



# Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



**Mary Mother of God Mission Society: Reviving the Roman Catholic Church in Eastern Russia**  
Issue Number One Hundred Seventeen May 1, 2014

## Brother Patrick Makes Final Vows

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

March 8 was the big celebration of Brother Patrick Napal, C.J.D.'s final life vows here in Vladivostok. Many religious attended from surrounding parishes, and he himself cooked a great meal for the guests after the ceremony.

Brother Patrick was born on September 1, 1983, of Josefina and Pablito Napal, in Magallanes Agusan del Norte, Philippines. He finished his bachelor's degree in Philosophy at St Francis Xavier College Seminary in 2012. As a communicative "people person" he is good at languages, speaking Filipino, Cebuano, Ilonggo, English, Italian, Russian, and even has a good start on Spanish. He has experience as a teacher of Italian, and also worked in a call center in English where he was awarded a #1 Agent prize.

1999 he was the youngest School Catechist in the Archdiocese of Davao, teaching grades 1 and 2 in public schools for 8 sections. In 2000, he joined a religious community in Davao City, Philippines, where he served as procurator, and started the novitiate program. He became their vocation director while still a novice. After leaving that community he organized a group of volunteers, the Servants of Compassion, to work in charity projects in Davao with its main apostolate to serve the lonely and the poor. They worked in a mental hospital, had a feeding program for 35 children.

His experience as a young vocation director, and his ability to communicate have put him in demand for the annual vocations talks that are given in each parish and school in the Philippines. Philippine diocesan vocation directors invite him to give presentations at these huge meetings.

Brother Patrick first came to Russia for a "come and see visit" in 2009. After novitiate in the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord in Vladivostok he took first vows in 2011, and now final vows. He will return to the Philippines to the major seminary, and hopes to come back to Russia, where he is famous for his constant work and concern for the dying at the Hospice in Vladivostok.

Brother Patrick recently wrote, "Dear Benefactors, you are playing a very important role in our missionary life here in the Russian Far East. Some of you, like St. Therese the Little Flower, have never been to Russia, but your kindness and generosity reaches Russia and has touched so many lives. Our presence in Russia would not have been possible, but for your kindness. The Catholic Church in Russia is still very young, and therefore much work still needs to be



*Brother Patrick comforts an orphan.*

done. Re-introducing the Love of Jesus to every individual is something that we can offer to Russia, where people were deprived of God, deprived of love, deprived of Christian charity.”



*The religious who gathered for the event. (l.) Fr Ashot from the Armenian Apostolic Church, (r.) sisters from the Sisters of Charity of St Paul de Chartre from Korea who work in Ussurysk, 3 Sisters in Jesus the Lord, 3 sisters of Charity of St Anne, six of our novices, and, in the back, Fr Daniel, Fr Myron, and Fr John Gibbons, OFM from Arsenyev. And Brother Patrick with the flowers.*

## First Mass in Convent Chapel on Russian Island

February 18 was an historical moment when the Sisters in Jesus the Lord asked Fr Myron to say the first mass at their convent on Russian Island, not far from the Far Eastern Federal University. They at last were able to move to the convent from the parish, so we are very happy for them as they continue to consolidate their presence on the Island. With the arrival of Sr Faustina there are now three sisters. They are very helpful to us in all our liturgical and pastoral work. And they are so happy now to at last have the Blessed Sacrament in their home on the Island. We'll have mass there regularly now, especially as the number of Catholic students increases.



They still need lots of help with the repairs of the building, and they are hoping to buy more apartments so there will be room for retreats and conferences, as well as for more sisters. A big bonus is that, since they are located on the inside bay of the island, they have summer swimming and winter ice skating to help keep them in shape, and it will be a great place for retreats and for the Far Eastern Catholic Youth conference, which is an annual event.

Congratulations, Sisters!



## The Feast of Good News

by Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.

In the late 1940's, the Great Patriotic War against Germany had ended, but the Stalinist repression was in full swing. A 47 year old woman became pregnant at a time when, naturally, she thought her family was complete with two girls. It wasn't a good time for children, especially for Catholics, and her husband had already been arrested. All her friends and family urged her to simply have an abortion. Helen decided that abortion was the only way out for her, and besides, she probably wouldn't live to care for her child--it would only be motherless anyway.

The date set for the abortion was March 25. As she collected her things to go to the clinic, she suddenly remembered that March 25 was a holyday--the Feast of the Annunciation! She thought that abortion was a sin, but it would be an even greater sin to commit it on the very day when the Angel came to Mary, and Jesus became flesh in her womb! With sorrow mixed with relief, she decided to let her child live, and to accept whatever struggle and pain it might mean. Alexander Ivanovich was born, a healthy child. One evening in the darkness and in secret someone came to their home, and Alexander and his sisters were baptized.

Later Alexander learned how he was saved from death by the Feast of the Annunciation--in Russian, the "Feast of the Good News". Alexander worked in the weapon's industry in the city of Comsomolsk-na-Amure, but found an opportunity to begin a business in the city of Blagoveschensk, a name which translates into English as "the City of the Good News". It is located in the Amursky State, on the border between Russia and Manchuria where there are many tourists and businessmen from both countries. He named his new tourist business "Good News".

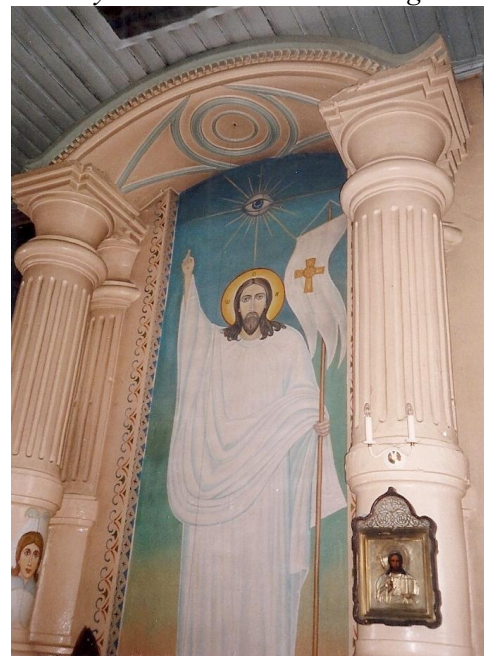
In early 1994 it became possible for me to find and serve the Catholics of the Amursky State--part of my region of responsibility in Russia, so I placed ads in newspapers in Blagoveschensk. Alexander answered the ads.

On March 23 I arrived in Blagoveschensk for the first time. I met Alexander and found that his office is just a block away from the historical Catholic church. He invited us to use his office for the Catholic parish until we found something else. He said, "My mother would be proud and happy if I were the one to make possible the re-establishment of the Catholic Church here in Blagoveschensk! In this way I can say 'thank you' to her for her decision not to kill me. And I can thank God and her for the gift of life which came to me on the 'Day of Good News'". I was happy to celebrate the Mass of the Annunciation on March 25th in the city named for that feast, in Alexander's office who was saved from death on that day. God had prepared for the re-birth of the Catholic Church in Blagoveschensk in such a miraculous way!



*The old Transfiguration Catholic Church and Catholic hospital in Blagoveschensk.*

*Image of Christ behind the altar where the Orthodox parish currently uses the Catholic building.*



*Alexander with Fr Myron*





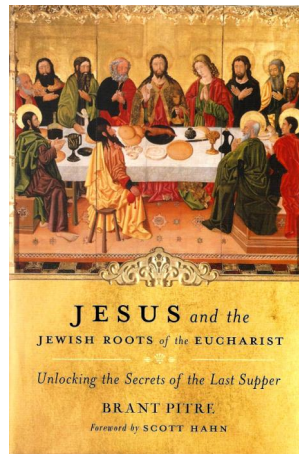
*The Annunciation window in Vladivostok*

## News Notes

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

- We are all so happy about our new website [www.vladmission.org](http://www.vladmission.org) If you haven't seen it, you might want to look. Meanwhile we are updating our Russian site, too. : [www.catholic.vladvostok.ru](http://www.catholic.vladvostok.ru) We'll need an Indonesian site soon!!
- There has been a lot of news about Russia these days, what with the Olympics in **Sochi** and the troubles in **Ukraine**. I'm glad you thought of us when you watched the news and games! And thanks for your prayers! The Ukraine is 8 time zones from us; things are normal here.
- Soon two more brothers will take their final vows, and five novices will take first vows, and then we are expecting a new class of five novices. It is such a joy that young men want to join our work, and I'm so very happy

with the quality of these men. We are hoping for ordinations in the years ahead so that we can expand our work, both in Russia and elsewhere. We are praying for that! Every "green" Monday we say the Mass for **Vocations to the Priesthood**.



- We have a nice project going with the novices right now. We read a book together by a professor in the Catholic seminary in New Orleans, Dr Brant Pitre, ***Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist***. It is a wonderful book, and the Indonesians noticed that it hasn't been translated into Indonesian so that it could be read by the many seminarians and parishioners in Indonesia. So they decided to translate it, and we'll look for a publisher there when it is done. They are also preparing some teaching units based on the book, which they could use later in Indonesia when they are called upon to give a talk at the retreat or in a parish setting. Translate to Russian? We don't have time just now, but perhaps a Russian novice can do it soon!

And a second project is that we are viewing the films about the lives of the saints that are available from **Ignatius Press** in San Francisco ([www.ignatius.com](http://www.ignatius.com)). There sure are some great films. We just viewed the one about St Philip Neri. They are not available in Russian or Indonesian translation yet. We're not sure what we can do about that! It would be a great evangelization project to produce such translations.

- **Brother Edwin** Intan, C.J.D. has been working hard to complete his Masters Degree in Philosophy in Cebu, Philippines, at San Carlos University, so he can begin the major seminary with the next school year. He had to make a quick trip to Manila to get his visa for Russia, but got there too late in the day. Wanting to save money, he decided to while away the night and take care of business in the morning. He spent time in stores open all night. At 6:00am he went to Morning Mass at a local church, but fell asleep in the pew. When he awoke, his bag was missing! With all his documents and money! Frantically he looked for the thief and went to the police. Later the pastor called him to say that an envelope was found with all his documents in it, but not money! Halleluiah for "honest" thieves!



- I worry about paying for our **seminarians' education**. After 20 years of practically no vocations, we suddenly are in a vocations boom, and I'm really pleased with the quality of these men. More promising candidates are still writing asking to please let them join us! But, as our Fr Inosensius in Indonesia says, "I feel stress because of our financial situation. We eat very poorly. Now we have only around \$1000, and I am beginning to be afraid. I can't take this to pay the tuition for our seminarians in Flores. The six candidates in Flores need money for the second semester but I haven't paid yet. Our minivan was in trouble and we paid around \$500 for repairs. I am very happy because all of seminarians are improving in spirituality and are more and more mature." Maybe readers know where it is possible to find more funds for our seminarians? Maybe you know whom to ask?

- We were so happy to complete the steeples of our church in Vladivostok. We knew there was one big question that remained, though: **Were the bells hung correctly?** The fact is that no one had any experience with hanging big, heavy church bells here in Vladivostok, so we hung them as the architect suggested. Now we have removed the doubt by inviting Roster Wu of Carillon Technology (S) pte.ltd of Singapore to come and inspect our work. He is extremely experienced, having hung many bells in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia, as well as in Singapore. His assessment? We have to re-hang them, as they are supported on the brick walls of the steeples, and that could be dangerous in the future as the vibrations from the swinging bells can gradually weaken the bricks to the danger point. He is suggesting changes, some of which we can do ourselves here, and some which he needs to do in the bell shop in Singapore. The weight needs to be shifted to the concrete floor of the steeple.



*Mr Wu and Brother Philipus inspecting the bells.*

- Thank you to a benefactor family who bought a new sewing machine for the kids at the orphanage in Novoshaktinsk. The orphanages are busy teaching the children life skills, something that wasn't done in earlier times. Sewing and cooking are included in the classes, and the orphanage even made a "home size" kitchen in which the boys and girls can practice. This machine is in the sewing room where the kids make clothing, ornaments, holiday costumes, and sometimes just plain old fashioned repairs.



*The bells as they hang now.*



*The sewing instructor and Fr Myron*

## Opportunities

♥ **Fr Daniel will be in the US** this summer for his mission fundraising tour. Here's his schedule of parish weekend visits. If you are in driving distance we can schedule a weekday reception meet and greet with Fr. Dan and your parish group or Catholic school or college. We can use your help contacting Catholic radio stations for interviews with Fr. Dan. Please contact the mission office – 209-408-0728.

**June 7/8 – Immaculate Conception, N. Little Rock, AR**

**June 14/15 – East Coast - TBA**

**June 21/22 – East Coast – TBA**

**June 28/29 – St Thomas More – Centennial, CO**

**July 5/6 – Prince of Peace – Las Vegas, NV**

**July 12/13 – St Agnes, Concord, CA**

**July 19/20 – St Anne/Holy Cross – Porterville, CA**

**July 24-27 – Napa Institute Conference, Napa, CA**

**August 2/3 – St Leander, San Leandro, CA**

Fr Myron will be in the US in October. Contact us for parish visit possibilities!

♥ Our **seminarians** need your help! Many faithful men, (and now in our sister order, women) are answering the call to religious life. Each of our seminarians are looking for individuals or groups who can sponsor them through prayer and financial support while in the seminary. The annual cost for 1 seminarian for education, books, transportation, and humble living expenses is \$10,774. (1/3 the cost as in the USA). Might your apostolate or family group consider sponsoring one of our seminarians? You will receive personal email news and communication from “your” seminarian. Please see our website for more budget details, or contact the mission office. Thank you!

♥ Priest **speakers** needed for weekend parish mission talks. Contact the Modesto office for more information.

♥ Thank you **SHARES card** users! At an average of \$3000 per month, you have surpassed raising **\$53,000** for the mission since the start of the program just by using your SHARES cards at any Save Mart, Food Maxx, Smart Foods and Lucky's grocery stores. You're still going strong. If you live in CA or NV, please contact the mission office for your **FREE SHARES card**. It costs you nothing to use. Present the card at the grocery checkout. Save Mart will donate up to 3% of your grocery bill to the mission! Hand out cards to your friends and family to use! It really works!

♥ Do you know of a **Catholic Conference** coming to your area? One of the important ways we help spread the news of the mission is to attend Catholic Conferences and

distribute literature about our mission. Please be our eyes and ears and let us know if there is a conference in your area. We'll send our nearby reps or you can join our bureau and attend for the mission! It's a fun way to connect with faithful Catholics and help the mission!



*Rev. Deacon (ret.) and Mrs. Patrick Cline represented us at the Ignite! Men's Conference, NY in March.*

♥ People love our new **Vladivostok international recipes cookbook!** *Abundant Blessings* celebrates our mission families and many blessings. Recipes were submitted from our priests, seminarians, sisters, and lay families from all over the world. Here's a sample:

- Vladivostok Sausage Soup (Russia)
- KOC Award Winning Chili (USA)
- Pancit Sotanghon (Philippines)
- Pierogi – Polish Dumplings (Poland)

A \$25 donation for each cookbook includes shipping in the USA. Proceeds go to support our **seminarians' education expenses and Women's Support Center programs.**

**BONUS!** Receive a free copy of *The Joy of Christmas in Vladivostok* CD with your cookbook as our thank you.



♥ We are growing rapidly in Indonesia, which is great news also for Russia, as we expect some Indonesian vocations will want to come to Russia as priests. So far, all our work in Indonesia is done from premises loaned to



## A Dark Forest Journey

By Bro Edwin S. Intan, CJD

Life goes on; we are on a journey of faith. As we wearily tread on, we stumble, take wrong turns, and perhaps fall face-first into the mud. But God, who looks on us with pity, would help us up, clean us up, and set us off into the right direction.

I remember when I was still an unruly teenager in the absence of parental guidance, all too ignorant of the higher purpose of life. Casting aside the stern but wise maxims of my grandmother who raised me, though in my childhood I was molded and conformed to religious life but there was a short juncture that I dived into the crazy world of adolescence. It was a world where one could gain a treasure of experience. But at a terrible price! My innocence was shattered, my faith shaken. Slowly, I disregarded my soul as I focused more on the pleasing my senses. I felt at home with peers who regularly played basketball and watched the most carnal of videos. I kept a mental record of the girls I wooed. I disregarded my studies, favored cheating, and laughed at my low scores. In that period, I winced and cried inside. If I only knew that the price of my sins as a teenager were terrible, I would not have cast aside my parents' warnings if only they were alive. But I was with different significant others who played the role of my parents. I long to undo the past, but I must live with its memories now.

As I advanced in age, I began to realize that my life is slowly being lowered down into the abyss. At first, I dismissed it and continue on with my lifestyle. But in the end, I panicked. I confided with my friends, but they dismissed my fears. I ran from them, seeking refuge from the darkness that had come to consume me. I began to seek, after years of feigned deafness, the wise counsel of the disappointed people who help shaped me. Gravely, they told me that I have to ask pardon for the one that have been the most offended: God.

With fear and trembling, I entered the parish church of my youth. It had been years since the last time I had set foot in it. I will never forget that event. It was as if after a series of wrong turns and a lengthy incursion in the dark forest, I finally found the path back to God. I sought the priest to confess my sins. After the last sin was confessed, I felt the load off my back. Truly it was a liberating experience. I was absolved and given my penance. I could live again, in a new life.

us—We have no property there except vehicles. Soon we will need to **buy a home for our seminarians** near the Divine Providence Seminary in Surabaya. The cost? I hate to mention it, but realities are realities. It will be in the lower six figures. Maybe someone will be interested to help with this?

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



## How to Communicate with Us

### Internet

Russian language: [www.catholic.vladivostok.ru](http://www.catholic.vladivostok.ru)

English language: [www.vladmission.org](http://www.vladmission.org)

Sisters in Jesus the Lord in English: [www.cjd.cc](http://www.cjd.cc)

**Office in Russia: Phone and FAX:** +7-423-226-9614

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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.

*(continued from page 8)* Wishing all moms and dads a happy and blessed Mother's and Fathers' Day! As we celebrate family, especially the love of our Holy Family, may you all be blessed.

Sincerely, Vicky Trevillyan Mission Coordinator  
209-408-0728 [usoffice@vladmission.org](mailto:usoffice@vladmission.org)

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Happy May!

## From the Development Desk

Dear Friends,

We give thanks to everyone who has given so generously through prayers, service, and financial support to help the children and families of our mission. Your efforts to share and spread the love of Christ and revive the Catholic faith in Russia are making a difference.

Here's just a small sampling of the many blessing coming from your efforts:

- Over 1500 babies have already been saved from abortion through the Adopt A Birth Project. The number of babies saved is ever growing thanks to your support of this program!
- The priestly order of Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord (CJD) and its sister order continue to grow and attract new vocations!
- The CJD sisters are in Russia long term and will be able to be a regular presence for the orphans and among the poor in need of help.
- Our Lady of the Pacific Church building fund reached \$37,598, almost the 10% mark of what we need! Our fundraising continues!

Please read about all our many programs and follow their progress on our newly redesigned website. [www.vladmission.org](http://www.vladmission.org). Only your love, prayers, and support make our work in the mission parishes possible. We are grateful to you and give all glory and honor to God.

Our mission international cookbook, *Abundant Blessings*, has been well received! We're getting great feedback! "It's beautiful!", "I love it!", "Well put together.", and, "I'm getting several to give as gifts." are common responses. A great WEDDING or MOTHER'S or FATHER'S DAY gift! The cookbook has nearly 500 international recipes and color photos of our mission families and a whole lot more. Check out more on



*Your support helps feed and cloth children living in the orphanages.*

our website or contact our mission office to request your books. \$25 for each book supports our seminarians' education expenses and our Pro-Life Women's Centers and takes care of the shipping/handling in the continental USA. There's additional postage for international shipments. (con't on pg 7)