



Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



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

Issue Number One Hundred Fifty November, 2019



28th Anniversary of November 11, 1991 First Public Mass in Vladivostok

It was blistery cold with a wind on that day. I had to wear a hat and gloves during mass for the first time in my life. I didn't have a chasuble, so the alb and stole had to do. The altar was a borrowed table from a neighbor, but the site was the front steps of the Most Holy Mother of God Cathedral in Vladivostok. It currently had four floors inside and was full of documents of the state archive. The attendees were gathered by advertising on state radio and by ads in the newspaper. The religious image behind the altar was a statue of the Mystical Rose which someone had received from Germany. It was still the Soviet Union, so police looked at us from across the parking lot, but did not interfere. Some of the attendees were Catholics who had not received the sacraments in years. A photographer who was himself a Ukrainian Rite Catholic took pictures for history's sake. It was the end of religious repression in the Russian Far East.

What does the parish in Vladivostok mean to me?

Answers from parishioners.



Rosa Mystica—The parish's first statue

Alexei: What does the parish mean to me? Right away I thought that it is the place where my worldview and my conception of the world changed! It is a place to meet God in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and a place where we get to know even ourselves and to see another side of ourselves. For me the parish became a family, a support and a constant in my life.

Albert: What does the parish mean to me? The parish is part of my life where I regularly try to take active part in its activities. I'm a Caritas volunteer, often helping with the work and providing transportation. I love to talk to the priests, listen to the sermons, regularly attend mass remembering my relatives and friends who have already gone from this life, and, of course, not forgetting my own sins and prayers. I love our church, our parish, and our priests!

Lily: I first came when I heard the announcement on the radio of the group of activists of 6 or 8 people in the Fall of 1991 which became the seed of our great parish. Then our priests came, Fr Myron and Fr Daniel, well-intentioned, open, and approachable. It was a shock for me that they came from rich America to our country at the time when people lost their faith in anything good, lost their work, lost their families, and when many were hungry. The priests shared all our troubles, and gradually life became bearable, and then the miracle happened: They gave us our church

back! We experienced joy, faith, justice, and good! In 1992 we had our first baptisms when two of my grandchildren were baptized, and then my daughter, and in 2000 my husband was baptized! From the first days of the parish we began to help with charity work under the direction of Fr Myron, and when Caritas was founded my life became bound with its needs until today. The church and the parish are my life and that of my family!

Michael: Our Catholic parish is the place where I bring my soul into order and spend the years of my life. Our parish is the only place where I look at my life's path through the prism of eternal life, through the eyes of our Jesus Christ, and where I get answers about life here on earth. I have been on all the continents of the earth, and everywhere there are Catholic parishes, but every time I return to Vladivostok I come back to our parish and feel that this is the best place for my life and my soul. I was baptized by my grandmother who was a prisoner in Siberia. I say that we are so lucky to have our priests and religious who gave a second birth to our parish.

Natalia: I come to church in order to know God. God is love, life, truth, wisdom, and life. The meaning of our lives includes the establishment of interior, moral, and good union with God. But to know God and the meaning of life we can find only through prayer--grateful, repenting, requesting, and through confession and Communion. When I am in church I rest my soul and find strength to endure suffering and sicknesses, enemies, and temptations. May God's blessing be with you and in your house.

Tatyana: The Parish of the Most Holy Mother of God has always been connected to my family. My ancestors came to Vladivostok from Poland at the beginning of the 20th century. The first thing they did was to meet with the priest and become parishioners. For more than 100 years five generations of my family have been parishioners. Many unknown facts about our family have been known through the parish registry books: Our ancestors participated in the



Three generations: Daria, Yelena, and Tatyana

construction of the brick church, brought their donations, prayed here, and preserved their faith during the bad times. In the years of antireligious and political repression they had to hide their relationship with the Church. For more than 60 years they kept their faith in silence in their hearts. In the 1990's our generation saw the rebirth of the church. We were among the first to come for the mass on the steps of the still-closed Catholic church, we participated in the official registration of the new parish corporation, and helped with the repair of the church building, helping to complete what our ancestors had started. My great grandmother Alexandra helped in the parish kitchen and helped with the housekeeping. My grandmother Veronica and Helen sang in the choir. My mother Yelena helped with many charitable activities and founded

the parish library. I work with the parish archive doing many historical projects, being a tour guide, and writing books about the Polish history in Vladivostok. My daughter Daria helps in the parish library. Praying for all our relatives is important to me, and working for the parish. Our gratitude to Fr Myron and Fr Daniel for the rebirth of our parish, and for faithful service to God! For me the parish is the home where we live with God.

Tatyana's grandmother Veronica in the "miracle picture"



Oksana: I would like to share what I like about the Parish in Vladivostok where Fr Myron and Fr Dan serve for many years. My husband and I attend already several years. The goodness that we see and hear in the psalms and under the music of the organ appeals to us in an understandable language with simplicity in Christ. The weekly mass in the church which our Catholic priests serve for us is a holiday for the soul. Alleluia!

Alexander: More than 27 years have passed since I came to mass for the first time in March of 1992. It was held in a rented hall in the House of the Pioneers. There were about 16 parishioners present, but as the years have gone by the number of parishioners has increased. It is hard to believe that we received our historical church back, but it had the state archive inside with three added floors! So at first we had mass on the first floor, then on the third floor, and when we took away the third floor, mass was on the second floor! Then we had mass temporarily in the parish house while the church building was renewed inside and out. The parish is for me, first of all, a community where people have a world view and values similar to mine. It helped me to get rid of the worldview of the “Soviet man” which was forced into the hearts of Soviet citizens. The parish helped me to form a solid interior spiritual world, strong Christian convictions, and a optimistic outlook on the world.



Natalia: God is everywhere, but the church is a place of his special presence and action for us. When we meet with God, with Jesus Christ, and with His mother the Virgin Mary we feel their presence especially in church. The church is also our home place, a giant home that unites people everywhere. The church is a place for saving souls, a place to escape from the cares of life with people who are there for love and peace. God and the saints always hear you there. The church never gets old, because in her is eternal life. Death is always before us, but in church we find the path to life.

First parish trustee Andre Popok supervising the removal of the 3rd floor.

Thank you for your help to rebuild our church from the people of Most Holy Mother of God Parish!



The Charism of the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord

By Rev Daniel Maurer, C.J.D.

I would like to highlight one aspect of our charism, which is a great and important gift to us: our community prayer with the people for the Lord and for His Church. For me it is always very important and very helpful to remind myself: our community praying of the Divine Office and of the Eucharist--the official prayers of the Church--are not just a requirement of our community life. They are the main reason that we exist, the main ministry that we do, the main method by which we fulfill our vocations. In some religious congregations, sometimes the members fall into the routine of thinking that community prayer is just one small part of their life, something that is necessary to do and "get done with" so that they can go out and do more important things; or something that is easier or more convenient to do together rather than separately. But for us our "choir of praise" in community is the main activity of our vocation, and we want to do it solemnly, publicly and joyfully. So we seek ways to include the people of God if possible; and we understand that it is a communal ministry, not simply a personal requirement of our day. As a community we minister to the Church and to the world by preparing/rehearsing/singing/reciting/reading/proclaiming/preaching/blessing according to the official rites of the Church.

This understanding of the Church's official liturgy as the main task of our order is for me a big help in organizing my day. This understanding of the liturgy as the main task of our charism also helps me to center myself and be attentive to God during the prayer time itself -- to pay attention to the words my voice is saying and singing, the ancient words and expressions of our faith, the great words of repentance, forgiveness and redemption; the long-awaited words of promise of salvation; the inspired words of Scripture; God's own words that we use to speak back to Him our praise and thanksgiving and petitions.

This mystery of the Liturgy is a constant source of grace and inspiration for us canons; and doing it together as brothers for the local Church and for the Universal Church, is for me and for all of us a great privilege.

This is only one of the many aspects of our charism, which should be learned well in novitiate, so that by continuing to meditate on this aspect our presence among the brothers in choir and at Mass and with the people becomes an ever deeper connection to the real presence of Jesus the Lord in our lives and in our work.

News Notes

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

- It is so exciting that we have many good young men in line for the seminary, and **so many ordinations to the priesthood** this year! We are working on their future ordinations and assignments! In fact I had the privilege of appointing our Brother Mark Dao to the ministries of



Lector and Acolyte by the special permission of our Bishop Kirill on September 8, as the Bishop himself was not able to come to do it. So now he and Brother Dominic Pham are ready for ordination to the diaconate. Also are Brothers Edwin Intan, and Harben Forte in the Philippines, our two brothers in Kazakhstan, Brother Agustinus Brussen and Brother Filipus Lasa, and Brother Kumud Nayak in Madison, Wisconsin.

- The **Board of Directors** of Mary Mother of God Mission Society met at St Monica Parish in Methuen, Massachusetts on October 2. One item of study was the relationship between Mary Mother of God Mission Society's work in Russia, and the growth of the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord in many other countries, even though we were founded in Russia. The financial report was also an item of study. The board also heard a

description and update by President Fr Myron Effing, C.J.D. of the development of MMOGMS's work.

- Here is a view of our **new seminary building** in Maumere, Indonesia where our seminarians from Indonesia prepare for ordination to the priesthood.



- October 4 was **first vows day** for four of our novices. Brothers Lloyd Cabataña and Peter Cao took their vows in the Philippines where they were beginning another year of seminary training. Brothers Mark Dao and Dominic Kien took their vows in Vladivostok where they will continue working for now with the Vietnamese parishioners. We hope their ordination to the diaconate will soon take place.



Brother Peter, Fr Jacob Dambe, C.J.D, who heard the vows, and Brother Lloyd



Brother Mark, Fr Nikita, Fr Daniel, and Bro Dominic

- The **color theme** for this issue is a red from the rose of the statue of Rosa Mystica. See page 2.

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.effing@gmail.com

daniel@catholic.vladivostok.ru

Office in California: Phone and FAX: +1-209-408-0728

Mary Mother of God Mission Society

1736 Milestone Cir

Modesto CA 95357

usoffice@vladmission.org

Sisters in Jesus the Lord: +1-816-353-2177 or 7009 Blue Ridge Blvd, Raytown, MO 64133 www.cjd.cc

Vladivostok Sunrise Edited and produced in Russia by V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D. Printed in Modesto, California by Parks Printing. Assembled for mailing by St Joseph Parish, Modesto, California, and Resurrection Parish, Evansville, Indiana.



Resurrection Parish Sunrise Crew, Fr Myron's sister Marilyn Wassmer seated at left.

Opportunities

♥ 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

♥ Give an eternal gift at Christmas. Remember loved ones in this special way. Masses celebrated in Russia may be requested. **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.

♥ 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

♥ A generous benefactor continues to offer a beautiful free gift of a **Swarovski crystal rosary**, valued at \$100, for anyone who donates \$500 or more to our **seminarians' education**. Thank you!

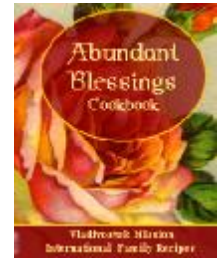
♥ **Adopt-a-Baby** or **Adopt-a-Mother** on behalf of a friend or other loved one this Christmas. We will send a special card to the recipient denoting your gift in their honor. An explanation will also be included. Your gift of \$50 in honor of a loved one to the **Adopt-a-Birth** program will pay for 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 over **\$2400** from Amazon Smile.

♥ 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. You can leave a specific asset, a percentage of your estate or the remainder of your estate after you have taken care of other beneficiaries. Additionally, you may specify that your bequest be used for the general purposes of the mission or for a particular area of interest. Any bequest provision can be altered during your lifetime to change the legacy you will leave behind.

♥ 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. 674 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 to order or visit our mission web store, store.vladmission.org.

♥ More beautiful and unique gifts! Magnificat, missal and bible covers, rosary cases and more made from discarded priest vestments. Shop our Vladivostok mission store, www.store.vladmission.org on **Cyber Monday, December 2** or visit our website www.vladmission.org on **Giving Tuesday, December 3**, or please visit us anytime. Thank you!

Vladivostok Mission
Mary Mother of God Mission Society
1736 Milestone Cir
Modesto CA 95357-0835

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Modesto CA
Permit No. 19

Return Service Requested

149th ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

Anniversary of November 11	Page 1
Meaning of the Parish	Page 3
Charism of CJD	Page 5
News Notes	Page 5
Opportunities	Page 7
Development Desk	Page 8

From the development desk...

Dear Friends, “The British are coming!”

This year’s executive board of Mary Mother of God Mission Society met in Methuen, MA, just outside of Boston. The executive board faithfully meets each year to examine and oversee our USA operations, hear of updates from Fr Myron regarding the Russia mission and develop ways to further help the mission.

Thanks to you, our benefactors, the Russia mission is thriving. Vocations continue to grow by leaps and bounds and more parishioners are attending Mass at the mission parishes in Russia. What blessings!

With action items in hand the board concluded a full day of talks and planning. For most of us, our stay in the area was a first. We are so thankful for our wonderful hosts, fellow board member Robert Moran, his wife Marianne and son, Sean. They organized a super day of tours of the town including neighboring Boston, Lexington and Concord historical sites. A hidden gem in Methuen was the Methuen Memorial Music Hall

<https://www.mmmh.org/>

Stopping in several east coast states and visiting such important sites to our American history fulfilled some of



Some of the Mary Mother of God Mission Society executive board on stage at the Methuen Memorial Music Hall.

our bucket lists! Thank you Moran family for being such terrific hosts. Our Mary Mother of God Mission Society executive board departed Methuen enthusiastic for the future of the mission and a deep gratitude for God’s many blessings. We thank YOU for helping make the work to revive our Roman Catholic faith in Russia possible. God bless you and God bless America!

Sincerely, Vicky Trevillyan, Mission Coordinator, 209-408-0728 usoffice@vladmission.org