



Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



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

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Volunteers from the parish and from “Memorial Society” renewed the area for the rededication of the memorial.

Keeping Alive the Memory

By Tatyana Shaposhnikova

Twenty Five years ago a simple memorial was made for simple people who were simply destroyed. The years of the late 1930’s in the U.S.S.R. are known as the years of the Great Terror. It was then that they shot 1600 people per day, or more than one person per minute, day and night. It was a time of mindless fear when morals, mercy, love, and faith were forced out of the people. It was an attempt to destroy whole classes of people, parts of society, who were considered enemies of the revolutionary dictatorship. The victims were of various nationalities and various religions. The wave of cruelty reached to Vladivostok, including the Catholic parish and the local Polish community. The “national operation” took place in the 1937’s–1938’s, when the Great Terror targeted whole Polish families. The exact number of those condemned, executed, and buried is still unknown. The places of the burials were secret for decades. The victims were not only deprived of life, but even deprived of a grave and a memorial stone, a final violation of their human dignity.

One of the places of mass burial in Vladivostok was found in the region of the Sedanka watershed. Here in the 1930’s there was a wooded area where the KGB shot and killed the victims. You could call the area a “land of the dead.” To discover those places of burial, those common graves, is to attempt a reparation, a humanitarian act opposing those executioners. In 1992 members of the historical research organization “Memorial,” discovered the location of some mass graves of those who were shot. On that site in August of 1992 a memorial marker was created in the wooded vale between Forts 5 and 6 of the prerevolutionary Vladivostok fortifications. The site was blessed, and since then the children and grandchildren of those who were executed have held memorial services, have brought flowers and candles, and even pilgrimage groups have honored the spot.

In 2009 a new express federal highway connecting the village of DeFrieze with Russian Island was begun. The bulldozers got so close to the memorial area that it became necessary for the road crews to make some changes. It was a nightmare when they began to uproot a horde of human remains. So work on that part of the road was halted and the area was roped off. From May to June of 2010 the remains were exhumed. There were so many that it required the help of volunteers from students of the universities of Vladivostok, workers from the military police, plane crash experts, help from the city administration and from Special Services Forces.

From the place where they dug for the highway they found nearly 4 tons of bones, 495 skulls with signs of violent death from 9mm caliber guns. Experts from the Primorsky Krai Bureau of Criminal Medicine confirmed that the remains belonged to political victims. Historians consider that the number of people buried there is probably quite a bit larger than those already discovered, and would probably amount to several thousand persons. But the area uncovered so far is only about 200 yards by 150 yards. Together with the bones were found other items: purses with coins of the 1930's, cigarette holders, tobacco pipes, children's beads, drinking glasses, porcelain plates, and eyeglasses. One of the cigarette holders had the name "Andreev A." scratched into it.

Specialists are of the opinion that this place near the fort road is where those who were political prisoners and those arrested without trial or even investigations were shot. Whole families, sometimes in good civilian clothing and a minimum of personal belongings were taken from their homes, moved to the site, and forced to dig their own graves. Then they were told to kneel at the edge and lower their heads. The command "Fire!" quickly did its work. Who were these folks, without names, without even numbers?



The new resting place

In November of 2010 the exhumed remains were reburied in the northern part of the 14th Kilometer Cemetery in Vladivostok in 56 common graves. Members of the Memorial Society, World War II veterans, public organizations, military personnel, clergymen, and city citizens took part in the reburial ceremony. A large monument was erected on the site in 2013. On the inclined grave stone is a tablet which reads, "To the Unknown Victims of the Cruelty of 1937. Here lies the remains of 5000 persons found during

construction of the highway from Sedanka to Patrokol in 2010."

How many such mass grave sites are to found yet around Vladivostok? In all of Russia only about 100 places are known to be mass grave sites. It seems too few.

Our original monument to the repressed still stands near the fort road. In these 25 years since it was erected it has sorely suffered: The roadbuilders moved it, the metal inscription plate with words was vandalized by shotgun and then stolen, a crack appeared in the base, and the cross on top was damaged. So we needed to restore it. The initiative was taken by the Catholic Parish of Vladivostok and members of "Memorial." The funeral company "Our Memory" repaired the marker.

On May 19 we cleaned up and arranged the territory around the monument and we planted flowers and decorative bushes and trees. Fr Myron and Fr Daniel, parishioners, and members of "Memorial" prayed for those who were killed in this place for political or religious reasons, including those who left this world without a trace.

"We pray for those whose earthly remains are in this place, for their families and relatives, for their descendants who never knew them." It is difficult to understand how this mass murder took place in the modern world, in our country. "Most of all, we pray that this unjust repression will never be repeated in this land. O Lord, if we must sometime suffer such as they did, give us strength to always hope in your constant help."

And for these who suffered unjustly, let there always be a candle to remember them, **until You come!**



Sons and daughters of those who were slain, posing at the monument at the first dedication 25 years ago



The VIP's Take Solemn Vows

May the Month of Mary was the occasion for our “VIP” priests to take final solemn vows. “The VIPs” they have called themselves since novitiate, for “Vietnamese, Indonesian, and ‘Philippino’”. Frs Luis VanDam and Jose Unlayao took their vows in Las Vegas before Bishop Joseph Pepe on May 1, and Fr Ferdinandus Walle before Fr Yohanes Marinus on May 8 in Maumee, Indonesia. Fr Jose is working at our sister parish of St Joseph Husband of Mary in Las Vegas and recently defended his Master’s thesis in Moral Theology. Fr Luis is working at St Anthony of Padua Parish in Las Vegas, and being of service to the Vietnamese of the Las Vegas Diocese. Fr Ferdi is Assistant Dean of Students at our Our Lady of Vladivostok Seminary in Maumere, Flores Island, Indonesia. Congratulations, Fathers! Thanks be to God for your vocations!



Fr Yohanes witnesses Fr Ferdinandus’ signature of his final vows.

New Deacon: Brother Patrick Napal, C.J.D.

On May 13 our Brother Patrick Milan Napal, C.J.D. was ordained deacon at the seminary in Karaganda, Kazakhstan where he is attending the seminary in the Russian language. He was ordained on Sunday, the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima in the Cathedral of Our Lady of Fatima by Bishop Odelio Dell'Oro, D.D. He was received and incardinated into the Apostolic Administration of Atyrau. The Apostolic Administrator asked me to send more vocations to him, as there is a great need for priests in Western Kazakhstan.

Brother Patrick is from Davao, Philippines. He has remarkable language talents, but is especially known for his kind heart for the poor. At his ordination he told about how he always went out at 10pm at night because it is a time when the restaurants close and they dump excess

Brother Patrick, Fr Myron, and Bishop Odelio, and Filipinos working in Kazakhstan, including the Franciscans of the Immaculate who made his dalmatic.

foods, so it is the time that the street people can find something to eat! The seminary rector here told me how happy he was with Brother Patrick because it was he who taught the other seminarians how to work with the sick and poor! Congratulations, Brother Patrick! His priesthood ordination should be in about six months.



Brother Patrick is instructed by Bishop Odelio.



Remember Mary Mother of God Mission Society in your will!

George Leo Thomas, D.D. Bishop of Las Vegas

By Bro. Kumud Nayak, C.J.D.



Bishop Thomas with his letter of appointment

The diocese of Las Vegas once again received gifts from the Vatican after 17 years: a ring, a mitre and a crozier. These gifts were handed over to Bishop George Leo Thomas (67) as he takes over the diocese of Las Vegas at the installation ceremony on May 15. These gifts were to symbolize his new assignment: **a ring**- representing fidelity to the diocese of Las Vegas and the Catholic Church, **a mitre**- his association to the office of bishop and the Roman Pontiff, and a **crozier**- as a reminder of Jesus' command to shepherd the flock of the Diocese of Vegas.

Reading the appointment letter from Pope Francis, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the Holy Father's Nuncio to the United States along with the Archbishop of San Francisco Salvatore J. Cordileone, installed Bishop Thomas as the 3rd Bishop of Las Vegas. More than 2,000 faithful of the diocese, several bishops, cardinals, priests, deacons, religious, public officials and representatives of ecumenical groups witnessed the ceremony at the Shrine of the Most Holy Redeemer, Las Vegas.

The congregation present at the celebration expressed sincere gratitude to Bishop Emeritus Joseph Pepe with non-stop applause, while whistling and cheers for minutes.

Bishop Thomas urged the priests, deacons and religious saying, "Know what we do not know." Throughout the Eucharistic celebration he emphasized a 'call to holiness' and a 'sound and substantial faith formation' in the diocese. He also said that we cannot be silent about human suffering, either in the womb or at the



Bro Kumud, Bishop Thomas and Fr Luis Van Dam, C.J.D.

death bed' so there should be a theological connection between the liturgy and our compassion. An option for the poor should be a priority in our service. Our church must be a home of mercy. We should provide a healing touch of divine mercy because mercy is the doorway to freedom, peace and harmony. With this mode of evangelization we can impact the modern world. We become missionaries to our own families first and then to the world. We should start by bringing back the missing members of our family to the family dining table. And then practice a deeper daily communion with the local church and then greater attempts at ecumenical reunion.

I was privileged to witness two installation ceremonies in the states. The first was on March 15, the installation of the Bishop of Stockton Myron Cotta, and then on May 15th, the bishop of Las Vegas George Leo Thomas. These two dioceses are very important for the CJD community, because the Mission Office is in the diocese of Stockton and CJD fathers are incardinated in the diocese of Las Vegas. Let us pray for the authorities of the Church until we are united with the Father where we will have eternal life.

From the Women's Support Centers

A 15 year old girl came to us and asked for help for her child. She told us her story. When she was 14 years old she was raped by a 38 year old man. When she became pregnant she didn't do an abortion because her doctors recommended against it. As a result she gave birth to a healthy baby girl, and the court gave the man only a suspended sentence! She loves her daughter and takes good care of her, but she doesn't have the monetary means she needs for the child. Our Center is providing her help.

--Olga, Women's Support Center, Nakhodka

News Notes

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

● Our fingers are crossed about reconciliation in Korea, which borders our parish in Vladivostok! It could be a dream come true! Meanwhile we hope and pray for the **Catholics of North Korea**, which was the most Catholic part before the war. Will we have an opportunity to work there? Praying for it! Frankly, it is one of the reasons that we chose to work in Vladivostok instead of another part of Russia. Not only because there was a significant Catholic presence in this part of Russia, but also because we are close to China and Korea and Japan. That is a lot of potential for future missionary work. At the same time we are close to vocation sources such as the Philippines, Indonesia, and India. Dreams do come true, but we'll need the help of our benefactors to make it happen! God willing!!

● On April 20 and 21 we held our annual **Easter Concert** in Vladivostok with our concert choir, Marina Omelchenko on the organ, and the Regina Angelorum string group. It was a big success with a full house both nights. Our concert program is very important because it brings people to the church, sometimes for the first time. While they are here they can view the windows, see the historical display, look at the religious items in the parish

store, and even pick up pamphlets about the Catholic faith. It is also good for the parishioners who volunteer to help at the concerts, as they are happy to help guests get acquainted with who Catholics are, answer questions and invite people back for mass or prayer.

The beautiful colors of the Easter Concert poster.



● The **university parish**, St John the Evangelist, is starting to get organized. The Sisters in Jesus the Lord have completed the project of getting space for the parish in their building on Russian Island near the Far Eastern Federal University where there are at least 200 Catholic students. Next there will be a lot of government paperwork and repairs on the dilapidated facility. On Wednesday nights the parish has a faith program led by Brother Nikita Kushnaryov, C.J.D. discussing some aspect of the Catholic faith, and then prayer and supper together for the sisters and the students. Every Saturday evening at 6 pm there is Sunday Mass for students



Tatyana Lupach directs the combined concert choir and Regina Angelorum group for the Easter concert.

and residents of Russian Island at the sisters' convent. We are really anxious that this program develops as soon as possible, but it will take a lot of funds, hard work, and prayer! You can help!



Sisters and students of St John's at a recent meeting.

How to Communicate with Us

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Opportunities

♥ Can you **sponsor a seminarian** on his journey to priestly ordination? In a few short years we have seen seven priests ordained in the order of Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord. We currently have 39 seminarians in various levels of education and formation in the Order. They need your help to continue their journey. Might you or your apostolate prayerfully consider sponsoring a seminarian? Please contact the California mission office for information.

♥ Masses celebrated in Russia may be requested for loved ones, living or dead. **Mass stipends** support Fr Myron and Fr Dan. Please send your special intentions or Mass requests to the mission office. Mass cards will be sent to you or designated persons. Suggested stipend is \$15 per mass.

♥ Thank you to all who are keeping our Women's Centers open through your generous donations. We're able to keep the doors open month to month. Our long running **Adopt A Birth** program within the Women's Centers has now helped **save well over 2500 babies from abortion**. The number of babies saved continues to grow as long as our center doors can remain open. Mothers will receive the help they need to keep their babies pre- and post-delivery with your donation of \$50 to the **Adopt A Birth** program. You will pay for the medical supplies needed in the hospital to deliver the baby. Often times, the cost of these supplies is the deciding factor for a mother to have an abortion or let her child live. Fr. Myron will send you a picture of the newborn you helped save! \$125 to the **Adopt A Mother** program provides help to the mother and baby in the first weeks supplying them with nutritious food, formula, diapers, baby clothes vitamins and medical aftercare.

♥ Remember the **SHARES fundraising program** for CA and NV residents? The program is still going on! If you shop at Save Mart, Lucky's Food Maxx and Smart Foods, the corporation will donate up to 3% of your grocery bill to the mission. It's as simple as entering your phone number at the register when you check out. Now operated through the **E-Scrip program**, other purchases from department stores and restaurants can help the mission also. Plus, residents from other states can join in to have their purchases count to help our mission! It can really add up. To register, please go online to Escrip.com. By the way. It costs you nothing to participate. Thank you!

♥ Bequests – A Lasting Legacy

A will is the easiest and most effective means to ensure that your assets are distributed as you wish. Bequests, or gifts by will, both large and small, provide long-term

support for the ongoing work of Mary Mother of God Mission Society and the mission in Eastern Russia.

♥ Please visit our **updated website!** You'll see the updates on seminarians, building projects and more! Go to www.vladmission.org.

♥ Here is our fall preaching schedule. If you are in the area you can come and listen!

July 15 St Michael, Brooklyn NY Fr Dan Maurer
 July 15 St. Lawrence, Huntington CT Bruce Gnatowski
 July 22 SS Peter and Paul, El Paso TX Fr Dan Maurer
 July 22 St. John Paul II, Lake View NY Robert Moran
 July 22 St. James, Haubstadt IN Marilyn Wassmer
 July 29 Blessed Mary Angela, Dunkirk NY Hannah Greb
 July 29 Sacred Heart, Bayside NY Fr Steven Bauer
 July 29 Perpetual Help, Windham ME Dea Patrick Cline
 July 29 Im Concep, N Little Rock AR Fr Dan Maurer
 Aug 5 St. Paul U. Cath Cntr, Madison WI Hannah Greb
 Aug 5 St. Edward, Texarkana AR Fr Dan Maurer
 Aug 12 St. Bernard, Levittown NY Deacon Patrick Cline
 Aug 12 SS Anth & Philip, Highland WI M. Jacobsen
 Aug 12 Saint Clement, Bixby OK Fr Daniel Maurer
 Aug 26 St. Rocco, Glen Cove NY Fr Jose Unlayao
 Aug 26 St. Anselm, Brooklyn NY Deacon Patrick Cline
 Aug 26 OL Lakes, Green Lake WI Fr Steven Bauer
 Aug 26 St Joseph, Garret IN Fr Doug Grandon
 Sep 16 St Mary, Eugene OR Fr Myron Effing
 Sep 23 St. John Vianney, Janesville WI Fr Jose Unlayao
 Sep 23 St. Joseph, Salem OR Fr Myron Effing
 Sep 30 St. Mary, McHenry IL Fr Myron Effing
 Oct 7 SS Peter&Paul/H Cross Haubstadt/Ft Branch IN Fr Myron Effing
 Oct 14 St. Joseph/ H Cross, Olney IL Fr Myron Effing
 Oct 21 Star of Sea, San Francisco CA Fr Myron Effing
 Oct 28 St Anne/H Cross, Porterville CA Fr Myron Effing
 Nov 4 OL Good Counsel, Plymouth MI Fr Myron Effing

(Opportunities continued on Page 8)



Vladivostok Mission
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From the development desk...

Dear Friends,

Educating our Catholic communities in the USA and even in other countries about the catechetical and charitable work of our parishes in Russia is critical to building the Church in Russia and to keeping us going. We work diligently to bring awareness to others who might help in the important work that our priests, sisters, brothers and faithful Catholic laity in Russia are achieving. You are all very much a part of spreading the news of our missionary efforts when you speak to a friend or fellow parishioner or share our newsletters with others. Surprisingly, we still come across many people who have not heard about our mission or who don't even know the Roman Catholic Church is in Russia!

Some of the many ways we can educate our Catholic communities about our work is through speaking at parishes and having a presence at **Catholic conferences**. Educating others is critical in order to bring the gospel to Catholics in Russia, feed the poor, provide help to orphans and abandoned, save babies from abortion, and do all the work we do. We are grateful to the dioceses who invite us each year to share our work and receive second offerings to help. Along with your individual generosity, the second offerings are important resources to help keep us going. Fr Myron, Fr Dan, our board members and other priests, brothers and lay volunteers spends

days and weekends all year long working hard to spread the news of our mission.

Thank you for your continued prayers and generosity and for sharing our work with others. **Keep up the great work!** We are thankful for your every effort. Here is our parish speaking schedule. We hope you can visit and meet our speakers!

God bless you. Sincerely, Vicky Trevillyan

Mission Coordinator usoffice@vladmission.org 209-408-0728

♥ Know of a **Catholic conference in your area**? Please let us know! Catholic conferences are one way we spread the news of our work in Russia. Here are some of the conferences we are attending or looking for representatives to help us. If you would like to help out at one of these conferences contact our Modesto office.

07/28/18 Catholic Women's Conf., San Antonio, TX
08/03/18 Midwest Catholic Family Conf., Wichita, KS
08/12/18 Catholic Women's League of Canada, Winnepeg
08/31/18 SCRC Annual Convention, Anaheim, CA
09/07/18 Eucharistic Congress, Charlotte, NC
09/27/18 Catholic Answers Conference, San Diego, CA
10/11/18 University of Dallas Ministry Conf., Dallas, TX
10/13/18 Diocesan Conference Youth Day, Visalia, CA
11/10/18 Marian Eucharistic Conference, Greenville, SC