



Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



Mary Mother of God Mission Society: Reviving the Roman Catholic Church in Eastern Russia

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Bishop Kherubim Pereira, SVD, DD, of Maumere leads those to be ordained into Holy Spirit Church in Nele, Indonesia, Deacons Yohanes Edo, O.Carm., Jacob Dambe, C.J.D., Yohanes Marinus, C.J.D., and Andrianus Daton, O.Carm.

Ordination Days for the C.J.D.

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

It was January 12 when the whole village of Nele, and lots of others from Maumere and friends and relatives of the ordinands came out to meet Bishop Kherubim and the deacons to be ordained to the priesthood. It was the grand parade from the edge of the village to the parish church, and all the street fronts were decorated to greet the bishop. He was met by police who stopped all traffic, by villagers



in their best traditional native costumes, and by troops of native dancers in brilliant costumes. The tribal leader was on hand to give a welcoming speech, and fire crackers were crackling. The parade must have taken 30 minutes, just a hint of the 3.5 hour ceremony to follow.

The parish ushered us into the rectory for a drink of water and some lunch, and so we clergy could all vest. Meanwhile the laity entered the huge church with its back-less pews and open-to-the-air window frames, and its strangely pink colored walls. The choir had been collected from several parishes and had long practiced for this special day—the priestly ordination of one of their own parishioners, our Bro Yohanes Marinus, and of our Bro Jacob who had served as deacons already for a year. It was to be a no-holds-barred day of celebration!



After the Ordination Mass, there were the usual speeches and thank you's, and then a huge procession with brightly colored native costumes to the rectory, again for water and a little lunch. (The offer of a glass of clean, clear water is the first element of hospitality in this hot and humid climate.)

When the lunch was over, the whole parish was invited to an amazing dinner, complete with entertainment and many kinds of fruit drinks. I said, "But we just ate!" No matter-- This is a special day for the whole parish and the whole church!



Entertainment included traditional war dances.

New Fr Jacob and his family from Silowesy Island



Bishop Pepe speaking in the black and white simplicity of the Las Vegas Cathedral of the Guardian Angels.



New Fr Yohanes and dancers from his home parish



Laying on of hands for Bro Jose



The two new deacons served at the altar, Bro Luis and Bro Jose.

Wouldn't you know? I got a bad case of jungle fever, but I did make it through the ceremony in Las Vegas. It was worth it to see four of our brothers ordained. All of them have a lot of life experience, and we are really counting on them. Probably two more of our brothers will be ordained this year, and, of course, the ordination to the priesthood of Bro Luis and Bro Jose is scheduled for May 31, 2017! You can come!

Preaching at a *Kasaulogan sa Pulong*

By Brother Edwin Intan, C.J.D. Seminarian



Kasaulogan sa Pulong in English literally means "Celebration of the Word" which can be equated to "Liturgy of the Word" which is normally experienced in the Philippines in some remote area chapels which are administered by a religious brother or laymen where the faithful can listen to the Gospel readings followed by a reflection and sharing and receive Communion in the absence of a priest. I joined my former Cebuano classmates for this experience in December 17 to 24.

Kasaulogan sa Pulong was not without its challenges. First of all, it requires inner preparation. I always believed that a good preacher always preaches, but uses only words when necessary, in which people get attracted to the words only if the preacher becomes an instrument to them by the sincerity of heart. I remember once I used to say this line to someone I knew who was good at words, "excuse me, your actions are too loud that I cannot hear what you just said." Now I am in the position of convincing people not just by words but also in deeds. The solemn act of bringing the Sacred Scriptures to the people and interpreting its words to enlighten the faithful requires the sincerest of efforts. How could it not be, since it would not just be their life in the Church at stake, but also their relationship with God? Thus, I prepared myself by intense study and praying for enlightenment that I may be able to effectively get the message and lesson of God across to the people. The thought of failing that burdened me, but because it was not just failing the people but also the community and God. That very thought strengthened my resolve.

Second, *Kasaulogan sa Pulong* requires outer preparation. The place where we were to hold the event was a far-flung place. It has been quite a time since I last rode a *habal-habal*, the quickest way of transportation available to our modest budget, save for walking. Add to that the poor state of the roads, which required intense balancing and quick reflexes on the part of the driver. Not only that, but we must travel in the dawn, long before the sun has risen. The cold air of the dawn is amplified by the rain and the accompanying winds. And so, I steeled myself for the exhausting journey ahead, that I may not be a whiner, which I find to be inappropriate for someone with such an important task ahead. Besides, whining would not be conducive to a sincere sharing of God's word with the people.

My inner and outer preparations served me well in the course of *Kasaulogan sa Pulong*. Not only did I manage to convey what I discerned is the message of God, but also it led me to some considerations of my own, like how the people maintain the faith, even with the scarcity of community events that urban dwellers enjoy year round. It goes to show what kind of Christians are in the far-flung community where we did the *Kasaulogan sa Pulong*, that they went to an event not led by priests at a time when most of us are still sleeping soundly. These Christians knew the value of the *pulong* and the importance of its correct understanding. Without them, the event would not have been successful. The second consideration is on how good preachers are needed more than ever. In our society in which sources of temptations are growing, the Christian message must be sent across. But today, when people are more persuaded by the sensational rather than the rational, good preaching does not mean simply reiterating what the Church teaches but to form these teachings so as to resonate with the people. *Kasaulogan sa Pulong* gives future preachers an opportunity to learn what resonates with the people, since only exposure can form such mindset.

Despite the elements of nature arrayed against me, I accomplished my assignment. The hardships that I faced melted away in the memory of that successful *Kasaulogan sa Pulong*, where there was an equal exchange: the people from me, and I from the people.

The 19th Annual Christmas Festival of Christian Choirs

by Fr Daniel L Maurer CJD

The 19th annual Christmas Festival of Christian Choirs took place in our church in Vladivostok on the second Sunday in January at 4:00 PM. The festival was founded by our parish for the Christmas season of 1998 (January 1999).



The Methodist choir



The Baptist choir

This year the participating choirs increased to 7 from 5 different denominations: 1. our own Catholic Mass choir (11 members); 2. a four-person vocal ensemble from the Evangelical Lutheran Parish of St. Paul; 3. the Eastern Presbyterian Church choir (also 11 members); 4. the Methodist Church adult choir (only 4 members participated because others were sick with winter colds); 5. new to the festival this year was the same Methodist parish's children's choir (8 members); 6. the Central Baptist Church choir (the largest choir participating this year, with 21 members and a new choir director); 7. the *Stella Maris* Musical Ensemble and Choir (18 members), which was founded by our former parish organist, Elvira Gribanova, and which has an inter-denominational membership of Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants, including three children from the music school

where Elvira works. The children sang without music notes or words, having learned their two Christmas songs perfectly by heart.



The Stella Maris Ensemble

Also participating in the first part of the festival and receiving very warm rounds of applause were some of the members of our religious communities: Our three American canonesses of the Sisters in Jesus the Lord – Sr Maria Stella, Sr Catherine Marie and Sr Faustina - playing two Christmas songs on harp and flutes;

Three of our novice Canons of Jesus the Lord, two from Indonesia and one from India: Br Alberten sang an *a cappella* solo rendition of "Silent Night" in Indonesia; and Br Desideratus accompanied by Br Pradeep on electronic keyboard sang in Indonesian: "God So Loved the World that He Gave Us His Only-begotten Son".

The second part of the festival is when all participants gather together on risers in the sanctuary of our church to form the Collected Christian Choir of Vladivostok. This year we sang 8 Christmas carols in Russian, two of which were new to the collected choir and six which are among our favorites that we have often sung at past festivals, and among which were: "O Holy Night", "Silent Night", "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear", and the finale each year "Joy to the World".

With the increase in choirs this year we also had an increase in audience. Practically all the 260 seats in our church were taken. Next January for the 20th Annual Festival we hope to have even more. Russians love "round



numbers". The Christmas Festival of Choirs is one of the most joyous of all of our many music programs each year.

News Notes

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

● Brother Patrick Napal, C.J.D., is on his Pastoral Year from his seminary in Davao, Philippines. His year is being taken in **Yerevan, Armenia**, where he is following up his interest in the Armenian Catholic Rite. He first lived and helped the Mother Theresa sisters and their home for severely handicapped children. He was able to be of considerable help to the sisters and the children, including doing all their Christmas decorating. We'd like to show you pictures, but perhaps the parents of the children would object. He also has been helping the Catholic bishops of Armenia, and says he is starting to do well in the Armenian language (his 7th language besides Latin and Greek.) It is interesting to note that Armenia was the first officially Christian country in the world, and its church goes back to apostolic times. There are many Armenians in Vladivostok but their parish is without a priest, and many in Russia in general, so his knowledge should be useful in the future.

● While I was in Maumere, Indonesia, I took the opportunity to bless the as-yet incomplete **social building** at Our Lady of Vladivostok Seminary on January 15. For now, we are only building the first floor, which contains the kitchen and dining room. The 2nd floor can be done later when the need is greater; it will contain study areas, meeting space, and a lounge. None-the-less, the seminarians set up the first floor for our Mass of Blessing. I spoke about how the monastic dining room is already a symbol of the messianic banquet that we shall all see in heaven. Meanwhile plans are completed for the new chapel building next door, and the beginnings of the foundation for it are in place.



The incomplete first floor set up for mass.

**Remember
Mary Mother of God Mission
Society in your will!**

The building as it will look when totally completed.



● December 8 was the day that Bro Desideratus and Bro Albertus from Indonesia entered our **novitiate** in Russia, for a total of five novices this year. It was somewhat out of schedule due to non-corresponding school calendars in the various countries where our novices come from.

Baby Talk

From the Women's Support Centers



My fellow Americans, er, Russians!

[Michael April 1, 2015]

Opportunities

♥ If you live in the Archdiocese of Sacramento or surrounding areas, we are in need of mission volunteers to help with planning, set up, raffle, auction, cooking, advertisement and other areas during our **Fatima 100th Anniversary fundraising event** on October 7, 2017.

♥ We have been blessed with 2 more priests in our order of **Canons Regular of Jesus The Lord** www.vladmission/vocations. We are blessed with **40 seminarians** still to support. Thanks be to God. Might you please consider a one time, monthly, or yearly sponsorship of one of our seminarians? You'll receive personal email news and communication from your seminarian. Each one of our seminarians is in need of 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 approximately **\$10,774**.

♥ Julianne Immordino from New York has created beautiful **Swarovski crystal rosaries**, valued at \$100 for anyone who donates \$500 or more to our **seminarians' education**. Thank you for your generosity Julianne!

♥ Help the mission by attending our booth at **Catholic conferences** in your area. While this is a very important way to help spread the work of the mission, attending a conference booth is also much fun and easy to do. We supply the materials, training and coordinate the registration. Here are some upcoming events where we will be attending. Can you help?

- 3/25 Ignite Men's Conference, Syracuse, NY
- 4/1 Men's Conference, Worcester, MA
- 4/21 IRL National Meeting, Mundelein, IL
- 4/29 Totally Yours, Rolling Meadow, IL
- 5/6 Napa Men's Conference, Napa, CA
- 5/9 Catholic Social Service Guild, Modesto CA
- 6/16 Eucharistic Congress, Atlanta, GA

♥ Ask your pastor to place a few copies of our bi-monthly **Vladivostok Sunrise** at your parish to share the news of the important work of the Catholic Church in Russia. We'll be happy to send them.

♥ You are invited to visit the **mission in Vladivostok!** We will help you form a team from your parish or you may join a group already going. See where it all started, learn the history of the church and area, and experience first hand the charitable works and many services of the mission. The experience is life changing!



Give loving attention to the orphans when you serve in the Vladivostok mission.

♥ You can find a fun family Easter recipe, **Resurrection Rolls**, in our **Abundant Blessings mission cookbook**. Teach the children about Christ's Passion throughout the preparation and baking of this delicious bread. Recipe submitted by Barbara



Fitzsimmons, Modesto, CA. Proceeds from our 571 cookbooks sold so far have gone to our **seminarians' education fund** and our **Women's Support Centers, helping pregnant women and families**. Choose from our 498 mouth watering recipes. Excellent for gift giving to all the cooks in your life, or better, all those who don't cook too! Many repeat orders have come in as buyers discover the diverse and beautifully arranged collection of recipes. Our cookbook is tab divided into 8 int'l geographic areas and submitted from the many cultures and countries of our priests, seminarians, sisters, and mission families in celebration of our abundant blessings. Interesting reading for your coffee table too! **\$25 per cookbook** covers cookbook and shipping in the continental USA.

♥ Special cookbook promotion beginning in March! With each cookbook ordered receive a free copy of our **Vladivostok Ecumenical Easter Concert Music CD**, while supplies last.



Performed in the Most Holy Mother of God Church, produced by Fr. Daniel Maurer, C.J.D, Music Director. Translation script included. You may also purchase copies of our Ecumenical Easter Concert CD separately for \$13.95. S/H included.

♥ You can give an eternal gift to your loved ones through **Masses** celebrated in Russia. Mass cards will be sent. You'll be supporting our priests too! Suggested stipend is \$15 per mass.

♥ You have the opportunity to help the mission while shopping at no extra cost to you. When shopping Amazon, use **Amazon Smile!** Designate Mary Mother of God Mission Society as your charity of choice. The mission will receive 0.5% of your purchase from Amazon. It costs you nothing to participate. Please see our website www.vladmission.org for more details on how to sign on.

Our mission web store too! www.store.vladmission.org For more information on all our opportunities contact our USA office usoffice@vladmission.org, or 209-408-0728

Happy Easter!

Vladivostok Mission
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From the development desk...

SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE!

We're pleased to announce a very special event on October 7, 2017. You are invited!

Mary Mother of God Mission Society will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima to the three children in Portugal. The event will not only serve as a celebration packed with interesting and thought provoking inspirational topics, but as a fun and exciting fundraiser for crucial help to the poor children and families of the mission, further the growth of the Catholic faith in Russia, educate the ever growing number of seminarians, and much more. We will have special guest speakers on the messages of Fatima and the church in Russia today. A special luncheon will be served, you can bid on our silent auction gifts, and can participate in our raffle to help the mission. Other fun activities and entertainment are planned. Those coming from long distances can stay on to visit neighboring San Francisco, Sacramento, Napa Valley and Lake Tahoe after the event!

We're grateful to the Bishop Jaime Soto of the Archdiocese of Sacramento and Fr Renier Siva of St Joseph Catholic Church in Vacaville, for their

welcome to hold this special celebration in the archdiocese and St. Joseph Church. We greatly thank Jo Clark, of Dixon, CA and Gail Lang of Eugene, OR for making this event possible.

More of the details will follow on our website and in upcoming issues of the Vladivostok Sunrise. For now, we are calling for volunteers near or far, who can help in the planning committee and the hands on tasks the night of the event. If you are long distance, you can still help with gathering donations for our silent auction, raffle and gift baskets, such as vacation/travel packages, event tickets, professional services, jewelry, collectibles, electronics, food and wine, etc.

We can't wait to bring you more of the exciting details as they unfold! We know you will be pleased with our speaker lineup and topics and the fun to benefit the mission. It will be a blessed opportunity for all to gather in our common hope to revive the Catholic Church in Eastern Russia. Stay tuned for more!

Lenten and Easter blessings to you and your family.
Sincerely, Vicky Trevillyan, Mission Coordinator, 209-408-0728, usoffice@vladmission.org