

Artur Radvansky



This photograph of me was taken in 1964 or 1965 by a Catholic priest. When the Prague Spring arrived, I was terribly glad and the course of events after 1968 greatly disappointed me. On the other hand, after the arrival of the Soviet armies, I searched out Jews among the soldiers, and made friends with them. I for example got to know one sergeant who used to come to our place for holidays and Sabbath suppers, along with other Jews. I worked at the Academy of Sciences until 1977, when I retired. That year we moved to Prague-Suchdol, about two hundred meters from the Theoretical Chemistry Technology Institute. In the beginning it was I who went about raising money to have the institute completed, and because I succeeded, I was quite respected. In this part of Prague our family also built a house, where today my daughter Anicka and her family live. In the 1970s I started working at the Jewish religious community with children from five to 15 years old. I met with them on Saturday once every fourteen days, we'd play ping-pong, tell fairy tales, I read to them from 'Modche and Rezi' by Vojtech Rakous as well as passages written by the Kolin rabbi Feder for Czech youth magazines. The children liked it very much. I gradually began to tell them about the concentration camps. By then my girlfriend Misha Vidlakova was helping me out. She took a group of the smallest children and I had the older ones. But basically both groups were always together. We also took the children to camp. They were camps à la going camping with your uncle, no parading around, assembly, or hoisting a flag up and down the flagpole.