

# Vladivostok Sunrise

Mary Mother of God Mission Society Vladivostok Russia St Paul Minnesota

Issue Number Seventy Five May 1, 2007



## May 27 is moved again to October 7!

At our Bishop's request the re-consecration of our church is scheduled for October 7, 2007. He will also bless our Our Lady of Fatima Rectory, and a new Franciscan hospice for the homeless in Ussurysk earlier in the week. Sorry about the changes!



organizations here in Russia are brand new, and there is much about them that needs improvement.

Due to personnel problems, and in order to improve the organizational structure, the Catholic charitable organization "Caritas," which was begun by Bishop Joseph Werth, S.J., in 1992, simply needed to be reorganized, and Fr Myron, as the Dean of the Vladivostok Deanery, began tackling the problem in January of this year. Among other things, it was necessary to come up with plans for restructuring the entire WSC project and to find new directors for some of the Centers.

That is where I came in. I'm the one who is "just beginning". Fr. Myron asked me to take on the duties of coordinating all the Women's Support Centers in the Deanery. I accepted the task even though I had no special training. I am not a doctor nor a psychologist, nor a nurse. I was not even a director of one of the Centers. I am a teacher and a religious sister of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Ann. But I think that together with all the other members of the board of

## Some Follow Through

### (And Others Are Just Beginning)

*by Sr. Maria Eugenia Lazaro Huerta, HCSA*

Fr Myron Effing, pastor of the parish of the Most Holy Mother of God in Vladivostok, is one of those who "follow through" on projects, and it always seems as though nothing can stop him. The Women's Support Centers have been working in this easternmost region of Russia for ten years, thanks in great part to Fr. Myron's pro-life efforts and preoccupation for unborn children.

It is not always easy to follow through on projects in Russia! Legal and even mental constructs of charitable



*Young women come to the Centers for help.*



*American visitors bring children's clothing for the Centers.*

directors of the Centers and all the Centers' directors and volunteers, we can continue to provide a necessary service, a beautiful and important service to our society in which the scourge of elective abortion continues to grow at an alarming rate.

Official statistics indicate that each year there are 1.6 million elective abortions in Russia (which has less than one half of the population of the United States of America.) In Russia one abortion in every five is performed on young mothers under the age of 18, (320,000 a year).

During my first months of working as coordinator I have visited nearly all the Centers: Vladivostok (3); Khabarovsk (1); Blagoveshensk (1); and Trudavoye (1)—Nakhodka still remains. And I can tell you that each time I visit a Center I become more enthusiastic about them. The work that the directors and volunteers are doing with the mothers and their babies whom they receive is so very important!

Before ending this article with the good news of a new Center in the town of Trudovoye, about which the director, Lyuba Sadovkikova will tell you, I would like to direct a few words to the friends and benefactors of all the Centers. You, like Fr. Myron, are among those "who follow through!" Thank you for your continuous support, your financial and moral help, and for your prayers!

### **A New Women Support Center in Trudovoye**

*by Lyubov Sadovnikova, Center Director*

Since January 15 of this year a new Women's Support Center has been carrying out its work, first in premises



*Lyubov Sadovnikova, the Leader of the Trudovoye Center.*

located in Trudovoye Hospital № 3 and later in the Trudovoye Town Hall, located about 45 minutes north of Vladivostok. In this short period our new Center has already received 200 women visitors, including pregnant women and teenage mothers. Some have asked for and received medical and moral assistance, and others have simply visited the Center out of curiosity.

The Center volunteers give information about the purpose of the Center, about methods of natural family planning, about abortion and its consequences, about the development of the fetus in the mother's womb, about venereal diseases, about breastfeeding, about chastity and its benefits, or they simply talk about life and when possible offer material and spiritual support.

As this article is being written the registration book of the new Center shows 18 young single mothers, 11 single pregnant women and 7 families of five children who are receiving help. We are very proud of this substantial beginning of our new Center, and we hope that the work of the Center will grow as well and as fast as the children whom we are trying to help!

### **News Notes**

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

- **Caritas Reorganized.** The local Caritas organization has done a remarkable amount of good since it was founded in our parish, especially in connection with Catholic Relief Services, an organization of the American bishops, and with Renovabis, an organization of the bishops of Germany. Most of this aid was of a one-time-emergency nature, especially during the Russian

economic emergency. But one program—of which we are the most proud—is the Women’s Support Centers which were founded here by the help and support of the Catholics of Ohio.

The Women’s Support Centers are on a new cycle of maturity. We’ve rewritten all the policies and handbooks. The Centers will be coordinated by a new Board, the leader of which will be Sister Evgenia. And we will try to get out of debt. Who wants to help us with this important project and program?

- Cardinal Stephen Fumio Hamao of Japan recently visited Khabarovsk to bring some **relics of St John Chrysostom** as a gift from the Holy See to the new Orthodox Seminary there. The exchange took place on April 12 when Cardinal Hamao officially gave the relics to Archbishop Mark, Bishop of Khabarovsk and of Priamurye.

There were some 700 Catholic and Orthodox faithful waiting at the Cathedral of the Transfiguration to witness the event. The priests began hymns and prayers as two servers lowered the ornamental golden fans over the relics in a bronze reliquary that Cardinal Hamao carried on a small red pillow. At the doors of the cathedral Archbishop Mark, beaming, kissed the relics and received them from Cardinal Hamao and the two of them then processed through the main doors of the cathedral.

Afterward, the Archbishop took the Cardinal on a tour of the cathedral beginning on the main level and then going downstairs to the lower church dedicated to St Mark. There the entire press corps of the city was gathered (some 4 or 5 TV stations) and they held an impromptu conference. The event was on Russian national news in the evening.



*Archbishop Mark receiving the relics of St John Chrysostom in Khabarovsk.*

The Catholic parish in Khabarovsk was the second parish we founded after coming to Russia 15 years ago, and it is still in the Vladivostok deanery.

- **Change of pastors in Romanovka and Nakhodka!** On March 15 Fr Myron, the Dean of the Vladivostok Deanery, installed new pastors in those parishes. The former pastor of both parishes, Fr Bartholomew Shost, has to return to Poland to care for his parents who are ill. Fr Christopher Terebka, who has “Fr Bart’s” assistant took over as pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in Romanovka. Fr Sebastian D’Silva, one of Fr Myron’s helpers in Vladivostok and a native of India, was installed as the third pastor of Our Lady of the Pacific Parish in Nakhodka. The architect was able to bring the general plan for the new church there for approval by the new pastor. As our readers know, we’ve been planning for new churches in both of these cities for several years. It seems that the time to begin will soon arrive.



*(from l.) Incoming pastor “Shistov” and outgoing pastor Fr Bartholomew with Fr Myron in Romanovka.*

*New Pastor Fr Sebastian receiving the official parish books in the chapel in Nakhodka.*



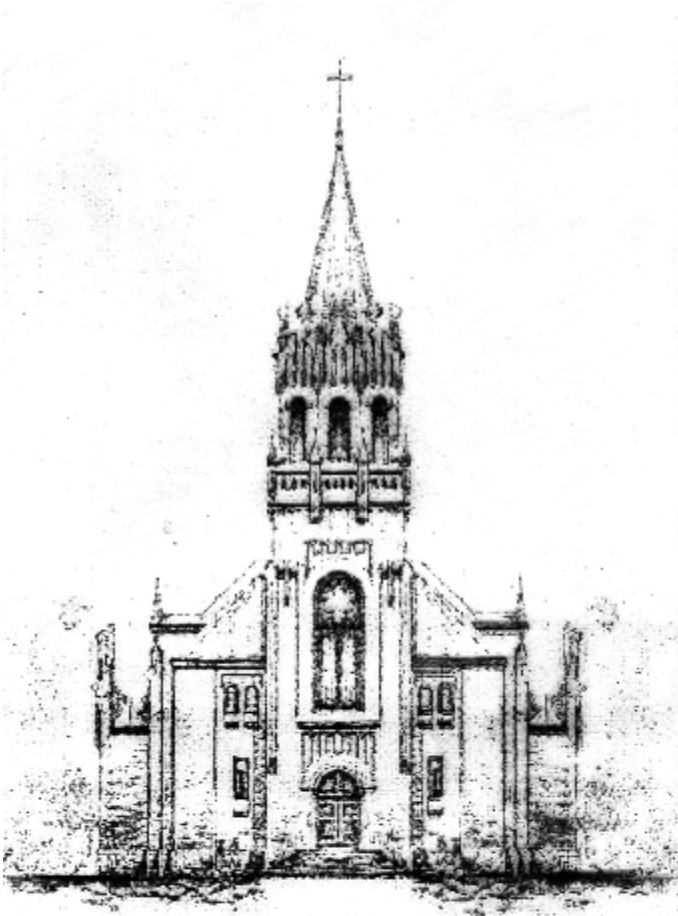
**Ave Maria!**





*Architect's proposal for the new Our Lady of the Pacific Church in Nakhodka. It will be two blocks from the bay.*

- We hope to publish Miroslava Igorevna Efimova's book on the history of the Church in our part of Russia. Here is a recent find—a drawing of the **Catholic church** that once stood in **Ussurysk**.



- **Street kids:** Recently Denis had a meeting with the police officers of the local Commission on Minors to discuss ways of our future cooperation in resolving the

street kids situation. We have been already cooperating with the Commission by exchanging info on kids. Denis was asked to give testimony about a 16 year old boy, Alexei, who has been living on the street for two years totally deprived of his mother's care and support. Together with the officers we seek to place this kid in a government care facility until he turns the legal age and the government will issue him a passport so that he can officially work. We have been helping Alexei with food, clothes and medication.

Also we continue to respond to the Commission's occasional need of help with transportation when they are inspecting children's sites and private homes, and when they need a witness to such inspections. The overall number of street children has noticeably decreased in the city.

- The apartment that we bought for the Omega student program happens to be in the very building which will probably be torn down to make room for the **new bridge across Golden Horn Bay!** We are waiting for word. It will mean that the government will have to buy the apartment at commercial prices, and then we can buy a different one. Research for the bridge is going on, including geological surveys, so a final decision about our Omega apartment is still to come.

- There is a new **Russian film** which is very popular just now called "**Island.**" It is a wonderful and at the same time terrible study of Russian culture. I hope it is helping the Russians and the Russian Church to have a good look at themselves, and to begin to make more positive steps to heal their culture and their Church.

- We held the **Easter Vigil** and the Easter Morning Mass inside the church!—in spite of the dirt and scaffolds everywhere. We just couldn't wait to get back in. Most of the walls and ceilings are done—just the part over the choir remains. On Easter Monday, we moved out again, and construction began on the new floor. After that, we can start on the altars, chapels, and then—The Steeples! We are so anxious to have it done. 15 years of waiting! Pray for us! We did finally get a date from the bishop for the rededication of our church, and it will October 7. Sorry we have to move it again from August. But everybody seems happy with the new date. Even tickets will be cheaper than in the summertime, so you can come, too!

**Gratia plena!**



*The clean white walls will allow the stained glass windows to shine! Scaffold still standing on March 19.*

- Recently Fr Myron was invited by the governor to attend his annual **“State of the Krai”** address. It was fantastic! I think that finally there is a clear plan for the future for our State here in Russia, and for the city of Vladivostok. And we want to be part of it! A new university will be established with 100,000 students! New plans for bridges, for entertainment facilities, for scientific institutions. President Putin has big projects in mind for us, too, including the building of two huge bridges, the building of an new oceanarium, the establishment of a “Las Vegas” style city (while closing all small gambling places in the state) and even the building of a bullet train between Vladivostok and Khabarovsk! Social problems continue here, but he is hoping that these public works projects will attract new investment, and attract more workers to this region, in order to build the economy. This is important for our future, too, not only financially, but because there is a “brain drain” from Vladivostok to Moscow and Europe, including some parishioners!

Of course the Catholic Church should be part of all the new developments! Our ability to attract more members will improve when we finish the restoration of the church building, and when we begin concerts again. Perhaps it is

time to begin a parish in Artyom. So we still have our work cut out for us.

- Together for Life** The Parish had the joy of helping to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of Albert and Lily Silin in February. It was an especially noteworthy event because of the poor state of marriage in general in Russia. Fr Myron thanked Lily and Albert for their faithfulness to each other and to their marriage vows, and prayed that they would be an example of Christian marriage that others could follow.

Lily and Albert studied in the same class where they finished their schooling in 1955 in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky (in the Russian Far East). Their friendship deepened so they both decided to continue their education in Vladivostok. Albert studied at the Marine University, and Lily studied civil engineering at the Technical University.



*Lily and Albert with 50 roses—one for each year!*

They decided to marry in their Junior year in 1957. They were blessed with the birth of their daughter Irene. After graduating, Lily worked in an architectural firm, and then began teaching in the Architectural College. Albert became Chief Engineer for the Far Eastern Marine Transport Company, where he worked for 42 years as Chief Ship’s Engineer in the Technical Department of the company.

They became Catholics—first Lily who had ancestors who were Catholics and who was among the first parishioners of the parish in 1991, and then Albert. These last years, Lily has dedicated herself to the charitable works of the Most Holy Mother of God Parish, while Albert began to work as Chief Engineer for a commercial company which provides services for the Russian Pacific



Fleet. They have two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

On February 2 of 2007 they celebrated 50 years of marriage. They note that their whole lives were filled with work and busyness. For many years Albert was often gone to sea, but in spite of that, they always maintained friendly and strong family ties.

- Our Bishop Kirill Klimovich has approved the ordination to the diaconate of our parishioner and member of our religious community **Brother Oleg Yelchaninov, C.J.D.** The ordination is scheduled for June 22 in Kosice, Slovakia where he is attending the seminary. And our Sisters in Jesus the Lord have just added a new member, too!

- Happy **Feast of St Joseph**, which was on March 19! We had a special play at St Joseph's Parish in Second River for the parishioners. I must say that "St Joseph" was a majestic actor as he told the story about all that happened surrounding the conception of Jesus in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. The actor was one of our older parishioners who suffered much as a child in Kazakhstan when he and his family were thrown into the snow from the train. His wisdom and faith really showed through his performance. It was great!

- **Fr Dan went to China** recently, for the first time, even if it is close. We have to leave Russia every six months, according to our visas. Six months ago he was in the States. We usually go to Korea for a couple of days—a flight away. But now it has become possible for us to go to China by bus—Just a four hour drive. It is much cheaper, and so it is a money saver! Fr Dan studied China and lived in Taiwan many years ago, but this was his first time to be in the mainland. He was told that if he dared to do anything as a priest there, he will never get another visa. In fact it all worked out fine and he is back.

- At last **Marriage Encounter** in Vladivostok! The first event took place on March 23-25, and was guided by Fr Vladimir Sek, the pastor of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Irkutsk. We are anxious to do whatever we can to help heal and improve the image of marriage in Russia, and, of course, especially among Catholics. Now that we have our feet wet, we are looking forward to the next Encounter.

**Dominus Tecum!**



*The Marriage Encounter was held in our new rectory.*

- Parishioners from **St Joseph's Parish in Modesto, California** are planning to visit their sister parish in Vladivostok this summer. Here the group is meeting to do a theological reflection on the meaning of mission in the life of a Christian. The reflection was led by Deacon David Dutra of the Diocese of Stockton.



*Vicky Trevillian (center) and some of those planning their trip to Vladivostok in mid-July.*

## Opportunities

- ♥ Sisters in Jesus the Lord now have a monthly "Desert Day" (silent overnight) at the convent for women interested in discerning their vocation in life. Upcoming dates are: Feb 24, 25 and March 17,18. See [www.cjd.cc](http://www.cjd.cc) under "Desert Days" for more details.

- ♥ Does someone want to come to Russia as a full-time volunteer for 2007-8? Last year Mira was here from Calgary, and this year Brian from St Louis. Both are remarkable people who did lots of good!

# Tax-Smart Charitable Giving

by Hugh Dillon

**Q** I'm thinking of giving some shares of stock to Mary Mother of God Mission Society!

**A** While it's generally better to give than to receive, that usually doesn't apply when it comes to one of our relatives--Uncle Sam. Here are ways to give more joy to the world but less money to him.

Use stocks as a smart way to be more charitable. Say you have a stock worth \$5,000 that you want to sell to make a \$5,000 charitable gift. Does it matter whether you write a check or give the stock to the charity directly? You bet it does! If the stock's value has increased since you bought it, giving the stock rather than the cash proceeds to a charity means no capital gains tax bill--either for you or the charity. But if that stock has become a loser, don't give it away. Instead, sell it and write-off the loss either now or down the road and then give the cash to the charity.

Either way, don't forget to take the charitable deduction on your income tax return. Keep in mind that the tax laws on charitable deductions vary, depending upon how long you've owned an asset, the type of asset, and the type of charity. Charitable trusts make nice presents too.

Charitable giving during your lifetime can do more than eliminate capital gains tax and give you an income tax deduction. There are several kinds of charitable trusts that can also increase your income flow and help reduce estate taxes. With a charitable remainder trust, for example, you stay in the picture as an income beneficiary.

Suppose you have an apartment building or stocks that have gone way up in value. If you sold them to reinvest the proceeds to live on, your reinvestment kitty would first be reduced by capital gains tax. There'd be less to reinvest. On the other hand, if you transferred the asset to a charitable remainder trust, the property or stocks could be sold with no income tax due. Then all of the sales proceeds could be kept in the trust to generate income for you--without any reduction for income tax on the sale of assets.

One important caveat is that at some point the money will pass on to the charity (this is a charitable gift after all, not just a tax-planning device). The charity is the "remainder" part of the charitable remainder trust. That means at some point the trust money will be going to the charity. For that

reason, it's very common to set up a life insurance trust at the same time to ensure your beneficiaries receive the same amount that's going to charity. Plus the life insurance trust can be designed so your beneficiaries receive the trust assets free of estate tax and income tax on your death.

Give the gift of IRA/401k money to your favorite charities. Your IRA and 401k benefits are subject to ordinary income tax (and estate tax if your estate is large enough). Since the combined wallop of these two kinds of taxes can eat up 70% or more of the benefits, naming tax-free charities as beneficiaries can be very attractive. But before you jump to revise your beneficiary designations to name your favorite charity, get tax advice on how naming a charity can adversely affect the ability to stretch out distributions. Time is of the essence.

You can do good for others and yourself by setting up tax-smart charitable giving. But remember: everything needs to be in place before the giant ball starts to drop on Times Square!

[To contact Mr Dillon, our benefactor, please send a note to our mission office.—ed.]

## How to Communicate with Us

### Internet

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## From the development desk...

Dear Vladivostok Mission supporters,

- Now that the date for the reconsecration of the church in Vladivostok is definitely established—**October 7**—we are organizing a group travel plan to the event. The group will be leaving from Incheon, South Korea, on Saturday, October 6, staying in Vladivostok one week, and leaving for Incheon again on Saturday, October 13—The Feast of Our Lady of Fatima. If you would like to join us, you can contact our travel agent, Barbara Garcia at AAA in Seattle. She can arrange your visas and all your travel plans. (866)756-1049.

[BarbaraHouplinGarcia@AAAwIn.com](mailto:BarbaraHouplinGarcia@AAAwIn.com)

- Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Egan and Mr. and Mrs. Tom Burbage of Columbia SC sponsored the production of our wonderful video presentation several years ago. Now they are embarking on a Christian Packaging program in their Carolina Retail Packaging Company. If you have a gift shop or any need of wholesale gift wrap and packaging of any kind see [www.carolinaretail.com](http://www.carolinaretail.com) They are members

of the Catholic Marketing Network:

[www.catholicmarketing.com](http://www.catholicmarketing.com)

- Need advice on donating stocks? See Mr Dillon's article on page 7.

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*The Sisters are planning to come to the Reconsecration.*