

Vladivostok Sunrise

Mary Mother of God Mission Society Vladivostok Russia St Paul Minnesota

Issue Number Eighty March 1, 2008



Rectory is Blessed; Church is consecrated!

The Our Lady of Fatima Rectory is blessed and the Church of the Most Holy Mother of God is consecrated! It all happened on February 2, the Feast of the Presentation, and on February 3, the death anniversary of our parish's martyrs. Many thanks to those who made it happen! We have to get back to our regular evangelical and charitable work, but I can't help but give you one more issue of the *Sunrise* on that topic, and then we'll move on. God bless all the benefactors who have struggled with us so long to get it all done! About 300 people attended the consecration, including some foreign benefactors. Here is a photo of the first mass on the newly consecrated altar on February 3.



Concelebrants Frs John Gibbons from Arsenyev, Sebastian D'Silva from Nakhodka, Christopher Gots from Romanovka, Deacon Oleg Yelchaninov, Christopher Koval from Petropavlovsk, Johann Trummer from Austria, Alexander Petshik from St Petersburg. Fr Myron and Fr Daniel are beside Bishop Kirill Klimovich. Bishop Kirill donated the chasuble to the parish as a memorial of the day. The words behind the altar read, "This is my Body. This is my Blood of the New Covenant." Bishop Kirill Klimovich is the ordinary of the Diocese of St Joseph in Irkutsk.

Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

The bishop even allowed us to put “Martyrs of Vladivostok” into the Litany of Saints that is prayed in conjunction with placing relics in the altar. The relics we have are St Dominic, St Thomas Aquinas, St Maria Goretti, and St Catherine of Sienna, which were donated to us by John Sonnen who lives in Rome. The ceremony was followed by two concerts which were sold out, and we’ve had a lot of TV and newspaper coverage, which is good for evangelization, and to remind lapsed Catholics that there is indeed a Catholic parish in Vladivostok. On February 2, the Feast of the Presentation, the bishop blessed the Our Lady of Fatima Rectory building, too.

Meanwhile, we are working on the steeples! We weren’t done by February 3, of course. We’re only halfway on the financing, but we are relying on God (and benefactors) to provide. We have about 70% of the needed amount of \$120,000.



The time capsule that was buried under the new cornerstone.



The crowd entering the church as the doors were first opened.

Choir members straining to follow the process of blessing.

Bishop Kirill anointing the walls of the church. The stations of the Cross we received many years ago from Pennsylvania.



The servers aren’t used to this level of solemnity.

The Catholic Cathedral of the Most Holy Mother of God in Vladivostok

Yesterday

*By V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D
and Miroslava Igorevna Efimova*

Already a long time ago in 1890 the first Catholic priest in the Russian Far East, Fr Kazimir Radzishevski received permission to build a brick Roman Catholic church in Vladivostok. The Mogilov Diocese approved an all-Russia collection which was taken up not only in the Far East, but in all the churches of the Russian Empire.

Four years later the City Council dedicated a piece of land in the center of the city for the building. They built a small wooden church on it which served the parish for eight years. It was called the church of the Birthday of Most Holy Virgin Mary. On the night of February 2, 1902, it burned to the ground. The parish quickly built a temporary prayer house of the barracks type which they called the Most Chaste Virgin Mary. They hoped to build a larger brick church in short order, but various factors delayed the completion of the building for 19 years!



The first parish church in Vladivostok

Fr Radzishevski wasn't able to see the results of his efforts. He died the year before the wooden church was built. A stream of other priests were appointed to Vladivostok. The parish building committee under the leadership of Fr Lavrinovich rejected all the plans for the new building that were proposed, and they decided that the church must be built on the pattern of the Church of the Holy Cross in Samara, in southern European Russia. The similarity of the buildings is obvious today.



Photo of the proposed area for building the masonry church, sometime before 1908 when the first radio tower of Vladivostok was located on the land. The white building just below the radio tower became the chancery of the Diocese of Vladivostok.

The side entrance to the church in Samara.



In 1909 the "cornerstone," which was laid in 1908 was blessed by Bishop Cepliak, and in 1911 Fr Karl Slivovsky, coming from Kazan, received this largest of parishes in

Russia, which included the territories of Primorye, Khabarovski, Amurski, and Sakhalin Island.



Laying of the cornerstone by Bishop Cepliak, 1908. His mitre is visible in the bottom, center of the photo.

In those days the temporary wooden building would hold only 200 people, but there were about 5000 parishioners! Most of them were lesser officers of the various military formations including the naval fleet, and their families. The new pastor was quick to search for possibilities to continue the church construction. He also paid a lot of attention to the parish charitable organization, “Dobrochinost,” developing care for the poorer parishioners and the children.



The building surrounded by scaffolds, probably 1920.

Considering the broad territory of the parish, in 1920 the Mogilev diocese created from it the Vladivostok deanery, and Fr Slivovsky was appointed Dean.

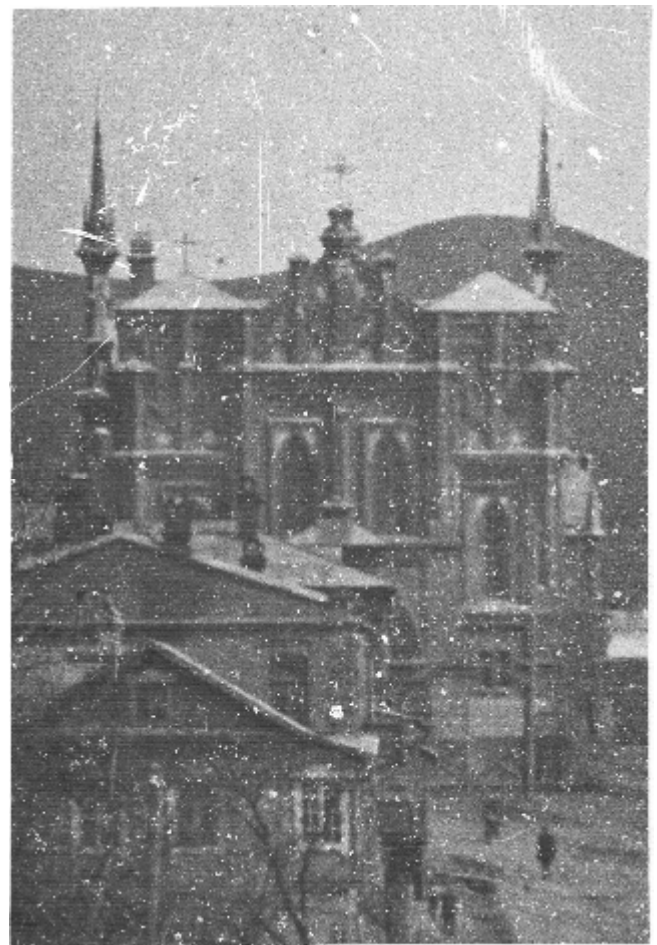
In October of 1921 the citizens of Vladivostok hurried to the consecration of the Catholic church, a large, grand brick construction with beautiful architecture—but there were still no steeples. “The local Catholic colony can be proud of their new religious possession”, was the phrase in

the local newspaper “Word,” and consider the fact that it took 31 years to see its grandeur.



The first consecration on October 2, 1921.

In 1923, when Vladivostok became the center of the new Diocese of Vladivostok, Fr Slivovsky became the bishop, and the new brick church became the cathedral. But by then everything was changing.



The church completed except for the main steeples. 1922?

The last pastor, Fr George Yurkevich was arrested on December 1, 1931. He was accused of spying because of his relationships with Polish and Japanese diplomats. On February 12, 1932, he was sentenced to ten years in prison, and sent to a camp in Siberia. Thus the parish in Vladivostok was leaderless, as Bishop Slivovsky was sent to exile in Sedanka where he died on January 5, 1933, the last priest remaining in the diocese.

The faithful parishioners continued to visit the cathedral where they read religious literature and prayed. In 1935 the taxes on the building were greatly increased, and parishioners were forced to abandon it. The most religious parishioners continued to pray at home, sometimes gathering together in one house. The KGB arrested a group of parishioners who were tried, convicted, and shot on February 3, 1938. These are their names:

**Anton Gerasimuk,
Valerie Gerasimuk,
Sygismund Brzhezinski,
Martin Malinevski,
Jan Strudzinski...**

Pray for us!



Martyr Sygismund Brzhezinski and his wife Sophia Mikhailovna (She died only on September 6, 2005) and their children

The wonderful Catholic church building was given to the State Archive. The walls were pierced by steel beams which divided the nave into four floors, and they began to store documents there.



The church with the two school buildings, after the reconstruction as an archive. 1950?

Today

The modern history of the parish begins in August of 1991. The church building, which was in terrible condition, was returned to the parish on January 1, 1994, the Feast of the Most Holy Mother of God. It was decided to arrange a complete restoration of the building. The church is now an State architectural monument, the only Gothic church in the Russian Far East, and the home of the parish once again, as well as the location of regular concerts of classical and spiritual music.

The Architect of the restoration, Pavel Matveevich Mamonov.



Architect Pavel Mamonov was born in 1957, and in 1979 he graduated from the Kuibishev Far Eastern Polytechnical Institute. He worked as an architect for the City of Vladivostok from 1980 to 1987, and is the author of many well-known buildings, including the American



Contractor Andre Alexeevich Udovichenko

Consulate in Vladivostok, a 16-storey apartment building on Nekrasov Street, the residence of the governor of Primorye, and the Meridian Shopping Center in Artyom. His is the designer of the steeples for our church, since we have never found any original plans for the building.

Contractor Andre Alexeevich Udovichenko was born October 23, 1959. In 1981 he graduated from the Shipbuilding Faculty of the Admiral Neville Marine University. He worked as an engineer constructor in the experimental department of the Marine University. In 1990 he organized the company “Sputnik” which restored the Orthodox St Nicolas Cathedral Church. In 1994 until the present he works for the Catholic Parish, overseeing the construction of the three-storey Our Lady of Fatima Parish Center. Also beginning in 1994 he has planned the gradual restoration of the Church of Most Holy Mother of God, including the step-by-step removal of the interior floors, the restoration of the brick façade, the placement of the stained glass windows, and the construction of the two steeples.

Benefactors for church*

Church Doors

Holy Trinity Parish, Ehrenstein Germany
Aileen Gallo, CA

Light Fixtures

Anna Yurievna Krizhanovskaya, Russia

Chapel

Michael Kasimirovich Zhmurko, Russia

General

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Liturgical Designer Matthew Alderman is an architect and interior

* Sorry if I forgot anyone! Please let me know...Unless otherwise noted, the listed donor is from the USA.

designer from Manhattan, New York. He graduated with highest honors from the architecture faculty of the University of Notre Dame in 2006. He designed the reredos, altar, baptismal font, and other elements for the

restoration of the church. For more information, see *Vladivostok Sunrise* #76, p2.

The company which produced our marble liturgical items is Xiamen Globe Faith Inc, of Xiamen, China.

Altar

The donors for the altar were all members of the Parish of the Most Holy Mother of God, Vladivostok. The relics of the saints were donated by John Paul Sonnen

Tabernacle Stand

Mr & Mrs Chet Vicary, NJ
Marianne Mersch, MN

Baptistry

The donors of the Baptistry were all members of the Most Holy Mother of God parish, Vladivostok.

Chapel Altar

Vaitulevich, Svetlana, Yaroslav Vladimir, Russia

Chapel Tabernacle Stand

Mr & Mrs Dan Strub, MN



Benefactor Roxanne Lum admiring the new altar and tabernacle stand in the chapel.

Stained Glass Windows For information on the stained glass windows, see *Vladivostok Sunrise* #22.

The Bells For information on the bells see *Vladivostok Sunrise* #36.

Tomorrow

Steeple—Donors to date.

- Michael Kazimirovich Zhmurko, Russia
- Mr & Mrs Robert Ozburn, WI
- St Joseph's Parish, CA
- Michael Valentine, NV
- Richard Martens Family, FL
- Lee Boom Sun, Seoul Korea
- Nelli Fidenko, Russia
- Rev Christopher Zugger, NM



The steeples are already straining upward..



2009?

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

Benefactors of the Our Lady of Fatima Rectory



Mr and Mrs Terry Kopp and family, Minnesota



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(1920-2003)
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Post-blessing dinner: The Bishop and Parish Council.



Rectory first floor, tea after Mass in the "Winter Garden".

How to Communicate with Us

Internet

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English language: www.vladmission.org

Sisters in English: www.cjd.cc

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Or you can **donate from your credit card** through our web site. Your donations are tax-deductible. You will receive any required receipt for tax purposes by return mail. Please be assured that we do not sell our mailing list or any other donor information to other organizations.

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.

Office in Canada: Phone: 1-(807) 597-6052

gnivall@shaw.ca

Donations and letters:

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PO Box 868

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News Notes

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

• Sandra Sonnen of St Paul MN has headed up our American operation for eight years already, after Ray Rzeszut of Anchorage AK did it for seven years. Sandie has been having health issues and needs less stress in her life. So I've asked Vicky Trevillyan of Modesto CA to head up the American operation now. She is a super lady, too, and loves Russia very much. The banking and mailing operations will remain in St Paul under Sandie and Dave Sonnen's supervision, but the overall coordination and development program will be shifting to

Vicky. Sandie was the coordinator of the Nativity of Our Lord Sister Parish Program for us before she became national coordinator, and Vicky has served as sister parish coordinator at St Joseph's Parish in Modesto. Another example of how important sister parishes are to us! I know that Sandie is glad to be giving so much of her responsibility over to someone who has proved very capable and faithful. And thanks, Vicky, for accepting!

• Our sister parish of the Nativity of Our Lord in St Paul, MN has a new pastor. He is Father Patrick Hipwell, currently pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary in Minnetonka, MN. Father is an accomplished organist! Welcome Fr Hipwell!



Father Patrick Hipwell

• On November 8, Miroslava Igorevna held a presentation and book signing ceremony at the Society for



the Study of Primorsky Krai in Vladivostok. Now we are waiting for the publishing of her work "Harsh Vineyard, A History of Catholic Life in the Russian Far East."

The Society's library space was used for the book signing.

• The number of people attending our inquiry class every Sunday has been growing, and we now have a second Russian living with us to join our religious community, with another visiting us over Christmas. Of course we are hoping and praying for these vocations, and encourage you to pray with us.

- Brother Paul Brooks, a Missionary of the Sacred Heart who worked in Our Lady of the Pacific Parish in Nakhodka during 1997 and 1998 had a meeting with the Archbishop of Canberra-Goulburn to seek his approval of Australian assistance for the parish. Archbishop Mark Coleridge DD DSS was appointed archbishop of Canberra-Golburn, the capital of Australia, in 2006. Prior to that, he had been an auxiliary Bishop in Melbourne, Australia's second largest city. During a challenging career he was a senior member of the Vatican Secretariate of State from 1998 to 2001 when he was appointed Chaplain to His Holiness Pope John Paul II.



Archbishop Mark Coleridge

When Bro Paul met Archbishop Mark on December 13 the Archbishop quickly indicated his interest in helping and said that he had some 'ideas'. These included making a generous donation from the forthcoming Archbishop's annual Christmas Appeal. He added that he wanted to take things further and hoped to find a

parish or Deanery that might 'twin' with Nakhodka. He also made the point: "It is in our region"--Nakhodka and Canberra are in the same time zone.

Bro Paul said he was very encouraged by the interest and support shown by Archbishop Coleridge. Now he is praying that the Catholic people of Canberra-Goulburn will respond generously to the Christmas Appeal! Bro Paul said the Catholic community consider that they are very fortunate in having such outstanding Church leaders in the Archbishop and Auxiliary Bishop Pat Power.

- Diabetic children in Lesozovodsk had a big problem getting their test strips, of which they use many every day, from a variety of manufacturers. They were not stocked in the local drug stores, but had to be specially ordered, which always took more time and effort for delivery, and therefore the price was high. Many parents simply couldn't afford them for their children, but they could die if their tests were not taken to regulate insulin in their blood. They appealed to us for help. We found that there were eleven children in Lesozovodsk who regularly needed test strips. We promised one drug store that we

would always buy from them if they would stock the necessary variety for ready sale and reduce the price. Now the children come to Caritas when their stock runs out, and we provide the funds for them to buy at that drug store. The cost for 11 children per month is now about \$338.

- Fr Sebastian D'Silva from Nakhodka called to say that a young girl had appealed to the Women's Support Center in Nakhodka for help. Her boyfriend (both of them are very young) just abandoned her after she gave birth to twins! The girl is pretty weak, and there isn't enough milk for both babies. So we'll be taking this project on for a while. It's the first appeal that the Center in Nakhodka had after the appointment of the new director and the reformation of the Center. So it is kind of exciting for them. Thank you, benefactors of the Women's Support Centers!



The new director of the Women's Support Center in Nakhodka, mother of six children, Olga Merkulova.

Olga's volunteers in the Center, Galina Adamovna, Olga Babina, and Tatyana Troshanovskaya



- In November St Joseph's Parish in Modesto held its annual dinner for Russia. Among the events was an auction of needs in Russia—Who would pay the most to fulfill those needs! Among them were the Women's Support Centers. Just before Christmas we received a request from the Women's Support Center in Blagoveschensk to find money to buy baby cribs and strollers and baby buggies. It seems that women students (girls, really) sometimes get pregnant, and their poverty encourages them to get abortions. The Center often

received requests to help with strollers, blankets, and other equipment. We were able to give money from the Modesto funds to provide those needs. Thanks, Modesto! The durable items are loaned to moms for the length of the need, and then returned to be loaned to others. We received lots of thanks for this project, and lots of photos. Want to see some?



Was it Santa who left these things below the Christmas tree?

Wow, what a ride!



Winter naptime.



- We have to upgrade the heating system for our buildings, since this was not completed last winter when we moved in. In this connection, the furnaces (Shadrack, Mishack, and Abednigo, as we named them--now there is a fourth one, so I guess we'll have to call it "Angel") have been reinstalled in the basement of the church. Earlier the fire department wouldn't let us install them there, so we had to build a shed outside the church for them and pipe the heat to the church. Now the fire regulations have been changed, so the furnaces are back where they should be.

(Continued from Page Twelve) parishioners executed for praying the rosary, all saints and martyrs of Vladivostok and the Far East of Russia: Pray for our Bishop, Cyril Klimovich, our priests Fr Myron, Fr Dan, Fr Zenya, Fr Sebastian, Bro Oleg, our seminarians, sisters, and parishioners, ourselves and all who hear the message to work for the spread of the Gospel and the glory of God and His Church. Amen.

God love you and your families, Sandra Sonnen

- Dear Fr Myron, Thank you and our Father in Heaven for this opportunity to serve as the National Coordinator of the Most Holy Mother of God Mission Society. I am so in awe of the love of our Lord! Among many uncanny spiritual ups and downs this last week was reliving the beauty and graces experienced during my first trip to Russia in 2004. In this past week so strong and vivid were these moments of 2004 and being so close to Him and our Blessed Mother during that trip! He led me during that first trip by so many gifts but then I felt I might have let him down by decreasing my efforts for the Mission. Was it my will I was following into the "desert" and not his? Then your phone call! Now I understand I was being prepared to accept His will once again to serve Him in Russia--more "...tiny brush strokes in that big picture being painted..."! May God give us all strength and courage!



Vicky Trevillyan

Blessings and love to all in Vladivostok!
Thank you again!!!!

Yours In Christ,
Vicky
Phone: 651-227-0208

usoffice@vladmission.org
www.vladmission.org

Thanks and Congratulations to all the benefactors!

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From the development desk...

- Dear Friends and family,

It is with great pleasure I announce I am stepping down as National coordinator. Because of ill health, and the fact we have a capable efficient woman who loves Russia and is interested in giving to the mission, it's an opportunity we can't pass up.

I am introducing Vicky Trevillyan from Modesto CA as the choice Fr Myron has made to replace me. I will continue part-time here in St Paul but the office is moving to Modesto. With electronics one never knows where someone is anyway.

I am old enough to retire but I just can't get the mission out of my sight. It has been a joyful spiritual work. I have seen things of heavenly nature every day I am here. I am in a wonderful spot and it has been so good. My faith has grown. It's a wonderful thing to see how Our Lord and Our Lady work in Russia, in our lives and in the lives of our helpers all around the country. I read such faith-filled inspiring letters from donors and travelers, adoptive



Sandra Sonnen

couples and mission team members. I have watched an order of priests bear fruit and I am witnessing a new order of sisters flower. The prayer requests we receive from around the country have been a particular joy to share.

I have met the most wonderful people in

the world, all in love with the Church, Russia, and the call to evangelize and comfort a most pained nation of Russia. A new springtime is just around the corner and I and you are a piece of the puzzle.

My prayer the day I started on October 13, 1999 and prayed many times since: Bishop Karol Slivovsky, Father Gregory Yurkevich, five *(Continued on Page 11)*