratitude for all the prayers and material support during my time overseas in Italy. My time spent there was one of the best times in my life which included meeting and acquiring new friendships with sisters from my order, being so close to the Holy Father and participating in the Masses with him and not to mention all the holy and beautiful places and saints that I was incredibly blessed to see. I consider going to Italy one of the highlights and most wonderful blessings to experience and to keep forever in my memories. Looking back, I thank God for all the graces and insights I received, either easily or with difficulty. From studying classes in a new language, being exposed to the differences of culture amongst the sisters or to learning more about the mystery of the vocation in the Year of the Consecrated, I can truly say that I learned and grew a lot more not only maturely, but more importantly spiritually.

When one is taken away from family, friends, culture, language and the comforts and the security of one's life and placed into a new surrounding of the unknown and unexperienced, one begins to understand more profoundly of the virtue of trust and complete abandonment to the will, mercy and love of God. It is through our own weakness and struggle, that we truly experience the reality that we are only small and insignificant instruments in God's plan for the salvation and evangelization of mankind; yet never the less, we are *HIS* instruments. Everything that God allows in our lives is for our perfection, sanctification and to manifest the majesty of his goodness and love in our lives and in those of others. It is through our cooperation, conformity and having a spirit of docility and cheerful joy that we are able to be completely and fully live out Gods will in our lives. Flowing from this openness and dedication to His will, this produces a deep and unfailing happiness because one has the assurance of finding delight in His eyes and not those of men or of ourselves. During my short time in Italy, I experienced this truth more intensely and grew in my relationship of trust and abandonment to His providence or in docility to whatever situation that he wanted to purify and sanctify in my life. Again, I wanted to thank everyone who encouraged me spiritually by



their prayers of encouragement or through the financial support of donations. Please know that I am very grateful to you all.

As I mentioned before, now I have turned yet another page in my walk with Christ and I find myself here in a city called Panevėžys, located on the north-east side of Lithuania. Actually, Panevėžys is the fifth largest city in Lithuania...that is, out of five cities. As one can imagine, Lithuania isn't that big in comparison to other countries, in fact it's about the size of the state of West Virginia, so it's pretty small and the cities themselves are even smaller. However, if there is even one soul that God loved enough to create, that's why I want to be here, to tell even just one more soul about God and his plan for him.

As for my new mission, this will first encompass learning the language itself since it is considered to be quite difficult. If you are familiar with Latin grammar, that is how Lithuanian is structured as well. If you are not familiar with either the two, for us English speakers, the Lithuanian grammar far surpasses English grammar with the differences in tense, mood, declensions, cases, gender, voice, structure and so forth. If you're kind of confused of what I explained so far, join the club, it's my whole new world. Thanks be to God that a part of my formation as a sister, I studied Latin for four semesters, so I am somewhat familiar with the things I mentioned about the grammar; however, Lithuanian is truly unlike any other language that I've experienced and it takes about two to three years to learn it well enough to get by and speak. (All thanks to that Tower of Babel!)

I would love to explain more about my time so far here, but I will end with a quick explanation of my picture taken above. I took this here in Lithuania at a place called The Hill of Crosses. Very briefly, this was a Catholic site where the people would stick crosses of all different sizes and styles in protest and as an demonstration of the Catholic faith that was under suppression and persecution during the terrible years of communism. Many times the communist would try and destroy the hill, which they did every time, but as soon as they would demolish it, the people during the night would return and put more crosses as a silent demonstration, constancy of their faith and a hope of liberation. Over the years, people from all over the world have come to visit (including St. John Paul II) and added their own crosses to the hill which has now become a symbol of faith, prayer and thanksgiving from the liberation of communism and also as a reminder of the spirit of hope and perseverance of the people when their faith was severely tested.

Again, I would like to thank everyone for all the prayers and support given to me especially in my times away from home. Even if it's through a quick email, a call or even a

donation and greeting, I'm always touched and deeply thankful for the wonderful community of friends and family that I am blessed to have. Please know that I will continue to pray for you, your family and your intentions. Also, for those who wish to continue to support me with donations, which are always very welcome and extremely helpful, the way possible is to send checks to the address below. Because I am overseas, it is the best and easiest way for you to give donations and for me to receive them. I only ask that you write the check out to "The Servants of the Lord" but in the memo box please write "Lithuania/Sr. Constancy". This way the sisters in the States are able send the check overseas and you don't have to worry about the expensive postage. Once again, thank you for all the prayers and support and May God bless you!

In Jesus and Mary,

Sister Mary Rock of Constancy Powell

**To support Sr. Constancy, please send donations to:**

Provincial House -Servants of the Lord

28 15th Street SE

Washington, DC 20003

*\*Please make checks payable to:* Servants of the Lord; but in the memo box please write Lithuania/Sr.Constancy