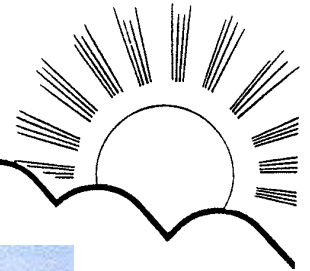


Vladivostok Sunrise

Mary Mother of God Mission Society Vladivostok Russia St Paul Minnesota

Issue Number Fifty Seven May 1, 2004



Will it or Won't it?

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

It is a question which we can't answer now, because the answer depends upon several factors:

1. Cash. We received \$200,000 from the Kopp Family Foundation toward the combined church façade project and the rectory project. We received money from Father McGuire's Mission Share and from the Mary Stuart Rogers Foundation toward purchasing the land for the rectory project. That was four years ago! But other benefactors have been very slow to take an interest in giving our parish a place for offices and for giving us priests and seminarians a place to live. The combined cost of the projects is \$625,000. Currently members of our board are calling major benefactors to ask for their help to finish this project this year if possible! If you are called, please consider helping.
2. Labor. Russian labor is very scarce partly because of low birth rates, because of emigration of millions of Russians during the difficult last 15 years of economic struggles, theft of major resources, and the war in Chechnya (and no wonder the old folks dream of having Communism again!) Prime worktime in this cold climate is summer, and we are used to seeing lots of imported laborer from China and North Korea working on construction and in the agricultural projects. But last year SARS closed the border between Russia and China, and so our work stood still. Our hopes are on this year, and we've invited 40 Chinese workers to come to help us for the three summer months. There is again a SARS outbreak in China. Will



**Will it
Or
Won't It
Be
Built?**

Announcing...

**A Weekend Retreat with Fr Myron and Friends and Benefactors
Don't be "left behind"!**

When? October 22-24, 2004 (Friday evening through Sunday noon)

Where? St Paul, Minnesota. Events will be held at famous St Agnes Parish. Hotel accommodations at Sheraton Four Points Metrodome Hotel or homes of local benefactors.

Why? We will pray together for the success of our mission. We will share the stories of our mission and better understand why this mission is so important. We will get answers to our questions. We will learn how we can be even more effective as friends and benefactors of the mission.

How much will it cost? Meals: \$45. Local Transportation: \$30

How can I get more information? See page 6.

You'll be sorry if you miss this!!

we have the workers we need?

There is yet another aspect of the problem. “Thees ees Russia!” is the phrase we use when we are exasperated. Here is a recent exasperation related to our expected workers: The government hired a private firm to handle work permits for all organizations of our state who want to invite Chinese citizens to work in Russia. This is thousands of people! The firm was accepting visa applications only on Tuesdays, from 9:00 to 2:00. Half of their secretaries were sick or on vacation, or simply didn’t show up to work. The line was so long that people slept in their cars at the door of the office for days at a time, and there were fights about who was before whom in line. We were standing in line for three weeks, hoping to invite our workers in order to begin the construction and façade work. The Chinese need the work, but if you wait too long to invite them, they find other work in China. Their help is much needed in Russia, which has very seasonal demands for workers. It is a terrible situation. Luckily we were able to find “a friend of a friend” who included our request in his own since he was way ahead of us in line. Why doesn’t someone do something about this bad situation which brings much pain and suffering to Russians and Chinese alike? “Thees ees Russia!” It is an ideal situation for making lots of money on bribes! Oh! Happy Day!

3. Building Permissions. There has been a perpetual war between the city administration and the state administration. The agencies which can grant building permits are also warring, and the outcome of the latest battle determines to whom we have to go. But the battles aren’t the war, and when each side gets an advantage, they annul what was done by the other side. We feel like ping-pong balls. Add to that the anti-Catholic sentiments of some bureaucrats, and sheer size of the bureaucracy which eats up paper like its favorite food, and you’ve got a mess which keeps us on the move, trying to get all our ducks lined up for the final building permit. You may recall that we actually started the building process some years ago, expecting to get a permit any day at that time, especially because we can only lay the foundations in summer, and not on winter frozen grounds. No dice.

4. Static. A neighbor of ours keeps suing us for imagined offenses, using false witnesses (If you are desperate for a drink, you will swear to most anything, it seems.) The commissions from the court come to check out whether what he says is true, and, of course, it isn’t. He also keeps going to all the agencies where we need permissions with complaints about us, and so it makes them afraid to act. I asked Andre, “What does he really want from us?” Andre says that he wants is for us to buy his land and thus be rid of him. That would come to at least \$120,000. When the other neighbors ask the man why he keeps tormenting us, he answers “They are rich Americans!” I am praying for him because it seems to me he is putting a stick in the wheels of God’s progress. But in one sense he is right—we could use that land—but we certainly don’t have the funds to pay for it! We can’t afford what we are hoping to do this summer, and we are always in debt, let alone buying that land.

Ages ago in these pages I spoke about the need for capital for the church in Russia. Our neighbors to the far north in Magadan just “completed” their church, but are still suffering from lack of funding and most of the office space is not completed. Romanovka is hoping to solve its need for a church, working with its sister parish in Oregon. Nakhodka now barely has a chapel to call home after ten years, but still not a church. No parish in Nakhodka’s sister-city of Oakland, California even answers our mail. Arsenyev has bought an inexpensive old wooden log cabin to call a church after eight years of its existence. The Blagoveschensk parish is still in its “temporary” chemical laboratory even though the Russian Orthodox Church has already completed its new cathedral there (with major help from Catholics) and none-the-less refuses to give the Catholics back their historical building for a decent church—the one that their ancestors built from private funds! In Khabarovsk the old wooden Catholic church has been condemned by the fire department, but the government refuses to give it back to the Catholics so that they can build their new church on the land. (Earlier they offered me a piece of land to build a church on for \$1,000,000!) In Ussuryusk the parish bought a small three room wooden building with help from South Korea. And in Vladivostok? We too are still waiting, hoping and praying that this will be the summer!



The construction site for the Our Lady of Fatima Rectory and Parish Center.

The scaffold standing already two years waiting for workers.



First Ecumenical Easter Concerts

By Rev Daniel Maurer, C.J.D.

On April 14-15 the Vladivostok Catholic Parish of the Most Holy Mother of God hosted two performances of an Easter concert by a specially formed ecumenical Christian choir of 60 people from six different Christian confessions.

1. St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, founded 1864, refounded April 1992.
2. Most Holy Mother of God Roman Catholic Church, founded 1860's, refounded February 1992.
3. Central Baptist Church, founded 1913.
4. Good News Evangelical Church, founded 1991.
5. Vladivostok Methodist Church, founded June 1992.
6. First Presbyterian Church, founded June 1992.

It could be said that these concerts were our most successful musical program ever. After the performances concert goers used words such as "triumphant" and "ecstatic" to express their feelings.

Over a year ago, during the only rehearsal of the 2002 Christmas Festival of Christian Choirs, Marina Venyukova, the choir director of the Good News Evangelical Church, said to me (the organizer of the festivals), "Why do we do this in winter when half our choir members are sick in bed with colds and the flu? Why don't we do something for Easter when we can get out more easily for rehearsals in the evenings?"

That comment awoke an old dream of mine, which came to me in 1998 during the first annual Vladivostok Christmas Festival of Christian Choir: to organize and rehearse a large ecumenical choir of more than 50 members for a full concert of sacred music and hymns.

But a full concert requires much more organization, rehearsal time and money than the Christmas Festival, and had always seemed impossible. Little did the Evangelical choir director Marina know when she made her comment that it would be the catalyst to fulfill a dream. I began to look for the necessary financial support. Each pastor gave his strong support to the project. As one of them put it, "I'm in favor of any program which unites our churches in worthwhile service to the Gospel of Jesus."

After two general planning sessions we had decided on almost all of the repertoire (including orchestration and organ accompaniment), the rehearsal schedule and the concert dates. The first of nine joint rehearsals was held on Tuesday, February 24 at the Lutheran church, which is easier to get to by public transportation than our Catholic church. Each meeting and rehearsal was begun with an ecumenical prayer composed specifically for this project, followed by the Lord's Prayer.

Finding choral and musical arrangements of concert quality was not a problem. I sent an email letter to Dr David Jenkins, organ

professor and director of liturgical music at St Paul Seminary in St Paul, MN asking for his advice. He very graciously offered to look into the song titles I had suggested and find the arrangements. He wrote back with a number of very good suggestions. Our U.S. mission office in St. Paul obtained the arrangements for us and sent them to Vladivostok by fax and jpg file attachments in email letters.

When we began the search for suitable choral and orchestral arrangements, our organist Marina Omelchenko was away in Moscow for one month of organ lessons at the prestigious Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music. There she got to meet the cathedral choir members, one of whom recently graduated from the Moscow Conservatory with a degree in music composition. This young woman agreed to compose orchestral and choral arrangements for us for the very reasonable fee of \$50 a song! We decided to commission four new orchestral arrangements to go with four of the hymns. These are marked with an asterisk in the list below. Musically we divided the concert format into three parts without an intermission.



Fr Dan with the Ecumenical Easter Choir and orchestra.

First Part, the suffering, death and cross of Christ:

By Your Cross You Have Redeemed the World;
O Sacred Head Surrounded followed by an organ solo variation on the same theme;
*Via Dolorosa**;
How Sorrowful and Bitter to Us His Suffering;

Second Part, the glorious resurrection of Christ:

Meditation for organ and trumpet by Karl Bohm;
At Last the Long Awaited Day Has Dawned;
The Strife is O'er;
The Empty Tomb;
Cesar Franck's organ prelude No. 18;
*Jesus Christ is Risen Today**

Third Part, what our faith in the resurrection of Christ means for us and for the world:

*Holy is His Name** (John Michael Talbot);
The Lord is My Salvation;
Amazing Grace;
How Great Thou Art (organ solo and then choir;

Now Thank We All Our God (organ solo);
Give Praise to the Lord, Alleluia;
Sing With All the Sons of Glory.

To defray the part of the cost not covered by ticket sales we received donations of \$500 from parishioners of our Sister Parish of St Joseph in Modesto, CA and another \$500 to have the concert videotaped professionally from Mr Dimitri Ilic. Thus we broke even financially. You'll hear it on CD!

The concerts received heavy advance publicity from news and feature stories on two local TV stations, and advertised throughout the city by 100 beautifully designed posters. The concert has brought us a priceless amount of good will, and much PR. Thanks for helping to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ risen from the dead to a city desperately in need of this saving message.

News Notes

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

- I received the following letter, forwarded from our Minnesota office, on the feast of St Joseph, March 19: "Dear Sandra, It was a delight to spend some time with Fr Myron when he passed through Saginaw. We moved here to Michigan in August, and as of March 1, we still had not sold our house in Ohio. I had been praying to St Joseph to help us sell--double house payments were getting us down. Anyway, at the beginning of March, I told St Joseph that in honor of his upcoming feast day, if he helped sell our house in Ohio by the end of March, then, the first time I do not have to make 2 house payments, I would send the amount of the Ohio house payment to Vladivostok for use in the orphanages. (Is that bribery?) Anyway, within 2 weeks we had a signed contract for the house, which will close in April. In May I will send the \$2500 I would normally have to pay for the mortgage. I guess St Joseph felt the children in Vladivostok need the money more than the mortgage company does! God Bless, Sue." Dear Sue, I think St Joseph is happy with that kind of bribery! When I told the Parish of St Joseph in Vladivostok about your plans, they applauded. We will use the money for the orphans of Sovietsky County where St Joseph's Parish is located.

- St Joseph was busy on March 19 it seems. On that date the mayor of Vladivostok, Yuri Kapelov, signed an executive order giving the building on Russian Island for the free use of the charitable organization "Just Say No to Alcoholism and Drug Abuse". It was quite a celebration on that day for AA members who will be able to use the building as a rehab center and a place for alcoholics to gather on holidays away from drinking parties. We've mentioned this building several times in our *Sunrise* pages (e.g. Number 44, page 5). It sits right on a beautiful bay with a view. Even though it is on an island in the heart of Vladivostok, and is accessible by boat four times a day, it is far enough removed from the city and surrounded by nature so that it is isolated enough for treatment purposes. There are currently eight apartments in the building, only two of which are occupied. Those folks—pensioners—continue to serve as

watchmen, and will surely be willing to do some of the housekeeping. Now the big question is how can we begin the process of transforming this building into an actual rehabilitation center, complete with experienced staff? 12-steppers, can you help? Dr Sergei Yakovlev, who has spearheaded this project, has decided to name the building "Salvation Coast," after a nearby real beach with that name.



"Salvation Coast," the new AA rehab center on Russian Island.

- Fr Sebastian is stuck India, waiting for a visa. So Fr Daniel has had all the parish activities here while I was sick in January, including the Christmas Concerts and the Christmas Festival of Christian Choirs. All the concerts and the festival were completely packed houses. He is exhausted, but he can't fully rest until Fr Sebastian returns. But the visa problem still isn't solved as of this writing, and so Fr Dan has also helped me with all the Holy Week services, and then three Easter Concerts and then two Ecumenical Easter Concerts. He is a further frazzle. Sister Purification is also waiting for a visa in Spain, as are Frs Timothy and Felix, who are the new priests in Nakhodka and are waiting in Seoul, and two Sisters of St Paul de Chartres from Korea who work in Ussurisk.

- The problem with the visas is that the Russian government says that I no longer can issue invitations for visas because I am a foreigner, even if I am the head of the parish (certainly an understandable rule). It means that we, and all the parishes in Primorye, had to change our parish articles of incorporation so that we can issue visa invitations again. The idea is to create an official position of "trustee" in each parish, who will be a Russian citizen with the right to issue official documents. We worked out the compromise with the Department of Justice, but the bishop's lawyer doesn't agree with us and the Department of Justice, so now we were scrambling trying to get it all straightened out! It was a bureaucratic mess! Perhaps you heard that Fr Michael in Magadan had the same problem, and it took a lawsuit to solve it there—Fr Michael won. But the Department of Justice says that they are not bound by the decision of the court in Magadan, and we'd like to solve it without a lawsuit if we can. So it's been a nerve racking time. The government said that they would expedite the process, and we hope to be able to issue visa invitations again by June 1. (When I first wrote this note, it said "April 1"—now we are already two months later!) Fr Dan and I have one-year visas, so we are okay.

- Andre Udovichenko, our building superintendent had the bright idea to see if we could receive from the city the old parish school foundation which is next to the old school building

across the road from our church. When he went to the agency to find out, they said that it was already purchased! When he checked further he found out that a 10-story building is planned to be built there! It is illegal, of course, to build that close to an architectural monument, but Andre says it is big money people, and dangerous for us to try to interfere. He said he will try to meet them, and explain our concerns, and perhaps they will take us into consideration, like save us two apartments on the first floor for tourists and pilgrims (toilets, a small snack bar, and a souvenir shop) and maybe one on the second floor for guests and pilgrims. They are also planning a parking garage, it seems. So, in any case, he will meet with them, hopefully before their architect is finished with the plans! Too bad we didn't think of this sooner. Now Andre is checking on all parcels of land around the church.

- On April 2 I had a meeting with the State Minister of Justice. He wanted to review with us our status as a parish and any problems we may be having. Of course I complained about not having a Russian green card so that we wouldn't have these visa problems. Fr Daniel mentioned that we aren't missionaries, strictly speaking, because we have come to Russia to live permanently, and no one sent us here. We were invited by the Russian diocese to come and work, and Fr Daniel was even ordained a priest in Vladivostok. So we don't know why, after 12 years of living here, we still can't get a green card. He promised to look into the problem. He then praised our work, especially our charity work, which is done without regard for the religion of the receivers, and he personally praised us for our concert series, which he said is a wonderful cultural plus for the city. This time again, it was my impression that the Department of Justice has really fine people working in it. It is a Presidential ministry, right under President Putin.

- Our Nakhodka Parish of Our Lady of the Pacific recently moved into new temporary quarters. It is a four room apartment on the second floor of a building on Lenin Street (like Main Street in the USA). We are located over a bank. One of the rooms is large, so it will serve as the chapel—the first parish chapel in the ten year history of the parish. (We usually had mass in rented halls until now.) The parishioners couldn't wait to paper the walls of the chapel and get it all in order for Easter. For the first time they will have an Easter candle on a tall stand with a design, and they hung some Stations of the Cross—also for the first time for them. Now we are planning the repair of the plumbing in the apartment, which will entail a new water heater, two toilets and sinks, and a kitchenette. The Nakhodka Women's Support Center is ready to move in. The previous small apartment will become the living space for the two priests that we expect to take over the parish. Of course the parishioners would still prefer a church to an apartment, but we can't afford it.

- On February 21 we held our first meeting of our experimental evangelization program for university students. We call it "Project Omega". "Omega," the last letter of the Greek alphabet, symbolizes our goal in life. Invitations were issued for the program, but attendance was not what we had hoped, partly because a big snow storm took place that evening. The

idea for Project Omega was mentioned to me by a parishioner in Anchorage during the coffee break after mass! We had been looking for quite a while for a model about how we could work with the students. Unfortunately, I don't remember the man's name to thank him for his idea! Vladimir and Yekaterina



Mr and Mrs Izranov speak to the parish. Vladimir is a teacher at the Med School in Novosibirsk. Yekaterina is a professional composer and has many hymns in Russian Catholic hymnals.

Izranov, parishioners from Novosibirsk, were the first presenters for Project Omega. After Sunday Mass they also spoke to the parish about their decision to adopt a handicapped child. It was a wonderful story. Project Omega will meet every Saturday night for ten weeks. Pray for us!

- We owe special thanks to benefactors in Seattle and Portland for hosting our Romanovka parishioner and her daughter for more than a year. The child had numerous disabilities and she was taken to America for surgery. It was a long haul, but mom and daughter returned to Russia in March. Special thanks to Rose Bucher of Seattle, Mrs Agnes Sawyer of Portland, and Jim and Doris O'Donnell of Romanovka's sister parish of St Philip Benizi in Oregon City, but they are just a few of the many volunteers, doctors, and nurses who helped. God bless you all!

- April 13 was a "red letter" day! I received 130 electronic letters with viruses in them. (They each show up on my email program with the letter symbol in red if there is a virus.) So far no damage because my anti-virus program works well. My secretary Nicolai Dorodnov's computer was nearly ruined by viruses. We gave up trying to fix it and simply reformatted it from scratch.

- "Sisters in Jesus the Lord" has updated their web-site. Please take a look and spread the word: www.cjd.cc A new associate is joining them in May and several other young women have expressed interest. Please pray for vocations to this sister order of Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord! Kelly Whittier, the first postulant, is completing her first year of Russian language studies and will become a novice on August 15th. The sisters hope to be in Russia within the next two or three years to join the Fathers in their exciting work in Far-Eastern Russia. Please contact Sr. Julia at 651 230-3337 or at info@cjd.cc for more information.

- Sr Julia and Kelly Whittier (Sisters in Jesus the Lord) organized and chaperoned a trip for forty young adults from the Twin Cities area to attend the annual "Institute on Religious Life" at Mundelein Seminary April 16-19. It was a great success and the young men and women had many opportunities

to meet religious from across the country, as well as hearing inspirational talks by Cardinal Avery Dulles and Bishop Dolan of Milwaukee, and homilies by Cardinal George of Chicago, among others. On Saturday, May 22nd at St Agnes convent in St Paul, MN, there will be a prayer evening for young women at 6:30pm. Please call Sr. Julia at (651)230-3337 for more information.

• Mr Terry Kopp, a member of our board from Minnesota and a major benefactor, was able to be with us for Holy Week. This was his third trip to see our mission. The first time he came with two of his children for the dedication of the Annunciation Window on March 25, 2000. He and his family were the donors of that window. It is great to have benefactors visit. They feel more connected to our mission, and they understand better our problems. Would you like to visit?

Terry Kopp and his wife Debbie and their ten children.



**Remember
“Mary Mother of God Mission Society”
in your will.**

Fact Sheet

**Weekend Retreat with Fr Myron
for Family, Friends, and Benefactors**

October 22-24, 2004

Location: St. Agnes Church, St. Paul, Minnesota

Accommodations: The mission has reserved a block of rooms at Sheraton Four Points Metrodome, 1330 Industrial Blvd, Minneapolis, MN 55413, toll free 1-800-325-3535. \$85 per night for 2 double beds.

Complimentary roll and coffee each morning. If you wish to share a room, please notify us. We will notify you of the name and phone number of a roommate so that you

can arrange your own hotel room. Private homes are available for those who might wish to stay with local supporters.

Transportation: Airport shuttle provided by us to hotel, or host will pick you up at airport. Please notify office as to arrival time and flight number. Please try to arrive by 3:00 PM. Transportation will also be provided from hotel to St. Agnes Church.

Cost: Meals: \$45. Transportation: \$30. (No transportation cost if staying in local supporter’s home.) Hotel accommodations as booked by attendee.

Friday, Oct. 22

4:00 PM First van leaves hotel for Mass
5:15 Mass at St Agnes
6:30 Dinner
7:30 Reflections from Fr Myron, evening prayer
9:00 Social hour
9:00-10:00 Vans return guests to hotel

Saturday, Oct. 23

6:30 AM First van leaves hotel for Mass
8:00 Latin Novus Ordo Mass at St Agnes
8:30 Rosary
10:00 Full breakfast
11:00 Fr Myron: What MMOG is all about
12:00 PM Small groups; sharing, discussing, brainstorming:
Foundations
Fundraising
Trusts
Investments
Wills
1:00 Lunch
2:00 Eucharistic adoration hour
3:30 Reflections from Fr Myron
4:30 Reports from small groups
5:00 Social
6:00 Dinner
7:30 Reflections from Fr Myron, evening prayer
8:30 Social
8:30-10:00 Vans return guests to hotel

Sunday, Oct. 24

6:30-8:00 AM Van transportation to Mass
8:30 Mass at St Agnes
9:30 Continental breakfast at St Agnes School
10:00 Reflections from Fr Myron
11:00 Box lunch
12:00 Farewell to all our friends. Shuttles begin to airport. Afternoon open to late travelers.

(Continued from Page 8.)

- ▶ We will open Friday evening with Mass at 5:15 PM.
- ▶ We will close on Sunday at 11:30 AM.

Please accept our invitation to join us in St Paul, on October 22, 23 and 24.

- The most important news is the rectory. This 3-story building is the first freestanding project Fr Myron has constructed since he came to Vladivostok. All other projects involved refurbishing a building or transforming an apartment. But there was not a structure of an appropriate size in the locality of the church to renovate. The first floors will be parish offices and classrooms, which will be moved over from the church. Then restoration can move forward on the Cathedral. Thanks be to God.

Recently one of Fr Myron's Russian seminarians left the church and joined the Lutheran Seminary—it was a question of finances. Let's try to stop this unfortunate thing from happening. The third floor will be a monastery for the priests and seminarians. It will be a concrete example that a religious order is forming, that priests do live apart from the world, and that there is a real place for priests and seminarians to live, pray and participate in community life. It will help to recruit more native vocations. Russian men will see how priests live apart from the world. A private small chapel will give them a prayer space away from the public parish they have been in for so many years.

The new building will also reduce the stress on the priests. They will have their own quarters, bedrooms that are not offices, beds that are really beds and not a couch pulled out, privacy for the first time in many years and a garden enclosed for them.

For this to go forward we need your generosity. We need you to help even if it hurts in this downward market. Our churches, convents and rectories were built in the US with pennies of very poor souls. We need that same spirit to return to American Catholics if we are to revive the Catholic Church in Russia. The Russians cannot do it themselves because they lost the know-how during the years of repression. Now is the time for Americans to help.

- Maybe quite a few of our benefactors would prefer to receive their "thank you" letters from Fr Myron by E-mail, rather than regular post. Let us know: usoffice@vladmission.org A disadvantage is that you would not receive an envelope to remind you of your next donation. We could include a link in the letter to let you donate on-line.
- We are very hopeful that attending Catholic conventions and conferences around the country will widen the scope of our exposure. We do not ask for donations at these conventions. We pass out our brochures; we are asking participants who pass by our table to become familiar with our mission work in Russia and mention us to their pastor.

We would like to be invited to be their mission speaker next year. Every parish has to host a missionary once a year, and we would like to be the one. There are many applicants to each diocese. If we are invited by the pastor, the diocesan mission office seems to agree. We have a current application in with every diocese requesting an assignment. We have 35 speakers. If you might wish to represent us at a booth, please call me at the office or email me. We pay hotel, air fare and admission for two, if needed. For many of the conferences you can bring your family and attend the talks.

- Our prayers for you all.

Sandra and David Sonnen
Mission Desk
651-227-0208

How to Communicate with Us

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Letters without donations can be sent to:

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690001 Vladivostok RUSSIA

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Internet: English language: 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 by 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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**Vladivostok Mission
Mary Mother of God Mission Society
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St Paul MN 55105-1662**

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Address Service Requested

From the development desk...

Dear Vladivostok Mission Supporter,

- We would like to invite you to a retreat in St Paul with Fr Myron. We are planning a spiritual, social and informative weekend for you. Fr Myron will lead us that weekend as we pray, chat, share meals together and get to know one another. We will discuss the work, the parishes, and the parishioners of our Russian mission, sharing our joys and sorrows. Fr Myron has so many wonderful stories. The work comes alive when you listen to him.

Our speakers who represent our mission in US parishes will have a chance to meet each other and discuss current events and their speaking experience. Benefactors will have a chance to meet one another and share insights. Investors will get a chance to meet and discuss new programs of giving.

Those who have already traveled to the mission in Vladivostok will wear special nametags so you can find them--They will share with you the stories of their visit.

If you are afraid that you won't know anyone else at the retreat, don't worry, you will not be alone as neither does any one else!

Fr Myron has met some benefactors but he looks forward to meeting YOU.

- ▶ Meet the newsletter group who puts out the newsletter from Nativity parish.
- ▶ Meet the folks from the Little Sisters of the Poor who do our important menial tasks.
- ▶ Meet the 5 Russian sibling orphans adopted by a couple here in Minnesota, who count, cut and deliver 13,000 newsletters just for you.
- ▶ Meet the St Peter Claver Sisters who prints the newsletter.
- ▶ See our office at St Agnes where we speak and write to you.
- ▶ Visit the convent where the new order of sisters is forming and meet the first members.
- ▶ Meet some of our Board members.
- ▶ And our helpers from all over the US will come.

You may choose to stay at the hotel, or be the guest of a mission supporter here in the area. We have a block of rooms at the Sheraton Four Points Metronome. The room rate is \$85 for 2 double beds. It is just 7 miles from St Agnes where we will hold the daily events.

- ▶ We will pick you up at the airport, which is just 15 minutes from the hotel.

(Continued on Page 7.)