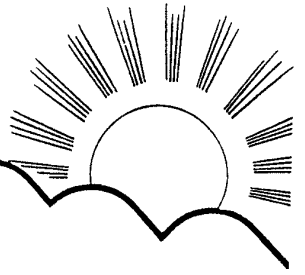


Vladivostok Sunrise



Mary Mother of God Mission Society Vladivostok Russia St Paul Minnesota

Issue Number Thirty Seven January 1, 2001



Christmas Mass by Candlelight at Nativity of Our Lord Parish, Ussurisk

Sister Parishes

Nativity of Our Lord Parish, Ussurisk Primorye

By V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.

Christmas of 2000! The Jubilee Christmas. It was the first parish feastday of the new Parish of the Nativity of Our Lord in Ussurisk. After struggling through some growing pains in the first year, the parish went all out to celebrate its feastday. The celebration took place on December 26 when Fr Myron, the pastor, could come for Christmas Mass. There were Christmas decorations everywhere, a Christmas tree, a manger scene handmade by the kids. The parish decided to celebrate the Christmas Mass by candlelight only, which gave a warm glow to everyone present. The Children prepared a skit for after mass showing that our efforts to help others are gifts to the Christ Child. After the skit Grandfather Frost came to give presents to the children, but each child had to show some talent in order to receive a gift. Many of the children sang songs in German or Polish, some recited their favorite poem, or they showed the Christmas decorations they had made. Then there was Christmas tea for everybody. The menu included corn and calemari salad, tomatoes, Korean carrot salad, baked garlic, potatoes with pork, fried fish, bread, and a huge decorated cake which was



The Good Angel of Christmas and kids from the skit.



A beautiful Slabbinck Nativity banner graces the wall behind our temporary altar. We forgot who the American donor was!

a gift to us from the bakery where we usually buy bread for our charitable operations.

We received a small grant from Europe to help with kids at Christmas, so there were presents not only for our kids, but also for the kids in the nearby orphanages. Soon our children will present the skit in the city orphanages, and give Christmas presents of fruit to the orphans who rarely see it. Thanks to the US Catholic Bishops' collection for Russia, we have a keyboard instrument which the kids will use for music at the skit.

My lectures about alcoholism and drug abuse continue in Ussurisk. We are hoping to help the young people understand and cope with the increased drug abuse of Russia.



Fr Myron at the first lecture on alcoholism in Ussurisk.



Dr Sergei Yakovlev, Doctor of Marine Science, often accompanies me at the lectures to speak about AA.

Three generations listen with hope to the Gospel.



Something is very obvious in Ussurisk--the parish apartment (three rooms) won't be big enough for long. When will we be able to build a church? And when will we have more priests? Something else is obvious—the parish will be a very active one, just like its namesake. Soon we want to start a Women's



Grand"father" Frost was a hit. But where were the men?

Support Center. We are already working in the orphanages. We use the parish apartment for children's lessons in foreign languages as well as religion, and we have done a big job in all of the colleges and trade schools in the city in regard to

alcoholism and drug abuse. We would hope that those contacts will allow us to establish a chaplaincy, but where will we get the priest or sister or trained lay person? And, of course, the money to make it happen.

Sister Parishes

Nativity of Our Lord Parish, St Paul Minnesota

By Jerry Alfveby

Which sister parish gets the newsletter *Vladivostok Sunrise* printed and distributed six times each year? --The parish of the Nativity of Our Lord in St. Paul, Minnesota! Nativity also helps in other ways. The parish has an envelope for our mission each month; they have had three clothing drives; our web-site, www.vladmission.org, was set up and is maintained by Nativity parishioner Jim Weatherly. Parishioners pray for us at their perpetual adoration chapel. The late pastors were very involved with the mission, Monsignor Clarence Steiner along with other parishioners donating the Nativity window for our church in Vladivostok and Father Patrick Lannan inaugurating the sister parish relationship. Our deep gratitude is hereby extended to Nativity's current pastor, Father Peter Christensen, and to all at Nativity who help us with their prayers, work and donations.



Nativity's huge and beautiful church is one of its joys.

Now let us discuss the newsletter. Each issue begins with text and pictures sent by e-mail from Vladivostok to Melanee Targia in Minnesota where her husband Chris uses a laser printer to make the copy ready for printing. The photo-ready copy is sent to the Missionary Sisters of St. Peter Claver in St Paul for printing. When Sister Susan finishes printing the 15,000 newsletters, they are transported to Nativity Church by parishioners Sandra and David Sonnen, our national coordinators. Kate Fischer and the committee secretary, Lucy Alfveby, call the newsletter committee plus volunteers from the Nativity Council of Catholic Women to help fold, tape and label those individual newsletters which are to be mailed within the United States. Melanee meanwhile has updated the addresses before computer generated labels are printed with appropriate postal bar codes. Virginia Murphy got us started with Bulk mail, a considerable savings, and she still funds the monthly update

program. Kate Fischer gets the postal trays and Bill and Harriet Kiffè take the loaded trays to the post office. John Scullin mails the newsletters to the international addresses.

Wow! The process generally takes three days of work (9-4) to fold and tape plus 2 hours on the third evening to do the labeling and get the postal trays loaded for mailing and the bulk boxes ready for delivery to churches in Minnesota and around the country.



Perpetual adoration chapel at Nativity.

Getting our newsletter printed and distributed six times a year requires a considerable amount of work and is a tribute to the commitment of our dedicated sister parish of the Nativity of Our Lord in St. Paul, Minnesota. To all involved we send our prayers and gratitude. Congratulations to Nativity on your parish feastday: Christmas, and especially on this Jubilee of Christmas in this year 2000.

News Notes

by Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.

- We have a new secretary for our non-profit corporation "Mary Mother of God Mission Society": Mrs Laurie Murphy. Laurie, a member of our Sister Parish Committee at Nativity of Our Lord Parish in St Paul MN, has served our mission as our Notary Public, and she has been taking care of our shipments of clothing and humanitarian aid from Minnesota.

Laurie will try to fill the shoes of our retiring secretary, Virginia Murphy, also of Nativity in St Paul. Virginia was the founding secretary of the corporation, and took care of

much of the registration and tax-exempt paper processing. She also helped with the publication of the *Sunrise*, and took care of its labelling and mailing, bringing us online with a more efficient mailing system, and inaugurating our business reply permit. Virginia has hosted Russians immigrants and students in her home, but is retiring as secretary due to poor health. Our love and prayers are with her. Thank you, Virginia, for a job well done!

Virginia and Laurie have both been members of Nativity sister parish committee from the very beginning. Both are altar preparers at Nativity, so it is fitting that we would catch them passing the torch in the middle of their favorite work, dusting the tabernacle at Nativity.



Virginia Murphy and Laurie Murphy (not relatives) both take care of the sanctuary at Nativity of Our Lord Parish in St Paul.

- Congratulations to Brother Oleg Nicolaevich Yelchaninov who took simple private vows on December 12, 2000, as a member of the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord. He completed his novitiate project, which was the study and review of the translation of documents relating to the history and life of communities of Canons Regular. After taking vows he went for a vacation to his home city of Blagoveschensk to celebrate his mother's jubilee birthday, and to see friends and relatives after his year-long ordeal as a novice under novicemaster Fr Myron Effing. His spiritual director was Fr Daniel Maurer. Brother Oleg is interested in the History of the Liturgy, and plans to do more study in this area. Meanwhile he is responsible for the liturgical fixtures and preparations for holydays in Vladivostok.

- In a note from Tad Michel of New Bern NC: "I note that according to the legible inscription, the large bell (St. Mary) shown in *Vladivostok Sunrise 36* is a gift from the families of the Poles murdered in the Katyn forest in April 1940. My stepfather was among those killed."

- "I took the liberty of writing the Holy Father with an enclosed copy of our last newsletter showing our new bells that he blessed while both he and the bells were still in Poland. The return letter can be seen on our web page."—Sandy Sommen



Brother Oleg saying the Magnificat after his clothing in his new canonical habit.

- Four Orthodox priests came to our Christmas "Midnight Mass" (which was really at 6pm—Our city is too dangerous at night with no public transportation to have Christmas Mass later!) It was a first! Some priests have come earlier, but dressed in lay clothes. This time they came in their cassocks and sat in the front row. We hope it is a sign of reconciliation between our Churches to come. If the second millennium was a thousand years of schism in the Church, we can hope and pray for 1000 years of peace in the Church for the third millennium!

At our Mass the kids put on a little drama, and it was the best ever in our nine years in Russia--more kids, better talent and organization, and better costumes. The children show the development of our work over time, and the big help which the Sisters of St Anne are to us.

We also received a letter from the Governor Nasdratenko which was read by his representative thanking our parish for all that we do for the poor and especially for children in our state. All of these things are gifts from you, and I hope your joy is like ours at this time of year.

- Recently I gave lectures about alcoholism in Ussurisk, and in Lesozovodsk. Soon we will begin lectures in Arsenyev. We are hoping to help young people understand and cope with the increased drug abuse of Russia.

- What a blessing that a donor recently gave us money to replace our car which we bought used three years ago. Actually we will continue to use it, together with its replacement--we just have more work and more miles to run, so both cars are already needed. My secretary Nicolai

Dorodnov is studying for his driver's license, and our helper Viktor Anisimov already has a license, so the two cars will soon be in full use, I'm sure.

- Our new deacon and seminarian Evgenie Peregudov came home for Christmas, which has been very helpful for us and joyful for the parish.

- Fr Dan is super busy, not only helping me with the home parish in Vladivostok for Christmas, but also preparing four Christmas organ concerts. There were supposed to be three concerts, but so many people were disappointed that the tickets were sold out and Fr Dan decided to add one concert. One of the vice-governors bought tickets. There will also be the ecumenical Christmas Festival of Choirs in early January. The concert program is more and more popular, and introduces many people for the first time to our church.

Vladivostok Parish's CARITAS

by V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.

A branch of CARITAS International, the Catholic charitable organization was established already in 1992 in Vladivostok. Its success can be measured by the fact that it has expanded to include all of the parishes of our territory, and even some units which are not related to parishes. That means that each parish has its own volunteers and programs. Here I'd like to tell about the activities of our own parish division of CARITAS.



Lilia showing with joy the colorful items that volunteers made for orphans for Christmas.

The parish director is Lilia Timofeevna Silina, but she has many volunteers who help with the work. I'll just list here some of the programs, which are many and varied.

1. Visiting the elderly of the parish and taking them Holy Communion with the help of Sister Evgenia once per month. The priests take Holy Communion at Easter, Christmas, and in the Fall. Sometimes there is trouble getting a car for the day.



Boys from the street gather at one of the feeding stations. They won't cross gang lines, so several places are needed.

2. Feeding the street children. This program is coordinated by Rachael's Volunteers, a Protestant affiliated charity, but our parish takes charge on one day per week. We could use a food wagon which could make a profit from regular sales in order to pay for food for the children.



A nourishing dinner for those in need.

3. Soup kitchen, which operates five days per week. This program is sponsored by CARITAS Japan, and our volunteers do a great job of coordinating the program, and clearing those who qualify. We don't have our own premises, but we have a contract with a local cafeteria for food service. We dream of expanding to two locations in our huge city.



Our clients pay for their meal with a ticket from CARITAS

If the weather is cold, our clients can take a meal home so as not to have to be in the cold two days in a row.



Recess

4. Orphanage program, where our volunteers and Sister Rosario help take care of the children, especially after the noon nap time when care can be urgent. The orphanage when we work is very young children who are often in the process of being adopted. We are hoping to offer adoptions ourselves, soon.

Sister Rosario and one of her charges.



The hot water heater that CARITAS installed in the baby orphanage.

"Did you come to adopt me?"



5. Sewing program in which our parishioners sew and knit items for the orphanage, for the elderly, and for sale—booties, night clothing, hotpads, decorations, etc. We could use a serger, and additional sewing machines.

6. Sunday tea is served nearly every Sunday in our first floor social hall. This is very important so that parishioners can get to know one another.



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- parish is required to sponsor. We have written to the Propagation of the Faith office in each diocese so they are familiar with our mission. We have excellent references from our bishop in Russia, the bishop in Minnesota where we are incorporated, as well as several other bishops who know us. We also have an honorary board of directors who are happy to endorse our work (Ask for the list.). Might you help us to spread the mission work by hosting us at your parish for a mission preaching date?
- Please consider donating your frequent flyer miles to the mission. We need miles for in the States as well as foreign travel. United, Delta, NWA, American, Korean, all fly to Seoul on the way to Vladivostok.
 - We are in need of a slide projector, slide carosel, a tape dubbing machine, a VCR. Please call Sandra at the mission office 651-690-5139 or e-mail at russianmission@Juno.com if you have any of these items to donate.
 - We need religious goods except rosaries. Please send to the mission office in Minnesota, especially crosses with a corpus on them, old or new. We also need several accordions for children who are taking lessons, but who don't have an instrument of their own.
 - We are receiving more than 200 hits on our website "www.vladmission.org" each week. We are very grateful! Please check it monthly for updates and information. Now you can also donate through the website using your credit card.
 - We haven't mentioned the Family Emergency Fund for a while. The fund is for families in Russia in need of emergency help--a sick child, a burned-out apartment, mothers with many children but no money to buy winter boots for them, unexpected funeral or medical expenses, lose of work, etc. Imagine the US without welfare or Catholic Charities or county social services. This fund allows Father Effing to personally help those in grave need. One might decide on a monthly donation to this fund.
 - Foreign checks cost the mission \$18 to cash. To save money for the mission, those not living in the States can donate using their credit card and our website, www.vladmission.org, to transfer funds through www.helping.org, or you can accumulate your donations for several months and send a larger, more efficient sum.
 - We hope to finish the restoration of the Cathedral of Most Holy Mother of God in Vladivostok. Also we have dug the foundation for the parish /rectory building. But we are only 1/3 of the way financially. We want to move our priests and seminarians from where they live

now--on couches in their offices and in the drafty belltower of the church where there are problems with mold and the antique piping system. Please see the web site www.vladmission.org or *Vladivostok Sunrise #35* for a donations list. and help us get the job done! What a gift of graces to your family and loved ones to donate to the Church rising out of Communism in Russia.

- In this newsletter you will find in the reply envelope we have enclosed several Mission Society business cards. We hope you will be our ambassador, and pass these cards along to friends who might be interested in our work. If you would like additional cards, please let us know.

God love you all. Gratefully yours, in Christ,

Sandra Sonnen, National Coordinator

How to Communicate with Us Russian Office:

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E-mail: myron@eastnet.febras.ru

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CARITAS@mail.primorye.ru

Internet Russian language: <http://www.catholic.ru>

Please do **not** send any **donations** of any kind directly to Russia. For donation information, see below. **Letters** without donations can be sent to:

Most Holy Mother of God Catholic Parish

Volodarskovo 22

690001 Vladivostok RUSSIA

American Office:

Phone: (651)690-5139

FAX: (651)690-5139

E-mail: RussianMission@juno.com

Internet: <http://www.vladmission.org>

Donations of money and **letters** should be sent to:

Mary Mother of God Mission Society

1854 Jefferson Ave

St Paul MN 55105-1662

Or you can donate from your credit card through our web site. Your donations are tax-deductible. You will receive any required receipt for IRS tax purposes by return mail.

Donations in kind. If you have items that you think we can use, please contact Mrs Sandra Sonnen at the Mission Office in St Paul giving a complete list of items.

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From the development desk...

Dear Readers,

- A special treat for you: We will enter the name of everyone we hear from between January and Easter in a special drawing of prizes donated by our friends. We want to show our appreciation of your support for the building of the new parish center and rectory for our priests and seminarians in Vladivostok. Gifts of thanks included in the drawing are:
 1. Use of a 2-Bedroom Beachfront Condo for One-Week on Ft. Myers Beach, FL
 2. A 16 x 20 Double-Matted Framed Image of Our Lady of Vladivostok
 3. A 12X16 Double-Matted Framed Set of "Blessing Before Meals" in Russian and English
 4. Two Beautiful Wood Crosses handmade in Russia
 5. Our Lady of Grace Porcelain Music Box from Ardleigh Elliot Galleries
 6. A Beautiful Set of Ballpoint Pens handcrafted in Natural Wood by a Mission Supporter
- We are starting more Women's Support Centers in Russian cities, which require \$15,000 start up fees and \$5,000 a year to maintain. Please approach your

churches, K of C's. A few nights of Bingo would be all a center would need for a year's operation. These centers can serve as temporary parish centers, too. Just think, you could buy and fund a parish!

- We are very much in need of more parish support to better assist our mission effort in the Russian Far East. Fr Myron has just finished an exhausting month in the States. When the priests travel away from Russia many of their far away parishes do not receive their planned monthly visit from a priest so it is actually two months until they receive the sacraments. We hope to have volunteer speakers here in the States to do some of the American parish visits. Also, we are seeking conferences where we might have a mission table set up to be attended by a local helper of the mission. You are our eyes and our ears. We need this assistance if the mission is to continue to expand at its present rate. I look forward to hearing any suggestions from you as to how we can accomplish these endeavors in your home parish.
- Currently we are developing a speakers' bureau. We are looking for laymen who might speak for us at various parishes preferably in their area but possibly traveling as well. Please consider approaching your pastor with the idea of inviting us for the yearly mission date that each

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