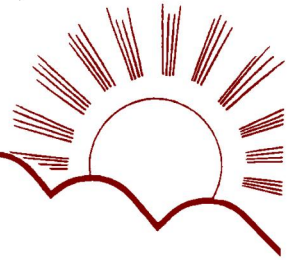


Vladivostok Sunrise

Mary Mother of God Mission Society and Vladivostok Mission

Issue Number One Hundred Three January 1, 2012



Perpetual Vows of Sister Catherine Marie

*By Sr Catherine Marie of the Crucified Lord of Love,
C.J.D.*

Monday, November 21, 2011, the Memorial of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary was a special day for my community, Sisters in Jesus the Lord, my family, and for me. On that day I was given the grace of making my perpetual profession of vows. The ceremony took place at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Raytown, Missouri, where our motherhouse is located. Our bishop, Most Reverend Robert W. Finn, DD, was the principal celebrant. I was blessed to have seven priests, two deacons, all of my community, most of my family members, and many friends present. It was a day which I will always remember.

In his homily, the bishop said, “Many have come to give themselves, to lay down their lives freely, in peace and joy, all for him and his church forever. What hope such gifts give us in the Church. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for working the miracles of grace in the hearts of your children. Weak as we all are, today he chooses and accepts this offering, a perpetual offering, for his glory and for the help of the church.” Speaking to my family members, he said, “Thank you for the gift of life and faith that you have shared with [this daughter] who will always be yours, but now also in a special way, [she is] God’s,” he said. The Bishop reminded me of the example of Mary, the Mother of God, “The Mother of God and our Mother gave herself completely to God and his will. Imitate her and she will lead you and help you to follow her son, the Lamb of God, wherever he leads you.” He

closed his homily with the words, “I know you are ready for this grace. May God sanctify every intention of your heart. May he who has begun this good work in you bring it to fulfillment.”

Please join me in offering heartfelt thanks to the Lord for His goodness and mercy in calling me to the religious life and for all the graces He will pour forth to sustain me. No one can deserve this calling. I rejoice at this gift of espousal to Christ and look forward to a life of prayer and service of the Church.



Sister Catherine and Bishop Finn on her profession day.

The Catholic Church in Eastern Russia

After the revolution of 1917, Siberia became a showplace of the new Communist era, a land without churches and without God. Under Stalin, all Catholic churches were confiscated, and many were turned into the most degrading uses imaginable.

Two American priests, Fr. Myron Effing, CJD, and Fr. Daniel Maurer, CJD, arrived in Vladivostok in 1992 to help re-establish the Church in this region. **They founded or re-founded 11 Catholic parishes in an area covering over 500,000 square miles.** With the foundations laid, additional priests and sisters are joining the work, and parishes are slowly growing and multiplying.

New Religious for the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord

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

For Most Holy Mother of God Parish, Mary Mother of God Mission Society, and for us Americans, December 8 is always a great feastday—The Immaculate Conception. This year we had the joy of celebrating two seminarians who took steps for the future on this feastday.

At first vespers of the Feast, Edwin Intan entered the novitiate of our religious community. Brother Edwin came to us from Sebu, the Philippines after working several years as a meeting organizer for a Japanese company. Besides English, Tagalog, and Visaya, he speaks Japanese and Korean. His language abilities soon became obvious, as he has been the quickest of all to begin to speak Russian! He is a happy person, ready to help. He has taken a shine to ice skating, and enjoys speaking to his fellow students from North Korea.

At Mass on the feastday, Brother Innosensius Hetu finished his novitiate and took his first vows as a religious. I call him “Brother Innokenti” since that is the Russian version of his name. He comes from Flores Island, Indonesia, and has completed his seminary studies already. We are planning when he might be ordained to the Diaconate. He has a great interest in promoting vocations and working with seminarians, which will be very useful as our community grows. He has already been a teacher at a minor seminary. He also speaks several languages, including now English and Russian. To get ready for work with seminarians, he is hoping to study for his master’s degree in Theology this coming year.

Currently there are so few vocations in Russia, mostly because of the extremely small number of children born in the last 20 years. So it is great to have such good men

How to Communicate with Us

Internet: Russian language: www.catholic.vladivostok.ru
English language: www.vladmission.org
Sisters in Jesus the Lord in English: www.cjd.cc

Office in Russia: Phone and FAX: +7-423-226-9614
myron@catholic.vladivostok.ru
daniel@catholic.vladivostok.ru

Office in California: Phone and FAX: +1-209-408-0728
Mary Mother of God Mission Society
1736 Milestone Cir

come to us with real spirituality—they give us hope for the near future—until Russia and Europe in general decide it is time to have children again.



Brother Innokenti preparing to read his vows.

Our community today—Fr Myron, Bro Innokenti, Bro Edwin, Bro Arnulfo, and Fr Daniel. Bro Patrick is studying in the seminary in the Philippines.



Modesto CA 95357
usoffice@vladmission.org

Sisters in Jesus the Lord: +1-816-353-2177
7049 Blue Ridge Blvd
Raytown, MO 64133
www.cjd.cc

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Vladivostok Sunrise gives you up to date information about the Church in Eastern Russia. Contact our office for your free bi-monthly copy.



Pilgrims preparing for the pilgrimage

Our Memorial Pilgrimage

By Tatyana Shaposhnikova

On September 24 our parish celebrated the 90th anniversary of the consecration of the church building by Bishop Karl Slivovsky. We celebrated by making a pilgrimage to the various places related to the history of our parish and parishioners, and to the sites reminding us of the tragic events of the time of the Repression.

The pilgrims started to gather at the doors of the church early in the morning. Most were descendants of those who suffered, many were members of the “Memorial Society” who themselves had suffered from being branded “Enemies of the People”. Others were local historians, members of the city administration, and news reporters. Many came with flowers.

1st Stop: The Catholic Church. We began inside the church with a small organ recital. The church had been built by many people mostly now forgotten, but the parish is now alive once again and so is the church. It gives us courage, faith, and hope in the here and now. In 1932 the church had been given to the State Archive Bureau and its interior reconstructed as a warehouse for documents. The marble crucifix was moved out to an undisclosed location.

After 60 years, in 1991, inside the closed gates of the churchyard, Catholics once again gathered who courageously weathered the great trials without the support of clergy and sacraments, full of faith hoping justice would at last be done. The Catholic Parish was reborn and the building was returned to the believers. Today the Catholic church building of the Most Holy Mother of God in Vladivostok serves as a Godly symbol of the “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.”

The pilgrims remembered all the clergy and parishioners who selflessly served God and His people with a prayer by Fr Daniel Maurer, C.J.D.: “All-powerful God, You show mercy toward those whom You love, and You are never far away from those who seek You. Be with us Your servants on this pilgrimage. Help us to see your guiding hand throughout all our lives. Today guide us on our way, in accord with Your will. Be our companion along our journey, be our strength when we are weary, our defense in the face of dangers, our shade against the heat, our comforter in times of discouragements. Keep our intentions for this day firm and unshakeable, that we may enter into this pilgrimage with open hearts, and listen to what You want to say to us at each stop along the way. Through Your guidance, may we arrive back to our homes, wiser, and with a greater understanding of our history, and a greater love for You. We pray through Jesus Christ Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.”

2nd. Stop: Pokrovsky Cemetery. State historians believe that there are at least 100,000 buried here, including the pioneers of Vladivostok, also a mass grave of the heroes of the Battle of Tsusim, and revolutionaries of the first and second Russian Revolution, the descendants of the great poet Leo Pushkin, and many simple people of many nationalities and faiths. It is divided into several parts: Nearest the city was the Orthodox section, then the Catholic section, and then the Lutheran section, all large and of equal size. Further there are the Chinese, Jewish, Japanese, and Moslem sections. The Soviet authorities decided to just eliminate the cemetery. There was no time to re-bury anybody. They simply leveled the cemetery to the ground. The bigger tombstones they simply put in the foundation of the newly to be paved main street of Vladivostok, Svetlanskaya St. From the bricks of the Pokrovsky Orthodox Church they built the normal school, and on the foundation of the church they raised a statue to the proletarian idol Lenin. For decades the cemetery was an amusement park complete with rides and arcades. Only in 1991 did the Park get the status of “Memorial.” Fr Dan had these words at the cemetery: “Brothers and Sisters, in the spirit of Christian reverence we gathered here to remember Catholics who came from many different places, whose remains are here in this old cemetery. They came to the Far East in the 19th and 20th Centuries. This place was supposed to be a place of peace and respect, prepared for the deceased, but for decades it has been far from that! But we believe that the souls of our ancestors, our grandfathers and grandmothers, our fathers and mothers, our brothers and sisters, already rejoice in Heaven in the peace of God. And we expect that they already pray for us, still living on the Earth, the

inheritors of their faith and hope. Already 16 years ago a group of pastors from various Christian denominations and other religions re-blessed this ground after the Soviet sacrilege. Now we are adding our voices to their prayers and express our joy that the era of atheism is ended: “Lord, we ask for your mercy for us and for our ancestors, and ask Your blessing for us and for all those buried here. Let us always live in Your peace, and when our time on Earth comes to an end, bring us also to eternal life with you and with all our ancestors. We pray for this through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

3rd. Stop: The Bishop’s Home in Sedanka. Many pilgrims were anxious to see the home in Sedanka where Bishop Karl Slivovsky, the last Catholic bishop in Russia, was exiled, lived and died. He was a canon of the Archdiocese of Mogilov, and had been awarded the golden cross-ring of the Order of St Stanislaus and the Order of the Rebirth of Poland. The beginning of the rapid development of the Church in the Russian Far East is associated with his name, who, as pastor, was highly respected by Vladivostok parishioners. The construction of the church building was among the many of his activities. Untiringly he had a huge sphere of work, including a lot of social and charitable works. During the revolutionary war years he worked with many city organizations taking care of the refugees. He opened a seminary in Vladivostok, and a parish grade school where the children were also fed, and he opened an orphanage for kids left familyless by the war.

Even though the Revolution brought to the Far East a huge number of utterly poor and needy refugees, the construction of the church was completed with its official consecration on October 2, 1921, and event that seemed all the more miraculous in military Vladivostok. There was to be one more great event.

On October 28, 1923, Fr Slivovsky was consecrated Bishop in Harbin, China. He was 77 years old, a tall man, with good health, peaceful, intelligent, active, and spoke Latin and several European languages. But that event was the last happy event in the life of the new Vladivostok Diocese. Soon the Far Eastern Republic was dissolved and it became impossible for the bishop to govern his diocese. His canonical visitations of the parishes in 1926 showed that atheistic propaganda was attracting the youth away from the Church, and that older folks hadn’t had the opportunity to go to confession for many years. Attempts by the Vatican to provide for Catholics in Siberia did not achieve success, and Bishop Slivovsky became one of the last bishops in the Russian Soviet lands. He always had hope that God would protect him: “It is only unshakable faith and hope which I lay on the Most Sacred Heart of

Jesus that supports me and does not allow me to break—it gives me strength to live and give support to my parishioners,” he wrote to the Holy See. “Eternal Rest grant to him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine on him. May he and all the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.”

4th. Stop: Sedanka Cemetery. We find a witness to the Sedanka period of the bishop’s life in Poland though the works of Franciscan Zachary Banasya which are housed in the archive of the Bernardine monastery in Krakow. He clearly and without criticism, but with fear and hope, realizing his great moral and spiritual responsibility, writes about his last historic meeting with the bishop. Bishop Slivovsky died on January 5, 1933, at 85 years old. He was buried near the chapel where parishioners prayed for him, but now without any priest. The pilgrims prayed here, too, for the bishop, and for their ancestors and all those who were buried without prayer and without the sacraments: “Loving and merciful God,

In the revolutions, wars and cataclysms of the 20th century many of your faithful people, like Bishop Slivovsky, who had grown up and lived so many years in a normal, religious, believing and practicing social context, found themselves in the later part of their lives without the consolation of the clergy to pray for them or the sacraments to console them and keep them in the grace of Christ. They could not confess their sins in the sacrament of penance or receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion. As their end approached, they faced the prospect of meeting You without the last rites of the Church nor even the familiar words to the Funeral Mass. Even though we continue to pray for Bishop Slivovsky, we think that he is probably now freed from any sins he may have committed in those last years, and is happy with you eternally in heaven. But there are others, other priests sent away to the GULAG where no one could practice their Faith; lay people who died with no sacraments or prayers. Here in this spot close to the grave of Bishop Karol, we remember them all – all the people who were deprived of the Motherly Care of Your Church, and who died with no religious funeral or even no one to offer a prayer for them: “Mercifully gather them all in the Most Precious Heart of Your dear Son and grant them eternal rest and peace with You in paradise forever. Amen”

5th. Stop: The Mass Gravesite. A memorial Cross and a memorial stone mark the spot of one of the many burial places in the forests around Vladivostok where were laid to rest the bodies of the tortured and executed victims of the political repression. Our parishioners’ documents read, “They are accused of participation in Polish religious and nationalistic counterrevolutionary organizations.”

They received the highest sentence: to be shot and left without any memorial or memory of them.

It was terrible how they took my father.
They didn't say why or where.
My heart is empty, dark, and blackened.
Wait, or not wait?—Never to see my dad or not?



The mass gravesite in the woods.

Our parishioners know and remember those who died during those years of the cruel war against religion. The pilgrims bowed their heads to acknowledge that sorrow and grief that came to every family. The older population who lived through those terrible nights of the arrest of their relatives, still have bitter memories of the constant fear, poverty, hunger, and midnight fleeing. Not only their loved ones were taken, but also their reputations and good names. In silence the pilgrims listened to the words of the prayer: “Merciful God and Father, We gather here to remember all those who were killed in the political and religious persecutions of the communist government and co-workers of the Soviet Union. We pray for all those whose earthly remains are buried here, for their families and their loved ones who suffered from their illegal, unjust and early deaths. We pray especially for those among them who were killed because of their religious beliefs. It is so hard to understand why this slaughter took place – in our country and in the modern world. As we remember our repressed family members, we pray for their descendents: for their spouses, their children and grandchildren who grew up never knowing them. Most of all, we pray that this kind of unjust repression never happen again, anywhere on this earth. Lord, keep us safe from the arbitrary and autonomous wills of others who want to oppress people. But if we must suffer through persecution, please give us the strength always to put all our hope in You, who are the source of all light and life. We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

6th. Stop: The Woods Cemetery. Today, right near the “forest memorial” goes a new highway. A year ago, during construction, the bulldozers came upon the human remains of a mass gravesite, including 4 English tons of bones of people who had been shot in the typical way in the back of their heads! After an official investigation those remains were reburied with all honors in a special place in the Woods Cemetery. Eternal Rest to them! The pilgrims light their candles and lay carnations on the endlessly huge mass grave.

7th. Stop: Second River. In the city of Vladivostok, on the shore of the “Second River”, near the children’s park there is a special place. Here in the 1930’s there was a transfer camp where prisoners, brought by train to Vladivostok, were transferred to ship for the voyage to Magadan. This is the place of human despair, a purgatory for huge crowds of people from various nationalities, a hell full of fear and inhumanity. From here all the political prisoners by the hundreds of thousands were sent to work in the mines and forests of the Far North and Far East. Sometimes they simply dumped people into the ocean on the way. Every day dumptrucks with the bodies of the dead were taken to mass graves. Their relatives could never know where the bodies of their fathers, brothers, mothers were left. Today there are still reminders of the forced work of the prisoners throughout Vladivostok and its surroundings, like the long railroad Lugovaya-Robotchaya Tunnel carved from almost impenetrable rock. They called it “The Stalin Tunnel” like many other tunnels, apartment buildings, and homes in Vladivostok.

The pilgrims cried remembering the sufferings of this camp. May it never happen again, and may there be just recompense for such suffering. Fr Daniel especially prayed for those who gave their lives for the faith and for their descendents: “Dear Lord Jesus, We lift our hearts and voices to you in this place of suffering and pain. We know that thousands of people passed through this transit camp on their way to other camps in the Far North. Most of us cannot imagine how much they suffered, but you know all their sufferings, and You suffered with them. In your lifetime on Earth, you were arrested, sent from prison to prison, given the heavy burden of your Cross to carry, and finally you suffered the most painful death imaginable – the death of crucifixion. You, Who were the immortal God and creator of the universe, chose to be born into our world. You were perfectly innocent from any sin, and yet you chose to take upon yourself the punishment for our sins, to suffer and die for our salvation. We pray now for all who passed through this camp, who suffered any kind of indignity here, and who suffered further on the terrible and cold journeys on the ships to Kolyma and the North.

We pray that all that suffering and pain was not in vain, but that it has been united with Your suffering on the Cross for the salvation of others. We pray also for all the survivors of the GULAG, who are still living and who are now old. Give them comfort and security in their old age. Give them the Gift of Faith to know and to love you. Give them the love of family and friends to comfort them. We pray also for the spouses, children and grandchildren of those who spent time in the camps. Help them to forgive those who unjustly abused their loved ones. Help them to love and respect their relatives who may have been psychologically or physically injured because of their terrible experiences at the hands of government employees. Help them to keep alive in their hearts the Hope, Love and Faith that you give to them. We make all these prayers through God the Father through You, Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.”

The pilgrims placed flowers and lit their candles. It

Opportunities

♥ Share a bit of your family history with us! The mission is collecting recipes from all over the world for the Mary Mother of God Mission Society **International Cookbook!** We especially would like old family favorites handed down from generation to generation! Send your recipes to us. Please include your name, city and state and the country of the recipe’s origin. Add any a sentence or two about your recipe’s history, if available. Proceeds from our cookbook will support our seminarians and Women’s Support Centers.

♥ CA and NV residents, please remember to use your free **SHARES card** for your holiday grocery shopping! Shop at Save Mart, Lucky, Smart Foods and Food Maxx and present your card at checkout. The mission receives up to 3% of your grocery total! It costs you nothing! You earned \$2568.37 for the mission for last quarter’s use of the cards. Thank you! Call us for your free cards to pass on to your friends, family, and apostolate members.

♥ We now have children’s size medium to adults 3X in our **Vladivostok hooded sweatshirts!** 50/50 medium heavyweight. Available colors are Black/Burgundy lettering, Navy Blue/Burgundy Lettering, Burgundy w/Navy lettering. **Great Christmas gifts!** See our website for ordering.

♥ We are well on our way to reaching the half way mark for the funds needed for the final phase of our roof repair

shouldn’t be too long before a new memorial complex will be built on this site, including an Orthodox church and chapel, a museum, and a memorial park. There was one unexpected moment: there was the blessing of the cupola for the Orthodox chapel and it was raised up while we watched, almost a sign of faith and justice.

8th. Stop: Parish House. We finished our pilgrimage with dinner in the Our Lady of Fatima Rectory. Those who participated in the day were ready to go home all the wiser and with a better understanding of the historic events, and more love for God and for their ancestors. We shared our feelings and our impressions. There were words of thanks to Fr Daniel, and to Polish House for their participation, to me and to Alexander Basov for organizing the day. For many pilgrims our day was a wonderful opportunity for clearing our minds and giving comfort to our spirits.

project. Many thanks to all have helped meet our needs to complete the roof repairs in year 1! Our goal is to raise a total of \$88,799 by next spring in order to complete the repairs to the roof. You can track our progress and donate on line at www.vladmission.org

Contact the mission office for more information on our opportunities! 209-408-0728 or email us.

News Notes

by V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D

- Mary Mother of God Mission Society attended over 30 conferences and events this past year (small craft events and markets not included in count), from Vancouver and Winnipeg in Canada to Connecticut to Los Angeles to Washington State. We also spoke at 39 parishes this year. Thank you, volunteers for taking on most of all this work!

- This is the first newsletter being printed in Ceres, CA by Valley Printing, and assemble by volunteers at our sister parish of St Joseph in Modesto, CA. Thanks, folks! We hope you’ll have as much fun doing the *Sunrise* as the folks at Nativity in St Paul, MN did!

- On December 18 Nikolai Dorodnov, Fr Myron’s secretary and long time parishioner, won the Primorsky State championship in Ballroom Dancing in the Senior Division. Many visitors to our mission will remember

Nikolai very well! It means he will receive a trip to Moscow to compete in the national tournament. Earlier he had already won the State championship for Latin American dance.



- Our visitors during the 1990's will remember Anatoly, our driver who served us in spite of our many accidents and problems with automobiles and bad roads. He died September 24, 2004 of a stroke. What a joy it was to see



the company for which he worked for many years honor him by naming a service ship after him! He had worked as one of the best underwater divers and welders, and was in demand to help ships in trouble anywhere the Russian fleet sailed. Here is a photo of the ship.



The "Deep Sea Diver Stashkov"

- Here is a photo of our Christmas tree with the boxes and boxes of toys, games, and food that we were able to donate to Children's Hospital #3 for the orphans there, thanks to our benefactors. And there is another stack just like it for all the kids at Parus Nadezhdi. And I've delivered three big suitcases of clothing to orphans in other cities. And we are planning orphan Christmas parties for the orphanages with the youth of our parish. They will have fun, and so will the kids! I hope you've had a Merry Christmas, and now a **Happy New Year!**

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From the development desk...

Dear Friends,

● We have had a wonderful response to our **roof repair** efforts. With the first half of the repairs completed, thanks to you, we are continuing to pray for the funds to cover the second and most costly half of the repairs expected to begin this spring. To date, we have raised \$46,541.02 of the \$88,799.00 needed to complete the project. We're over half way there, thanks to your generosity, but a long way to go! Over the next few months, we'll need to be creative in our fundraising to meet our goal, any suggestions? You can visit our website www.vladmission.org for the complete budget and needs for our roof. Once the repairs are complete, the roof will have a life expectancy of 50 years or more!

● Our recipes collection for our **international cookbook** fundraiser is coming along nicely. What great recipes we have! Many thanks to those who have shared their favorites with us! We have half of the 500 recipes we hope to collect. Once the cookbook is published this spring, proceeds will go to support our seminarians

and the Women's Support Centers. If you haven't sent in your favorite family or international delicacy, we hope you will soon!

Your favorite recipes will be in print in our book to hand down to future generations! See our Opportunities column this issue for instructions on how to submit your recipes.

● **Thank you** for all your help to the mission and the work our priests are doing. Have a blessed New Year! Please pray for us as we continue to pray for all of you.

Sincerely, Vicky Trevillyan, Mission Desk 209-408-0728



Happy New Year Everyone!