



# Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



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

Issue Number One Hundred Forty Nine September, 2019

## Lesozavodsk Kids 2019

*By Brother Vicky Samuel, C.J.D.*

Working with children is a great blessing for young adults. Jesus gave kids the first place in the kingdom of God. They are innocent and clean in their minds and souls. When young people work with children they learn many things for their spiritual and human development, like patience, adaptability and creativity. During Jesus' earthly ministry, some children were brought to Him so that He could lay hands on them and pray for them (Matthew 19:13). The disciples tried to turn the children away, but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these". Mark 10:14 adds that Jesus was "much displeased" with His disciples for their actions. He then blessed the children (Matthew 19:15).

I want to talk about the summer program with the children in Lesozavodsk from 21<sup>st</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> of July. Almost 35 children took part in the program. This program was aided by the FOCUS group from America and organized by the Sisters in Jesus the Lord (C.J.D.). FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students) is a collegiate outreach whose purpose is to share the hope and joy of the gospel with college and university students. They come every year to work with the children of Lesozavodsk.

### **The purpose of the program**

This summer program is held every year in Lesozavodsk, so that the children may learn some etiquette and good habits for their growth through stories from the Gospel and the example of adults. Almost all the children are already baptized, so evangelization is not the purpose of the program, but rather the better formation of the kids who are mostly from disadvantaged homes. Most of the children are without fathers and most don't even know their fathers. Some girls become pregnant in their young age and want to abort their child but some of them give birth and take care of the child. They are very poor so that sometimes the children don't have breakfast or lunch. Their parents sometimes work on



*Just how many kids can seminarian Paul Sappington carry at one time?*

daily wages and hardly manage their expenses. Their children go for school every day in the school year but after school they are just roaming here and there. There were some children who are smoking in very young age and there was nobody to stop them. There is nobody to take care of them after school. They just wait for their parents to come so that they may eat.



*Some little sheep needing a good shepherd*

### **Activities of the Program**

Every morning the children would come at 10:00 o'clock and we would serve them breakfast. After breakfast Sr Maria Stella taught them some new music. Then two persons from FOCUS taught them some poems with funny actions. Children were very happy to learn. After that we showed them some videos from the gospels,

like the prodigal son and the good Samaritan. After that some group members would act out the scene and then they asked children to come forward and act on the same videos which they were shown. Some children were shy--they did not participate but some of them were very good actors. We asked them questions so that they may better understand what the parables were about.

After class we played games like soccer, basketball, Frisbee, and volleyball. The children who were under eight years old made crafts as an opportunity to learn and develop skills. They were fast learners, and especially the younger children were very enthusiastic and energetic. They liked all the games with the participation of the FOCUS group. We got quite tired, but all the children were active all the time. I think the reason they were active because they don't have any other organized activities for play and to be friendly with each other. After the games we gave them some time to relax and rest and then we served them food. After lunch they were allowed to go home, but they were so attached to us that they didn't want to leave. They really had a great time with us and we with them as well.

Frankly, it was my one of the best experiences I've had working with children. I enjoyed being with them in their happiness and joyful moments. As they were learning through us, I also learn some skills by working with them. On the other hand, to be with children is to have patience--Sometimes children don't listen and do whatever they want. I learned that instead of being frustrated it is better to listen them first and then make decisions.



*Volunteers and Lesozavodsk parishioners*

# 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Far Eastern Catholic Youth Conference 2019

By Brother Kiran Chinthapalli, C.J.D.

## THE CHURCH AND THE YOUTH IN RUSSIA.

“We don't need youth museums but we do need holy young people”, said pope Francis on the occasion of a youth conference quoting from “Christ is alive (*Christus vivit*). We conducted the Far Eastern Catholic Youth Conference at Nativity Parish in Ussuryusk on the role of the young adults in the church. Altogether 40 young adults from Russia and the FOCUS from the USA, some seminarians and other college students too attended. We began the conference with the holy Eucharist and then followed the first talk by Fr Gracian, OFM. “The youth of today, lack in future, but they don't realize that the Christ is the hope of today and tomorrow and forever”, he said. After the talk, we discussed the realities of the youth in Russia. We discussed how to give the experience of Christ to the today's generation, and this led us to the Bible study conducted by the FOCUS group. Afterward we had evening prayer, supper, and then night prayer and adoration. There was an opportunity for confession.

## THE CHALLENGES OF THE YOUTH IN RUSSIA TODAY.

With the help of the youth from Russia, we sought out the many challenges that they face. The parents and grandparents do not understand what the Catholic Church is, and are never in support of the growth of youth toward it. Most of the time, they block any interest in the church. Secondly, the youth are not much integrated into any faith, due to lack of interest. And also, today's generation is affected with an identity crisis, so they are interested in a particular identity like doctor, engineer, etc.

On the second day the talk was given by the FOCUS group sharing how important it is to understand that the youth is future, not only the world, but also the of church. They encouraged us not to fear the future because the Lord is owner of everything, of our lives, our future. Jesus promised that “he will be with us always till the ends of the world” (Mat.28.20).

## WHAT IS A VOCATION?

“And the Lord came and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel said, Speak, for thy servant is listening.”—1 Samuel 3:10. Our vocation may not be so clear or so direct as that of Samuel. We have the example of many others who received a call from God, such as Abraham, Moses, Samson, Solomon, Esther, Daniel etc in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament, the perfect example of faith and our beloved Mother Mary. But to

get to know whether we are called or not, we need to seek the help of others, like priests, religious sisters and other spiritual directors”.

## THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN THE CHURCH TODAY.

“If we journey together, young and old, we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here revisit the past and look to the future. To revisit the past in order to learn from history and heal old wounds that at times still trouble us. To look to the future in order to nourish our enthusiasm, cause dreams to emerge, awaken prophecies and enable hope to blossom. Together, we can learn from one another, warm hearts, inspire minds with the light of the Gospel, and lend new strength to our hands” (*Christus vivit*, p.199). We are called to follow the good examples of the elders who grew in faith and love of Christ in order to imitate Christ in each one's life, said Fr Jose (from FOCUS). “Youth is so much invited into the church to serve as altar servers, help in the parishes, to join in the choirs, to play musical instruments for the church's activities like in Mass and adoration, novenas, holy rosary etc, invited to make young adult groups and conduct different activities, take up responsibilities. We are given many opportunities to grow in the faith”, added Br Vicky. “I had the opportunity to work with the Far Eastern Federal University students for 6 months, and I found out that they don't like to go to church for whatever reason, but I fervently prayed for one of them, and today he claims that he is a Catholic and he loves Jesus. So also, I request everyone, to pray for the youth so that they may experience Christ's love in their lives”, said Br Rajnal.

## EFFECTS OF INTERNET IN TODAY'S YOUTH

“To understand the internet and its effectiveness, we need to realize that it has its share of limitations and deficiencies. It is not healthy to confuse real communication with mere virtual contact. Indeed, “the digital environment also is one of loneliness, manipulation, exploitation and violence, even to the extreme case of the ‘dark web’. Digital media can expose people to the risk of addiction, isolation and gradual loss of contact with concrete reality, blocking the development of authentic interpersonal relationships. New forms of violence are spreading through social media, for example Cyberbullying. The internet is also the channel for spreading pornography and the exploitation of persons for sexual purposes or through gambling”, *Christus vivit*, 41. We discussed all of these negative affairs of the internet apart from its positive information. And as Catholics and as humans, we need to set our mind as to become saints. The FOCUS group had lead the discussion of ways to use the internet for the spreading of the Gospel and to read the biographies of the saints, watch their films, through which we may grow constantly in faith. And besides our serious discussions,

we took a tour to the countryside and every one enjoyed the barbecue. We went to the lake for a refreshing swim. It was a lot of positive energy gained from the nature to nurture our faith.

### “MATURITY AND YOUTH”, A TALK BY SR OLGA NIMCHINOVA

Maturity is psychological aspect of a person, so for youth we might expect some irregular behavior. But to mature you should:

1. Take responsibility for yourself, your desires, dreams.
2. Don't take responsibility for other people.
3. Know how to help.
4. Don't become dependent.
5. Imitate mature behavior:

\* GOAL- Why am I doing this? Pose a question always about what you are doing (Goal)

\* PLANNING- make a plan for everything. To attain a goal.

\* FLEXIBILITY- change the plans if circumstances change. Absent of Rigid behavior

\*ACTIVENESS- be active and make a decision to be active.

The 4 important things in the life of the youth:-

1. Your relationship to God - we give time to God and spend time with him to know him and to know what we are. Time of prayer.
2. Assessment:- Assess the problems through a confident trust in God.
3. Recognize (Awareness of my feelings):- maybe I feel this way because of the conflict or misunderstandings or hurt or being lost etc. What is my exact feeling?
4. Responsibility:- what must I do now to be more responsible? Turn back to God, because everything is connected to God.

Thus we had the chance to meet the youth, to speak on the aspects of the church and responsibilities of the Catholics. We thank everyone who took part in this program. God bless the youth!!! AMEN.

## Remember Mary Mother of God Mission Society in Your Will!

## News Notes

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



- **Fr Johann Trummer**, the longtime head of the Department of Church Music at the Graz University of Arts in Austria died on July 18. Born in 1940 he was a champion of church organs and organ music. It was he who contributed to our Diego Sera organ in Vladivostok, came here to play concerts, and, in fact, it was he who founded the Diego Sera Organ Company in the Philippines. Eternal Rest grant to him, O Lord!



*Yelena Andreevna*

- On June 21 our **first parishioner, Yelena Andreevna Shaposhnikova** died at 87 years old. Born in Vladivostok of her Polish family, working as a technical project organizer for the electric company, she was raised a Catholic. I baptized her in 1992, as there were no priests in Vladivostok due to the Communist Revolution earlier. She dedicated herself to the development of the parish from the first mass that I said on the steps of the cathedral in 1991. She was part of many charitable

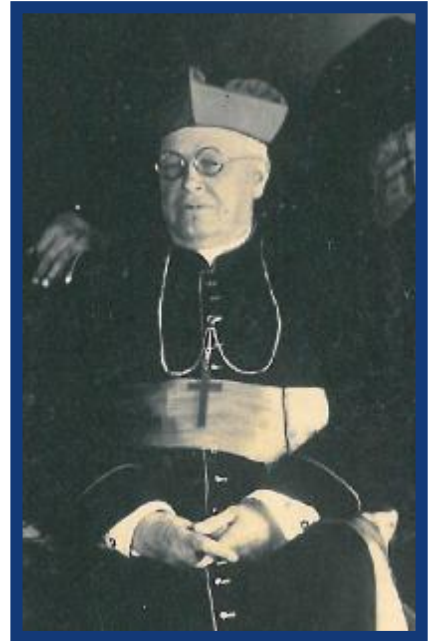
programs and for several years was the preparer of the Prayer of the Faithful for Sunday Mass. Her main work became the parish library. She became godmother to many parishioners, and was an example of a faithful Catholic. She also was a member of the Polish club, “Polish House” and often spoke about the history of Vladivostok and of the parish. She was an example of love, patience, wisdom, and mercy. Eternal Rest grant to her, O Lord!



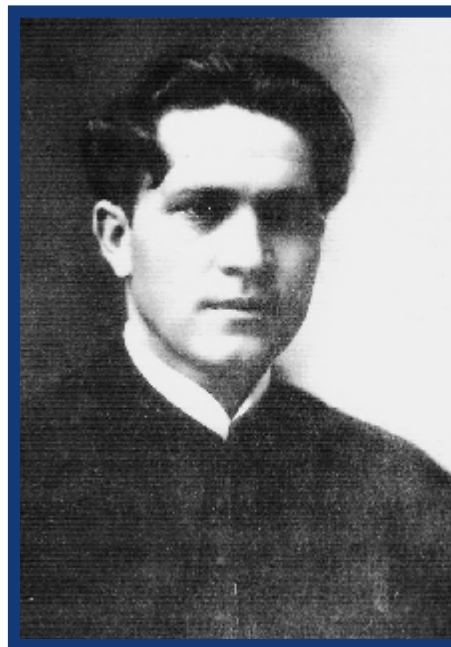
*Galina and friend*

- **Galina Kazimirovna Gunbina, our parishioner of Lesozavodsk’s Visitation Parish, died on June 28 after a long illness. She was 94 years old. Born in Warsaw, she worked for the Polish Underground during the War, and married a Russian soldier after the War. He brought her to Dalnerechensk, Russian Far East, where she raised a family and worked as an archivist for the Police Department. She was preceded in death by her husband and her three sons. She is survived by her grand-children. I managed to anoint her in Intensive Care after she suffered a heart attack. Eternal Rest grant to her, O Lord!**
- The postulator of the proposed **Soviet saints and martyrs** is ready to submit the files to Rome. Our former **Bishop Karl Slivovsky**, who died in 1933 in exile in Sedanka, our last pastor during the Repression, **Fr George Yerkevich** who died in a prison camp in Siberia

in 1942, and our five “last parishioners” who were executed in 1937 for gathering to pray the rosary on Sunday, are all included. One complication is that we don’t know the exact location of any of their graves. Mass, unmarked gravesites are common in Russia from the Communist era. There are roads in the North known as the “Roads of



Bones” as the roads were just built over the frozen bodies of the dead prisoners—That was easier than burying them! We know which cemetery Bishop Slivovsky was buried in, and we have pictures of his grave marker with the date of his death, but we have no map of the cemetery after all the markers were removed by the Communists who hated the crosses on tombstones. The mass gravesite of the camp in Siberia is also known, but the location of Fr Yerkevich’s remains is unknown. We don’t know where the five martyrs were buried, but probably in the mass gravesite just outside Vladivostok where there is a memorial today.



As far as relics of our saints, we have several items from Bishop Slivovsky including letters he had written. The house where he lived and died is still there, and we like to include it in our local pilgrimages. For Fr Yerkevich we have his photo, and the house where he lived

is also standing. For the five martyrs we have only photos of three of them, and nothing else but their death certificates and their KGB report.

- Surprise! Surprise! I guess we were too busy to notice, or maybe we didn't have the resources to notice, but now we see something we didn't know before: The **Diocese of Vladivostok** once included a good part of Siberia and the whole territory of the Central Asian Republics, including present day Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, in addition to the Russian Far East. The change came only on April 13, 1991, when the apostolic administrations in Russia were created. From my viewpoint, even though the territory needed to be divided, as it was too big, it is sad that a bishop of Vladivostok was not appointed. Perhaps it is still in our future.

- Stay tuned for more news about more **ordinations** of our brothers.

- Three brothers regularly work with the kids at the **children's boarding school** here in Vladivostok. These are special kids who cannot get an education at home because of their special needs. This is a great opportunity to share love and faith with the children. Every Saturday the brothers visit the children and talk with them and play with them in the outdoors. The staff of the institute was really happy as they told us that usually men do not come to spend time with the kids. "When we started taking the kids to the playground and played different games with them, inside and outside, like basketball and soccer, we observed that the children were really happy and they always waited for us to visit them and play with them on Saturdays," says Brother Rajnal.



*Brother Rajnal and simple play*

*Soccer is always popular with the kids.*



- At the same time that **FOCUS** was with us in Russia, it was also with us in Indonesia. Here is a group picture of the Indonesians and Americans together.



- The **color theme** for this issue is a blue from the FOCUS webpage: <https://www.focus.org/>.

### 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)

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# Opportunities

♥ Thank you to the **volunteers** who have come forward to help distribute our mission literature at conferences! We couldn't do the work without you! If others would like to help out, we've listed some of the potential conferences on page 8, or if you know of a conference, please contact the mission office. We'd love to hear from you.

♥ Want a way to involve your parish to help promote awareness of the mission and fundraise all the while having lots of fun? Ask your pastor if you can hold a **Russian Icon and Religious gifts fundraiser sale** at your parish! We provide the supplies you need. We can plan for a Fall or Christmas sale too! Contact Vicky or Jessica at the mission office in Modesto, CA for more details. 209-408-0728

♥ Our priests are getting older. We've set up a **Priests' Medical and Retirement Fund**. If you'd like to help care for Fr Myron and Fr Dan in their retirement years, please note, "Priests' Retirement Fund" on your check or donate online at [www.vladmission.org](http://www.vladmission.org)

♥ You can **sponsor a seminarian** in his journey to priestly ordination. In a few short years we have seen 13 priests ordained in the order of Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord. We currently have over 30 seminarians in various levels of education and formation in the Order. They need your help to continue their journey. Might you prayerfully consider sponsoring a seminarian? Yearly costs are \$10,700 for each seminarian, but you don't have to sponsor a full year. Please contact the California mission office for budget information or see our website [www.vladmission.org](http://www.vladmission.org)

♥ We have raised **\$9633 for the rectory land**. We now rent the land from the city. Once we own the land we will be able to register the rectory as an official building and thus register to live on site. The city has proposed an excellent price for the land here in the center of the city, \$34,250 for the 1.436 acres. Legal fees will cost \$6850 for a total of \$41,100. Thank you to those who are helping with this critical need!

♥ Give an eternal gift. 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.

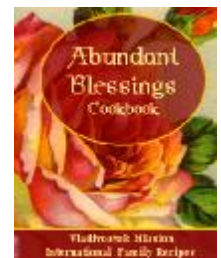
♥ Become a missionary right where you are and help spread the news of our mission in Russia. Ask your pastor to place our bi-monthly **Vladivostok Sunrise newsletter**

in your parish. We'll be happy to send you a few copies every two months.

♥ **Adopt A Baby** or **Adopt A Mother** on behalf of a friend or other loved one this Christmas. We will send a special card to the recipient denoting your gift in their honor. An explanation will also be included. Your gift of \$50 in honor of a loved one to the **Adopt A Birth** program 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 to keep or pass on. Over 2900 babies have been saved from abortion to date! Your \$125 gift to the **Adopt A Mother** program will provide help to the mother and baby in the first weeks supplying them with nutritious food, formula, diapers, baby clothes vitamins and medical aftercare.

♥ Shopping on Amazon? Please remember to type in **Amazon Smile** in the search bar and select Mary Mother of God Mission Society as your charity of choice. Amazon will donate 0.5% of your cart total to the mission at no cost to you! To date the mission has earned **\$2406** from Amazon Smile.

♥ Special Christmas gifts! Receive a FREE copy (up to \$14 value) of one of several **Vladivostok Concert CD's** with your purchase of our mission's **Abundant Blessings Cookbook**. 494 International recipes from our priests, seminarians and mission families fill the pages!



Proceeds from our cookbook go to our **seminarians' education fund** and our **Women's Support Centers** helping pregnant women and families. 659 cookbooks sold so far! **\$30 per cookbook** covers cookbook, CD, and shipping in the continental USA.

♥ **Our Lady of Vladivostok Pendant** with Most Holy Mother of God Cathedral on back of medal. Finely detailed! Text reads, *Our Lady of Vladivostok, Pray for Us*



3/4" Sterling Silver medal w 18" stainless chain \$65

3/4" Pewter medal w 18" stainless chain \$35

1" Sterling Silver medal w 24" stainless chain \$79

1" Sterling Silver medal w 24" stainless chain with text in Russian \$79. Prices include S/H in continental USA

Contact the mission office at [usoffice@vladmission.org](mailto:usoffice@vladmission.org) to order or visit our mission web store, [store.vladmission.org](http://store.vladmission.org).

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## From the development desk...

Dear Friends,

- Fr Myron is coming to town!  
 Fr Myron will be visiting with parishioners and speaking at Masses in these parishes. We hope you can stop by.  
**Sept 21/22 Cincinnati, OH St. John the Baptist**  
**Sept 28/29 Sidney, OH Holy Angels Parish \***  
**Oct 3 Methuen, MA St. Monica Church 8:15 am**  
**Oct 5/6 Chicago, IL To be confirmed**  
**Oct 12/13 Grandview, MO Coronation of Our Lady \***  
 \*Russian icons and other religious gifts are a very successful and fun fundraiser. There will be Russian and other gifts for sale at these parishes to benefit the mission. Look for pictures in the upcoming issues of the Sunrise!
- We are always looking for **volunteers** to help us distribute our mission literature at **Catholic conferences and parish celebrations**. With your help, we can attend more venues and reach new Catholic communities to educate them of our mission work. Have fun and help the mission! We often sell icons and other religious goods as fundraising for the mission. Here are some Catholic conferences and activities we will be attending or would like to attend if we have help. The mission makes all the arrangements, provides meals and the supplies. Some

dates include full weekends. If you know of a conference in a city not listed, please let us know!

9/28	Lockford, CA	9/30	Anaheim, CA
9/29	Sidney, OH with Fr Myron *		
10/4	Green Bay, WI	10/10	Dallas, TX
10/11	Brentwood, CA	10/18	Tacoma, WA
10/12,13	Grandview, MO with Fr Myron *		
10/24	Center Pointe OR	10/25	St Paul, MN
10/26	Philadelphia, PA	11/9	Hillside, IL
11/9	Greenville, SC	11/15	Folsom, CA
11/17	DeKalb, IL	11/23	Modesto, CA
12/5	San Jose, CA	12/7	Portland, CA

- Did you know? Fr Myron writes a thank you letter for every donation received. In each letter, Fr Myron includes our tax id number and the statement, “No good or services were received in exchange for this donation.” Fr Myron’s thank you letters also serve as your receipt for tax purposes. The mission office will gladly provide a year-end statement upon your request. Thank you always for your support to keep our work going.
- God bless you and your families.  
 Sincerely, Vicky Trevillyan, Mission Office  
[usoffice@vladmission.org](mailto:usoffice@vladmission.org), 209-408-0728