

## How can I become involved?

- **Pray for our Sister Mission**
- **Mission Travel** – Join a mission trip to Russia. Assist in construction projects, spend time with children in the orphanages and the elderly in the hospice facility, or help with the Youth Conferences.
- **Sister Parish Project Committee** – Help plan the educational and fundraising projects of our Sister Parish Committee.
- **Speaker** – Speak on behalf of the mission in other parishes or host a booth at Catholic Conferences.
- **Parish Activity Ideas** – Organize or volunteer to help with a benefit dinner, movie night, or soup dinner and prayer service. Run a parish craft boutique or Russian gift sale (the mission provides merchandise for gift sales). Host an information booth at a festival. Insert bi-monthly newsletter into parish bulletins.
- **Involve children** – Organize the children and youth to reach out and help kids of the world. Do small fund raising projects.

**YOUR PARISH Activity Picture  
HERE**

For more information on how you can be involved with your Sister Parish Project, contact:

**(Parish Contact Person)  
(Phone Number)**



*Mission team visitors play with children at an orphanage in Vladivostok.*

## What are some programs we might help?

Most programs survive only through your generosity. You may choose which program(s) your committee wishes to help:

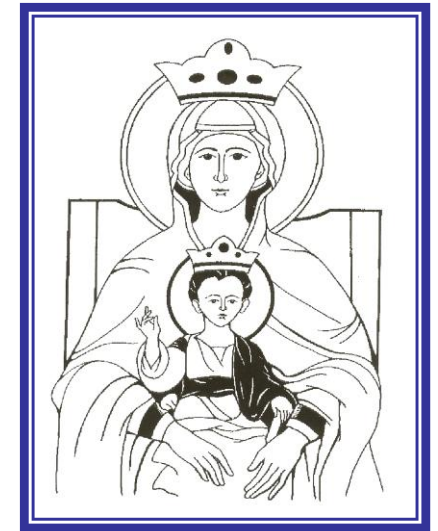
- **Individual Parishes** – You might choose to support a particular parish. We have information on several parishes and their current needs.
- **Pro-Life** – If your parish wishes to strengthen the pro-life message in Russia, you can help support our pro-life Women's Support Centers, Project Rachel, assistance for new moms, or provision of nutritious food for orphans.
- **Catechesis & Evangelization** – Perhaps you will assist us with our Omega college outreach program, or publication of catechetical materials.

**Check our website  
for the entire array of programs.**

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**(Your Parish Name)**

## Sister Parish Project



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



Our Lady of Vladivostok,  
Pray for us!

Our parish has accepted the call and the challenge to serve as a sister parish, helping to support a Catholic mission effort in eastern Russia. This brochure provides some background on the work that lies ahead of us as well as information on ways we can help.

## Why Russia?

For most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the cold, iron fist of communism ruled Russia, nearly obliterating all religion. Hundreds of thousands of priests and religious were killed. Churches were confiscated, desecrated, or dynamited.



*First Communion class, 1922, Most Holy Mother of God Cathedral in Vladivostok, shortly before the church building was confiscated.*

Finally, the dreadful scourge ended as Our Lady foretold. The breakup of the Soviet Union came in 1991. Sadly, by that time, virtually all traces of Christianity had been wiped out. Russia—the largest country in the world—was predominantly an atheistic nation. Accordingly, alcoholism, abortion, divorce, and suicide rates were astronomical. Millions of children were living in orphanages or on the streets. People knew nothing about God and had no hope or sense of worth.

## What then?

In 1992, two American priests arrived in Vladivostok, in the Russian Far East. Fr. Myron Effing, CJD, and Fr. Daniel Maurer, CJD, were the first resident Catholic clergy in Vladivostok in 62 years. Over the next decade, the priests opened or reopened 11 parishes throughout the Far East, covering an area of nearly 600,000 square miles.



*Fr. Myron celebrates the first baptism at one of the newly opened parishes.*

While traveling great distances to celebrate Mass and the sacraments, the priests have established numerous parish and community programs:

- Catechetical programs for children, youth, and adults
- Concerts of sacred music
- Translation of hymns and liturgical music
- Publication of Russian-language prayers, hymn books, and catechisms
- Pro-life centers for women seeking an alternative to abortion
- AA counseling
- Medical and dental assistance for needy
- Weekday lunches for the elderly poor
- An initiative that pairs retired seniors with children in orphanages
- Natural Family Planning
- and much, much more!

## How does our partnership work?

Our parish chooses (or may have already chosen) how we wish to assist a parish or program in eastern Russia. Some suggestions are listed on the back of this brochure.

Then, through our bi-monthly newsletters, thank you letters from Fr. Myron, or visiting speakers, we learn how the mission effort is proceeding with our assistance.

The Russian people are always amazed to hear the story of Our Lady of Fatima. They find it incredible that we prayed for them and for the conversion of Russia during those dark years of persecution. Today, they are grateful that people are reaching out to help them build churches and bring the light of Faith. In return, they pray for all their benefactors.



*Sisters in Jesus the Lord provide music for liturgical services. They also bring music and song to the elderly confined to the local hospice*

God's mercy and love have survived in Russia, and in His plan, Russia will be converted. Do you wish to cooperate in this remarkable plan... **will you help?**