

## **Inter-European Division**

### **First Quarter 2020**

Supplemental information to share during mission story time in Sabbath School. Prepared by the Office of Adventist Mission.

### **Bulgaria**

1. The Bulgarian Union of Churches Conference has 118 churches, 104 companies, and a membership of 7,084. That's an average church size of 32 members.
2. In a population of 7,076,000, there is one Seventh-day Adventist for every 999 people in Bulgaria.
3. In 1899, Ellen G. White's "Steps to Christ" was translated into Bulgarian and published in Bulgaria, the first Adventist book to be translated into that language.
4. Bulgaria has no state religion, but most Bulgarian citizens identify as Eastern Orthodox Christians.
5. Bulgaria's Rila Monastery houses a wooden cross with 140 microscopic scenes from the Bible. The biggest of the 1,500 figures featured is smaller than a grain of rice.
6. Bulgaria is the oldest country in Europe that hasn't changed its name since it was first established, which was in 681 AD.
7. Plovdiv, the second-largest city in Bulgaria after the capital, Sofia, was founded 7,000 years ago, making it the oldest city in Europe outside Greece.
8. The famous Bulgarian rose oil is used for making some of the world's most-popular and expensive perfumes. It takes 1,000 rose blossoms to make 1/3 ounce (one gram) of rose oil.
9. Every year on March 1, Baba Marta Day (Grandmother March), Bulgarians exchange *martenitsi*, small pieces of adornment, made of white and red yarn, usually in the form of two dolls, a male and a female (Pizho, who is usually white, and Penda, who is usually red). Martenitsi are worn from Baba Marta Day until the wearer first sees a stork, swallow, or blossoming tree (or until late March) and symbolize the end of Winter.
10. The first digital wristwatch was invented by a Bulgarian named Peter Petroff.
11. Bulgarians shake their heads to mean "yes" and nod for "no."
12. The official language of Bulgaria is Bulgarian, and all ethnic groups speak it, either as a first or second language. It is the oldest-written Slavic language and is written in the Cyrillic alphabet.
13. The Cyrillic alphabet was invented by two Bulgarian monks (Cyril and Methodius) during the 10th century.
14. The food in Bulgaria has a strong Greek and Turkish influence, with dishes like baklava and Shopska salad. In fact, because of the popularity of a wide variety of salads, meat consumption is lower in Bulgaria than the European average.
15. The national instrument is the bagpipes, called the *gaida* in Bulgaria. There are only three nations in the world that employ the bagpipes in their traditional music — Scotland, Ireland, and Bulgaria.
16. According to Mensa, Bulgarians score second highest in the world in IQ scores as well as SAT scores. The person with the highest IQ ever recorded by Mensa is Bulgarian Daniela Simidchieva, who achieved a score of 200.
17. Rila is a mountain range in southwestern Bulgaria and the highest mountain range of Bulgaria and the Balkans; its highest peak is Musala, at 9,596 feet (2,925 meters).

18. Bulgaria has three national parks, 11 nature parks and 54 nature reserves. Forests cover about 35 percent of the country and deer, bears, wild boars, wolves, foxes, badgers, jackals, and lynx may be found.
19. The Rock-hewn Churches of Ivanovo are a group of monolithic churches, chapels, and monasteries hewn out of solid rock. The caves in the region were inhabited by monks from the 13th to the 17th centuries, where they cut cells, churches, and chapels out of solid rock.
20. The Bulgarian folk song “Izlel e Delio Haydutin” was included with Bach’s and Mozart’s greatest works when the Voyager 1 and Voyager 2 probes were launched into space in 1977.
21. Orpheus, a legendary musician, poet, and prophet in ancient Greek myth, is said to have come from ancient Thrace, part of which now makes up southern Bulgaria.
22. Although Bulgaria allied with Germany during World War II, it was one of only two countries (the other was Finland) that protected their Jewish inhabitants from being sent to the Nazi concentration camps.
23. Bulgaria’s population is shrinking due to low birth rates and outward migration. It is estimated that the current population will decline by almost one-third by the year 2060.
24. Kozunak is a traditional braided sweet bread. It is a favorite among Bulgarians, especially during Easter.

## Czech Republic

1. The Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference has 191 churches, 42 companies, and a membership of 9,736. That's an average church size of 42 members.
2. In a population of 16,031,000, there is one Seventh-day Adventist for every 1,338 people in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.
3. Seventh-day Adventist tracts in the Czech language were prepared as early as 1890 by the Hamburg Publishing House. A Czech Baptist in Hamburg by the name of Antonin Simon read these tracts, accepted the Adventist doctrines the same year, and at once translated some other tracts. After returning to Bohemia, he settled near Prague. The members of the Simon family were active missionaries and soon made converts of many of their associates and neighbors.
4. The government of the old Austro-Hungarian monarchy strongly opposed efforts to teach Protestant doctrines, especially through the circulation of publications. Early Adventist colporteurs were arrested several times while doing colporteur work in 1912.
5. The Czech Republic ranks as one of the least religious populations in the world, with only 19 percent of them claiming to believe in God.
6. The word robot was first used by Czech writer, Karl Capek, in his play, "R. U. R.," to describe creatures that could perform all the work humans didn't want to do and had no soul. Robota means "drudgery" or "hard work" in Czech.
7. The astronomical clock in the capital, Prague, was installed in 1410, making it the oldest in the world.
8. According to the "Guinness Book of Records," Prague Castle is the largest ancient castle in the world, with more than 700 rooms. It occupies an area of almost 750,000 square feet (70,000 square meters). It is about 1,870 feet (570 meters) in length and an average of about 430 feet (130 meters) wide.
9. Puppetry and marionette exhibitions are very popular for both children and adults and puppetry festivals are held throughout the country each year. The puppet museum in Prague has the largest collection in the world.
10. The Czech Republic is known worldwide for its mouth-blown decorated art glass and crystal, all individually made.
11. Czechs have invented the first grounded lightning rod, the screw propeller, the modern compass, sugar cubes, photogravure, the arc lamp, the plastic explosive Semtex, and soft contact lenses, among other things.
12. Germany occupied the Czech part of the nation during World War II until being liberated by the U.S. and the Soviet Union in 1945. By 1946 the country had become Communist under Soviet influence. During the 1989 Velvet Revolution, the communist regime collapsed and in June 1993, Czechoslovakia was peacefully dissolved. It then became two independent states: the Czech Republic and Slovakia.
13. Skoda Auto, Europe's largest carmaker, is based in the Czech Republic.
14. The Czech Republic is castle capital of the world. With more than 2,000 of them, the country has the highest density of castles in the world.



## Italy/Sicily

1. The Italian Union of Churches Conference has 110 churches, 18 companies and a membership of 9,491. That's an average church size of 74 members.
2. In a population of 61,012,000, there is one Seventh-day Adventist for every 6,428 people in Italy.
3. Italy occupies a unique place in denominational history in that it was the first country in Europe in which Adventist doctrines were preached. M.B. Czechowski, a former Polish Catholic priest, had been baptized in 1857, and had worked among French-speaking people in the United States. He failed to persuade the Seventh-day Adventists to send him to Europe and so he went under the sponsorship of another Adventist denomination, arriving in Torre Pellice, in the Waldensian valleys of Piedmont, northern Italy, in 1864, where he taught Seventh-day Adventist doctrines.
4. Italian Adventist University Villa Aurora (Istituto Avventista di Cultura Biblica Villa Aurora) is located in Florence, Italy and teaches Theology and Italian Language, Art and Culture, the latter to mostly foreign students.
5. Sicily is the largest and most populated island of the Mediterranean. It stretches over nearly 10,000 square miles (25,711 sq km) and is followed by Sardinia and the much smaller Cyprus.
6. Sicily's Etna is the tallest active volcano in Europe, and it is still active: spectacular eruptions are often visible from many miles (kilometers) away.
7. Sicily is separated from the Italian mainland by the Strait of Messina, only 2 miles (3 km) wide at its narrowest point.
8. Sicily has been affected by man-made deforestation since Roman times, when the island was turned into an agricultural region. The climate gradually dried, leading to a decline in rainfall and the drying of rivers. The central and southwest areas of the island are nearly completely devoid of forest.
9. Sicily has a wide variety of animals, including fox, least weasel, pine marten, roe deer, wild boar, crested porcupine, hedgehog, common toad, Vipera aspis, golden eagle, peregrine falcon, hoopoe, and black-winged stilt.
10. Sicily is well known for its varied and delicious food, of which cannoli is probably the best known — tube-shaped fried pastry dough with a sweet filling usually containing ricotta cheese.
11. One of the characteristic cultural traditions of Sicily is the "Opera dei Pupi" (Opera of the Puppets): a marionette theatrical representation of romantic poems such as the "Song of Roland" or "Orlando Furioso."
12. The Sicilian coppola is a traditional kind of flat cap (usually made in tweed) typically worn by men in Sicily. Today it is widely regarded as a definitive symbol of Sicilian heritage.
13. Today in Sicily most people are bilingual and speak both Italian and Sicilian, although the use of Sicilian is limited to informal contexts (mostly in family).

## **Romania**

1. The Romania Union Conference has 1,096 churches, 243 companies, and a membership of 64,295. That's an average church size of 48 members.
2. In a population of 19,596,000, there is one Seventh-day Adventist for every 385 people in Romania.
3. Seventh-day Adventist doctrines were first preached in Romania by M.B. Czechowski, a former Polish Catholic priest who had learned of the seventh-day Sabbath and of the imminent return of Christ while he was in the United States. Returning to Europe in 1864, he preached these doctrines in Italy and Switzerland even though he had not been sent by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In the winter of 1868-69 he came to Romania and preached in Pitesti, where about 12 people accepted the message.
4. The name "Romania" comes from the Latin word "Romanus," which means "citizen of the Roman Empire."
5. Peles Castle in Sinaia was the first European castle entirely lit by electricity, which was produced by the castle's own plant, and its central heating system, built in 1888, is still functional and in use today.
6. The tallest wooden church in the world, and the second-tallest wooden structure in Europe, is found in Sapanta Peri, Maramures, in northwestern Romania. The church is 257 feet (78 meters) tall and is topped by a 23-foot (7 meter) cross that weighs 1,000 pounds (454 kg).
7. The first perfect 10 awarded in the Olympic Games went to Romanian gymnast Nadia Comaneci for her performance on the uneven bars in Montreal, Canada, in 1976.

## Slovakia

1. The Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference has 191 churches, 42 companies, and a membership of 9,736. That's an average church size of 42 members.
2. In a population of 16,031,000, there is one Seventh-day Adventist for every 1,338 people in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.
3. The Slovak Constitution guarantees freedom of religion. In a survey carried out in 2011, 62 percent of Slovaks identified themselves as Roman Catholics, 8.9 percent as Protestants, 3.8 percent as Greek Catholics, 0.9 percent as Orthodox, 13.4 percent identified themselves as atheists or non-religious, and 10.6 percent gave no answer.
4. Tennis champion Martina Hingis, former world No. 1 and winner of five Grand Slam singles titles and nine Grand Slam women's doubles titles, was born in Slovakia in 1980 to a Slovak father and a Czech mother.
5. Štefan Banič (1870-1941) invented the first actively used parachute, patenting it in 1913.
6. Slovakia has the world's highest number of castles and chateaux per capita. There are 180 castles and 425 chateaux in a country with a population smaller than New York City.
7. The picturesque village of Čičmany in northern Slovakia is the world's first reservation of folk architecture. The village is particularly famous for its traditional wooden houses, decorated with white geometrical patterns, which can also be found on the folk costumes of the villagers.
8. Nearly 50 well-preserved wooden churches stand all over Slovakia, several of which are part of the cultural heritage of UNESCO. The oldest and best preserved of them is the church of St. Francis of Assisi in Hervartov, built in 1500.
9. According to a chromosomal study conducted in 2009, of all the non-Roma populations in the world, Slovaks have the highest percentage of Romani, or Gypsy, genes.
10. The caves in Slovakia are so unusual that the UNESCO has named a large number of them as World Heritage Sites. The rarest flower-like formations called Aragonite formations can be seen here.
11. The most popular sports in Slovakia are ice hockey and soccer.
12. Bryndzové Halušky is one of the national dishes in Slovakia. It consists of small potato dumplings (halušky), similar to gnocchi, and a soft sheep cheese (bryndza). There is an annual Bryndzové Halušky festival in Turecká that features an eating contest.

## Spain

1. The Spanish Union of Churches Conference has 110 churches, 54 companies, and a membership of 16,748. That's an average church size of 102 members.
2. In a population of 46,687,000, there is one Seventh-day Adventist for every 2,788 people in Spain.
3. The territory of Spain was assigned to the Latin Union Conference when it was organized in 1902. B.G. Wilkinson, Jean Vuilleumier, and Jules Robert were sent in 1903 to survey the possibilities and to evaluate prospects for evangelism in Spain, giving special attention to the large cities of Barcelona and Madrid. On his return, Jules Robert wrote, "After a stay of four weeks in Spain, we have only good reports to give of this country, in regard to the facilities for evangelization, because, in spite of existing conditions, God has opened a way" (in "Messenger de la Prophétie," May 1903).
4. Through the years, thousands of Adventist books have been sold in all the mainland provinces of Spain and in the Balearic and the Canary Islands. Especially successful was the sale of the health book "Guia Practica de la Salud" ("Practical Guide to Health").
5. According to a 2012 study by the Center for Sociological Studies in Spain, although around 70 percent of Spain's population are Roman Catholic, only 13.6 percent actually goes to church.
6. Spanish is the second-most widely spoken language in the world, after Chinese. There are an estimated 437 million people native speakers of Spanish. While Castilian Spanish is the official language, in Catalonia, the Basque country, and Galicia, the regional languages of Catalan, Basque, and Galician all have official status.
7. Spain's capital, Madrid, is located in the center of the country and has a population of more than 3 million. The most ancient recorded name of the city, Magerit, comes from the name of a fortress built on the Manzanares River in the ninth century and means "place of abundant water" in Arabic.
8. Spanish author Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra is considered to be the greatest writer in the Spanish language and one of the world's most eminent novelists. His book "Don Quixote," written in 1605, is considered to be the first modern novel and has been translated into more than 140 languages and dialects. It is, after the Bible, the most-translated book in the world.
9. The first known stapler was made in the 18th century in the Basque region of Spain for the French King Louis XV — and every single staple was engraved with the royal emblem.
10. Spain produces more than half of the world's olive oil — more than 1.5 million tons, and almost all of it comes from the southern region of Andalusia.
11. Although other restaurants claim they are older, the title of the oldest restaurant in the world has been awarded by "Guinness World Records" to Restaurante Botín, in Madrid, which has been open since 1725.
12. Spain has a variety of foods and unique dishes such as paella (a type of rice dish) and tapas (a range of small snacks or appetizers).
13. The 1992 Summer Olympic Games were held in Barcelona, the second-largest city in Spain.



## **Game**

### **Romania**

#### **Water and Fire**

“Water and Fire” is a popular game in Romania, very similar to the U.S. game, “Hot and Cold.” One player leaves the room and the other players hide an object. The first player returns to the room and tries to find the hidden object guided only by clues from other players such as “fire” if he is close, or “water” if he is farther away.

## **Recipe**

### **Slovakia**

#### **Bryndzové Halušky (Potato dumplings with cheese)**

2 servings

#### **Ingredients**

2 medium potatoes

1 cup (125 g) flour

1 (5 ml) tsp salt

4.4 oz (125 g) bryndza or other soft cheese like feta, goat, or cottage

3 tbsp (50 ml) cream (optional)

#### **Instructions**

Grate the potatoes and place in a bowl. Mix flour and salt with potatoes to make a thick, sticky dough.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.

Place several small spoonfuls of the halusky mix into the boiling water and give them a quick stir. The batter should cook into soft dumplings in 3-4 minutes. If it's not holding together, add more flour to the batter to thicken it.

Cook the halusky until they float to the top and have changed color. Strain out with a slotted spoon and place into a colander to drain. Repeat the process until all the batter is cooked and let drain for 2-3 minutes.

Transfer to a large bowl and mix with the cheese until evenly coated. To make it extra creamy, you can mix in some cream.

Recipe adapted from Cookpad.com ([bit.ly/CookpadHalusky](https://bit.ly/CookpadHalusky))

## **Songs**

### **Jesus Loves Me**

#### **English**

Jesus loves me, this I know  
For the Bible tells me so  
Little ones to Him belong  
They are weak, but He is strong

Yes, Jesus loves me x 3  
The Bible tells me so

#### **Spanish**

Cristo me ama, bien lo se  
Su palabra me hace ver  
Que los niños son de aquel  
Quien es nuestro amigo fiel

Si, Cristo me ama x 3  
La Biblia dice así

For pronunciation see the YouTube video at [bit.ly/JesusLovesMeSpanish](http://bit.ly/JesusLovesMeSpanish)

#### **German**

Jesus liebt mich, ganz gewiss  
Denn die Bibel sagt mir dies,  
Alle Kinder gross un klein,  
Ladt Er herzlich zu sich ein.

Ja, Jesus liebt mich x 3  
Denn die Bibel sagt mir dies.

For pronunciation see the YouTube video at [bit.ly/JesusLovesMeGerman](http://bit.ly/JesusLovesMeGerman)

**Italian**

Gesù mi ama, questo lo so  
perchè me lo dice la Bibbia  
I piccoli appartengono a Lui  
loro sono deboli, ma Egli è forte.

Si, Gesù mi ama x 3  
è la Bibbia che me lo dice

**Romanian**

Isus mă iubeşte, ştiu asta  
Deoarece Biblia îmi spune aşa  
Cei mici îi aparţin Lui  
Eu sunt slabi, dar El este puternic

Da, Isus mă iubeşte x 3  
Biblia îmi spune aşa

**Slovak**

Ježiš ma miluje, to viem  
lebo tak mi to hovorí Biblia  
Malíčkí (deti) patria k nemu  
Su slabí, no on je silný

Áno, Ježiš ma miluje x 3  
Tak mi to hovorí Biblia