

Our Parishioner Galina Olegovna Povlova

by Valeria Walatka

Galina Pavlova, at 17, is one of just a handful of teenage members of our parish. She first became interested in the Catholic faith in Biology class. No, they don't typically teach Creation in Russian schools, but Galina's teacher happened to be Yuri Belozyorov, a strong Catholic with no qualms about calling the students to silent prayer for a few minutes before each lesson. (Yuri is now Director of Evangelization for the Catholic Parish of the Most Holy Mother of God.)

Against the whole idea of prayer, Galina was not afraid to voice her opinions to the teacher. But watching some of her classmates participate in the prayer before class eventually had an impact on her. When she began allowing the grace of God to work in her life, she found herself enrolled in the Catholic Parish's correspondence course "Introduction to Christianity." She began to participate in the prayer before her Biology lesson began, and shortly after this, she began attending Sunday Mass and instruction in the Catholic Faith.

Galina was baptized when she was just 6 months old (her grandmother was a faithful Orthodox believer and made the necessary arrangements). Almost 16 years later, last Easter Sunday, she received First Holy Communion and conditional Confirmation. And now she feels right at home. "The parish is like a second family," she said. She is an active parishioner, organizing the Sunday lectors and assisting her old Biology teacher with his work in evangelization and pro-life. She participated in our summer camp for children, helping organize and counsel the children.

Shortly after her Confirmation, Galina began praying a daily Rosary. She's been keeping a diary for several years, and is now in the habit each evening of writing in her diary about the troubles of the day, and then picking up her rosary for the sure solution to all of her problems. Life is much easier now, she says.

She used to have a hard time relating to her dad, but not anymore. He's noticed a big change in her for the better, and has told her so. She doesn't expect that her conversion will help bring him to the Faith, but God's grace works in mysterious ways!

Several days a week, Galina comes up to the church to pray. She is a participant in our Thursday Day of Prayer with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. She says it's great to get out of the house and away from the noise in the street to pray in the quiet of the chapel. She will be graduating this spring and plans to study liberal arts at the Far Eastern State University beginning in the fall. Not having Catholic friends at school is hard for her, and she will need our prayers next year at the University even more.

She has a generous heart open to the will of God. Pray that He continue to increase her faith and continue to be for her that Joy which her life was lacking for so many years.

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Anchorage AK 99501 USA

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News Notes

by Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.

A church historian showed me an official handbook of the old Archdiocese of Mogilov--the original Roman Catholic diocese in Russia. There in the list were our parishes here in the Far East, and to my surprise, the name of our parish in Khabarovsk was "Immaculate Conception", not "Transfiguration of Jesus"! I had wondered why two neighboring parishes--Khabarovsk and Blagoveschensk--had had the same name, but I was assured of it by historians here in the Far East. It turns out that they were wrong. So when we get a chance we will change the official name of the parish in Khabarovsk back to its original. We can use the name "Transfiguration" in Comsomolsk-na-Amure, when we open a parish there. Comsomolsk is in the same state as Khabarovsk, so we won't have to register a new parish, but just use Khabarovsk's registration. Incidentally, recently I found that the sister of one of my Blagoveschensk parishioners has moved to Comsomolsk. So we have five active Catholics in Comsomolsk, in addition to the probably several hundred still unfound Catholics who live there. When will we have time and resources to find them and begin the parish?

As Scripture says, true religion consists in feeding the widows and orphans in their need (James 1:27). Our lack of cash has forced us to cut back on all activities, especially important activities, like evangelization, catechism, and vocations, because we can't let people starve to death. An elderly, sick lady called to say her "meals on wheels" hasn't arrived for days, and she has nothing to eat and can't go out to get anything. We tried to explain that our car was broken, and our funding is lacking so that we don't know when we will be able to resume our rounds of bringing dinner to the sick and elderly homebound. I offered to send her dinner through a volunteer, but she said that if we weren't bringing dinner to others, she would suffer along with them! Temporarily we will be able bring food to the needy only once a week, and include with it some foods that will keep well, so that they have something to eat later. Most of these people we help have absolutely nothing of value, having already used up everything they own to stay alive. Pray that we will find new sponsors for our program, so that, after feeding the needy we will still have the means to do evangelization, to teach our children, and encourage vocations. Recently two very fine and intelligent young men spoke to me about maybe becoming priests! How can we afford their seminary education?

My assistant Igor handed me 20 applications for baptism from the Amursky State, and 14 from the Khabarovsky State. These are all people who have completed our course in the Catholic faith by mail. When will we have the help we need and the money we need to go and baptize these people? Can you please increase your prayers that God will send us more help? Priests, deacons, sisters, brothers, lay helpers, and the finances to support them!

Our indebtedness is now \$15,300. We try to avoid debt completely, since we have no assets, but sometimes it happens.

Can somebody please help us to reduce our debt? While we work in Russia we have no way to earn money. We are dependent upon you, our benefactors, and your creative fund-raising ideas. We could try to earn a larger share of our needs in Russia itself, if we had some capital to work with. For example, CARITAS has started a candle making operation on Popov Island, both to try to earn some money and to help the handicapped who need work. But starting with \$300 is a rather slow start. It will take a while before the income generated will produce any moneys for charity. We would like to begin a mushroom growing operation, as a way to give some work to the poor of Popov Island, but we have no capital to begin the project with.

If you like to surf, please note our new web page address:

<http://www.pond.net/~jeffclang/mostholy>

On Holy Saturday Father Dan sang the wonderful Easter hymn, The Exultet, in Russian--it was the first time it was sung totally in Russian, and the first time that Fr Dan has sung it in his life. In previous years I worked on a hybrid Russian-English version, since my Russian was so bad, and we had no Russian version of the hymn. Now official translations into Russian have been approved for the Mass. Usually the hymn is sung by a deacon, but Fr Dan only became a deacon in Russia, so he had no opportunity to sing it before in America. Needless to say, Fr Dan did a great job!

During Holy Week, in Chelyabinsk, Russia, five time zones from us, two thieves who were parishioners set fire to the little wooden Catholic church at night to cover their theft of sacred vessels. The building was a total loss, and the parish had to have holy week services without proper vestments and utensils, and in a rented hall. The parish, with sponsorship from Germany, was building a new church which was well along in construction, however, so the parish will be in its new building even sooner than expected. The outpouring of aid to the parish from all over the world was truly astounding, following the remarkable accounts of the events sent out by electronic mail. They were written by one of the four American sisters from Fond-du-Lac, Wisconsin, who work in Chelyabinsk, Sister Lucy Ann Wasinger, C.S.A.. Maybe we should start a novena for an earthquake in Vladivostok? (Tenth Commandment: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.)

Mission Helper Ghennady Krestsov to Leave Staff

by Fr Daniel Maurer, C.J.D.

Either God cared enough to send us the very best, or else He knew how much help we needed to survive, and found us just the right person to provide it. Now that it is almost time to say good-bye, it is hard to imagine how we will get along without him. In July Ghennady Krestsov, one of our first Russian mission helpers, will be leaving us to begin a new job in a rapidly expanding New Zealand-based food import business. Since shortly after we arrived in Russia, "Ghenna", as he is affectionately called, has been involved in almost every aspect of our mission. If I had to choose one word to describe Ghenna, it would have to be "HELPFUL". Everyone knows how much help he is. That is why everyone always asks him for help.

"Ghenna, please show Fr Daniel where the men's room is," said my Russian teacher to a student standing in the stairwell during morning break. The young man responded in imperfect but understandable English that showing foreigners to the toilet seemed to be his particular responsibility in the cramped and dirty, labyrinthine building that provided temporary classroom space for the newly founded "Far East Business Academy". That was back in April 1992 on my first day of Russian class in a new location, and I was grateful for the help since I would never have found the room on my own. Little did I know then that the young man who guided my way through the narrow, dingy corridors would later become one of the most indispensable assets of our mission.

Fr Myron and I were at the school to study Russian. Ghenna was there on a special scholarship from the University for a six-week intensive English course. Back in those early days when Vladivostok had just opened up to foreigners and you could count the number of Americans in the city on the fingers of one hand, all Russians were anxious to meet native English speakers, so our teachers arranged that during our Russian class break we would go to the English classroom for 15 minutes of conversation with the students of English. The students were anxious to learn but afraid to speak. Except for Ghenna. He is never afraid to speak. You could say that he speaks all the time, in whatever language he might have heard a few words, and he generally makes himself well understood. In my experience most Russians tend to be reserved with strangers. There is nothing reserved about Ghenna.

It is hard to recall exactly when Ghenna became such an integral part of our mission. It seems as though he has always been here helping us. And his help is not the kind that you would rather do without. Fr Myron offered Ghenna a job because it was clear from the beginning that he is uncommonly talented and intelligent. And because he has a quality which is rarely found in Russians: he looks for opportunities and

possibilities to do new things rather than for reasons to decline. When others too easily say, "That's impossible," Ghenna gets going.

(Hint: the answer to all the following questions is, "Ghenna".)

- When we could find no apartment to buy in the vicinity of our Church, who plastered signs on every apartment door in a 20-block radius, successfully finding one within a five-minute walk?
- Who got three muscular classmates and a large truck to help us move to our new apartment on the sixth floor without an elevator?
- Who "found" and installed two phone lines for our apartment at the subsidized (very low) government price when Russians have to wait over 20 years for a phone and when most foreigners must pay bribes of \$1,500 for a phone?
- When we moved into the church only to discover that the Archive took their phone numbers with them, who found a way to bring two phone numbers to the church building, and a phone number to the apartment of our American lay volunteer, Valerie Walatka, making use of a cable which just happens to pass through the stairwell of his apartment building?
- To whom did the Lutheran pastor appeal when he couldn't get a phone line, although now he has two of them?
- Who regularly finds train and plane tickets for us when the person at the ticket window says there are none?
- When there was not a single empty seat on a train from Novosibirsk to Prokopievsk, who found out that the railroad was transporting some train cars to the repair factory in a special train, so that we were the only passengers on the whole train?
- Who refuses to use an umbrella regardless of the rain, preferring to run between the raindrops sopping wet?
- When we learned that four very important keys on our large electronic organ did not work, who discovered the problem and repaired the broken circuits in 15 minutes, when another technician had looked through the maze of circuits for over three hours without success and when the closest trained organ repairman was 5000 miles away?
- Who has smoothly navigated his way through the mountains of paperwork and bureaucracy surrounding the reception of two large ship containers of humanitarian aid and church goods?
- Who refused to leave our employ two years ago when he was offered the attractive job of Far East Service Manager of Sony at more than four times the salary?
- Who, before each payday, usually figures out a way to save us enough money to cover his pay, without using mission money?
- Who, in order to help our trained, full-time parish bookkeeper, studied on his own time and learned a complex Russian computer bookkeeping program so well that he is now a licensed consultant for the software company which produced it?

- Who is an untiring and pleasant traveling companion, making all arrangements and taking care of every unforeseeable need with efficiency and good humor?
- Who even talks in his sleep?
- To whose mother did Fr Myron once say, "Why didn't you have three more sons like him so that we can get more accomplished?"

The list could go on and on, but you get the point. This guy is a gold mine.

Ghenna was born on New Years Day in 1968 and raised with his two sisters, Irina and Marina, both younger than he, in the city of Bolshoy Kamyen, the center of Soviet nuclear submarine manufacturing, three hours from Vladivostok by train. He was the only student of 90 in his advanced technical high school graduating class of 1987 to pass the highly competitive national university qualifying exams. In the fall of that year he enrolled at the Far Eastern State University in Vladivostok in a five-year curriculum in the department of physics, but meanwhile served a year as a submariner in the Soviet Navy.

During the Soviet period B.K. was always a closed military city, no foreigners allowed, and even Russians needed a special visa to enter the city limits. As a student living in a dormitory in Vladivostok, he became a tireless promoter of his home town. A few days after we met, he was already arranging for Fr Myron and I to speak to all the English teachers in the Bolshoy Kamyen school system, a gathering that I will never forget. Over 40 English teachers, some of whom had been teaching for more than 30 years, gathered timidly in the auditorium of the local City Hall to meet native English speakers for the first time in their lives. Most of them spoke English very well but at first were afraid even to ask a question since they had no practice speaking their chosen language with native speakers.

After another three months, Ghenna saw an opportunity for us to begin regular classes in Christianity in the B.K. school system. At that time there were no Christian denominations active in the city, but the Hare Krishna's had found their way into the newly instituted religious classes offered in all the elementary and high schools. We began to go to B.K. once a month to speak at two schools about the history of the Church. After the first year of informal classes, Fr Daniel began a monthly series of four different classes in two of the five local high schools. The classes were: The Book of Genesis; Christian Art and Culture; the Christian Understanding of Marriage; and the History of the Church. Out of that pastoral initiative grew the Catholic parish of Saint John the Evangelist, with Fr Daniel as acting pastor, and Ghenna (then age 25) as parish elder. The parish gathers for Mass on the fourth Wednesday of every month.

When we first met Ghenna, he was not baptized, but he believed in God. His beautiful and intelligent wife Olga, then a recent University graduate (also from the department of physics), is a baptized Russian Orthodox. In August 1992, their son Dennis was born. Ghenna asked if Dennis could be

baptized a Catholic. Fr Myron told him that if one of his parents was a Catholic, then Dennis could be a Catholic. So Ghenna began his catechumenate, fulfilling all the requirements, and both he and his son were baptized at the Easter Vigil in April 1993. The next month, toward the end of his fourth year at the University he began to work part-time for our mission.

Ghenna's years at the University saw the crumbling of the old Soviet system of state sponsored education, and he needed to find a commercial sponsor to pay the cost of his final year. The usual solution then (three years ago) was that a company would pay the sponsorship cost and in return the student would promise to work at the company for two years after graduation. He asked us if we knew of any company which would sponsor him. Fr Myron decided that the sponsorship fees were low enough, and Ghenna's work was so valuable, that our mission could sponsor him, an unorthodox arrangement in the eyes of the university administration. But the agreement was made, so Ghenna continued to work for us part-time while he completed his diploma thesis.

He graduated in July 1994, the only *summa cum laude* graduate in his department. Since then he has faithfully fulfilled his commitment to work for us full-time. Actually, since he loves to work, it has been much more than full time. Often he is still in the office at 7:00 or 8.00 pm and even on Saturdays.

The part of his job that he likes best is traveling with Fr Myron as his general assistant. Especially in the early years when Fr Myron spoke limited Russian, they regularly traveled together to all of our parishes (Khabarovsk, Bolshoy Kamyen, Blagoveshensk) and also to Aldan in Yakutia, and to Novosibirsk for meetings with the bishop and priests.

Since our paycheck is small compared to what foreign companies pay, and less than what many Russian companies pay, we and our benefactors have received a tremendous bargain for his creative and talented services, and we have had the pleasure of his friendly and outgoing personality. He has also grown tremendously in ways that will benefit him in future work. While Ghenna has worked for us, he has had the opportunity to perfect his knowledge of conversational English. Even though he is primarily a scientist and engineer, he has an amazing facility for languages. I kid him that he now speaks English with a Midwestern American accent. He remembers every word I say and every expression I use. When he speaks to me, I sometimes think I am listening to myself. While working with us, he had the opportunity to become a skilled computer operator on our office computers, mastering both American and Russian language and technical software.

Everything considered, these past three years have been a tremendous benefit both to our mission and to Ghenna. Now he will move on. If Russian laws become more amenable to a healthy business climate, he will have great potential for success in whatever field he chooses. Meanwhile, he and his

family will also have the strength of the Faith in God whom they have come to know and love. Only because we trust in the Lord who surely was the One who sent Ghenna to us in the first place, do we look forward to finding out who the next God-send might be.

The Eucharist in Russia

by Fr Daniel L. Maurer, C.J.D.

Recently in our Vladivostok parish, the only regularly functioning Catholic parish in a radius of over 1800 miles, the amount of unconsecrated altar breads ran very low due to an oversight on my part. With no host-making equipment for thousands of miles around, it would have been difficult to produce our own. Thanks to the generosity of Father LaSalle Hallissey, O.P., Rector of Holy Family Cathedral in Anchorage and benefactors from the Cathedral parish, to the modern technology of electronic mail, and to a cooperative flight attendant, we were able to get more hosts in time for the next Sunday Mass. Fr LaSalle thought that the incident would present a good opportunity to tell the members of Holy Family parish what the Eucharist means to our Catholic people in Vladivostok, so I wrote the following article for their "Cathedral Clarion" newsletter.

Vladivostok is a city of one million people, all of whom have been strongly affected in uncountable ways by the last 75 years of militant, atheistic communism. In Vladivostok between 1930 and 1990 the Catholic Church was against the law and was very harshly suppressed. When Father Myron Effing and I arrived four years ago, we knew of only ten baptized Catholics in the entire city. Only five of them had received their Catholic faith in pre-Communist days. Since then we have found five more who remember their faith from the pre-Communist days. That means that only ten people in a city of one million remember what it was like to be a Catholic before communism. All of them are quite elderly now, but they were young children when they were forced to abandon the practice of their religion. All of them lost close family members between 1922-1936, killed because they were believers. They have only vague memories of the Mass.

One of them lost all the men in her entire family: grandfather, father, uncles and brothers. Another remembers being part of a big church ceremony but she does not remember if it was her first communion or her confirmation, or both. Another, now very old, through all these dark years saved a group photograph taken in the sanctuary of our church of herself and 27 other boys and girls with a priest and the first bishop of Vladivostok. She and the other girls are wearing white dresses and veils. It is the only known photograph of the interior of our church, the Cathedral of the Most Holy Mother of God.

Because they were so young, they remember virtually nothing about any religious training they might have had before the Communists came. Nothing. No prayers, no catechism questions and answers, no Scripture, no devotions. They only knew that their families had been Catholic before the revolution, that their parents had seen to it that they were baptized in the Church and practiced their faith as long as it was allowed, and now that they were again able to practice religion they wanted to continue where they had so abruptly left

off sixty years earlier- -Catholics on their pilgrim journey to God in this valley of tears.

At first it was hard for me to realize the extent to which the faith was destroyed here in the Russian Far East. I had a kind of romantic notion that people must have taught their children and grandchildren something, perhaps copying by hand their worn-out missals down through the generations and hiding them in the mattress in case the secret police suddenly appeared. But no. That was much too dangerous for their children. The vast majority of Catholics in Vladivostok at the time of the Communist take-over were either killed or fled to China and beyond. Those who stayed in the area and survived soon realized that to teach their children how to pray may be to sign their children's death warrants.

The suppression of religion was so harsh and the Communist control of society so total, that the few Catholic parents who survived those days refused even to talk about their faith. And so the children grew up with no religious training whatsoever, and with very much anti-religious training in the obligatory Communist youth clubs and school system. For the last four generations all children have been raised and educated under the watchful eye of the Communist state where all ideas have been rigorously controlled by the all-pervasive, atheistic government bureaucracy. All voluntary associations of people had to be approved and registered by the Communist Party.

No religious organization, not even the Russian Orthodox Church, could teach religion to anyone. They were only allowed to hold prayer services and Mass for those few, usually older people with little left to lose, who were willing to risk persecution to attend. Occasionally the religious leaders, including some priests, bishops and ministers, were not-so-secret Communist agents whose job it was to discourage religious devotion among their own flock! The Catholic Church did not have such internal problems: it was completely banned and totally destroyed as an organization.

So coming to the Russian Far East to help re-establish the Catholic Church is about the closest thing I can think of to starting from scratch. A few people cried tears of joy at the return of the priests and the reopening of the long-closed Church, but there were not many left who remembered the last priests. Many who do not remember are also grateful, especially the children and grandchildren of those who were killed or persecuted for their faith. But theirs is not a gratitude based on nostalgia for the past, since they do not remember that past. Theirs is rather a gratitude of future promise. Finally they can be given the chance to receive their birthright, to know God, to learn to pray, to grow in holiness. For many who have come to believe in God and join the Church in these past four years, their earlier life was like a very long Advent, knowing that what they were waiting for was important, but not knowing very clearly what it would be like. They know that they don't know what they should know, and somewhat like children, they trust the ones who have been sent to them to transmit intact the treasure of their lost heritage.

This puts a very grave responsibility on those of us who have been called to this mission. We have to examine clearly what we do and why we do it, because it will be received trustingly by people who do not know how to discern its relative importance.

In our pastoral priorities we have been extremely careful to put the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Eucharist, at the very center of the faith life of our reborn parish, especially our Sunday celebration of the Mass. The Second Vatican Council clearly affirmed that the Eucharist is the source and summit of our life as Christians. In our program of preparation for the sacraments of adult baptism and confirmation, we have put great stress on a clear understanding of and love for Our Lord sacramentally present to us, body and blood, soul and divinity, under the appearance of bread and wine. We emphasize the sacrificial nature of Jesus' life, death and resurrection "for us" and how the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus is continually renewed for all present and for the whole world at every Mass.

In order to help our new Catholic people better to appreciate and reverence Our Lord present in the Eucharist we have weekly exposition of the Blessed Sacrament every Thursday from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm ending with Benediction. During that time, even though our parish is small (about 330 members in Vladivostok), our parishioners spread out across a large city, and our church difficult to reach (especially in winter) there is always someone present before the Blessed Sacrament in silent adoration. Others of our elderly and homebound parishioners have signed up each hour to pray at home in union with the parish and the ones who are praying before the Blessed Sacrament in church.

Do our people love the Eucharist? The best answer is that, like all Catholics, they are learning to love their Eucharistic Lord. Most of them are at an early stage of their journey because only a handful have been baptized more than four years. Many are at Mass every Sunday. Others are there whenever possible, which often excludes Sundays in summer when they must work in their garden plots located as much as three hours by train outside the city. One devout family with two small daughters recently lost their 34-year-old daddy to stomach cancer. He was an Air Force fighter pilot who flew rescue missions to Chernobyl after the atomic power disaster. They come to Mass every Sunday on the electric train from their home in a small village, a total of six hours travel time.

Some of our Russian parishioners are still "trying on" their new-found faith, and are not completely at ease with it. Our bishop, himself born and raised in the Soviet Union, warned us when we first arrived that many Russians start out their faith journey very enthusiastically, but often after about two years they stop attending Church completely. Some never come back. Others manage to weather the crisis and return to active participation in parish life again. That has also been our experience, no matter how carefully we try to prepare people for their baptism. Most who come and then leave are young

adults, and we pray that there is still time for them to learn how important the Faith and the Church are, and to return.

Most difficult for me is when older people stop or interrupt their relationship with the Church and the Eucharist. For them, there might not be much time left. I pray especially for one elderly lady who made her first communion before the Communists closed the parish, but then was never able to be confirmed in the Communist era. When we arrived we heard about her from another parishioner and arranged for her to be prepared at home for confirmation by the priests and by trained lay catechists. She was confirmed by our bishop on his first visit to our parish more than three years ago. Since it is difficult for her to come to Church, we priests would regularly bring her Holy Communion at home. But two years ago, after the tragic death of her only grandson in an automobile accident (he was a newly graduated medical doctor and she was rightly very proud of him), she began to put us off when we would call to schedule a communion call.

What does the Eucharist mean to Russians? To the vast majority of Russians, raised under atheistic communism, it means nothing at all. In Vladivostok we estimate that less than one tenth of one percent of the population receive Our Eucharistic Lord in communion each week in either our Catholic parish or the three Orthodox parishes. By American standards that is an infinitesimal number. We must pray that the number will grow. It will be slower than we had hoped. But those who are coming to know the Lord in the Eucharist as members of His Body will be the ones whose holiness and goodness will invite others to the Banquet of Life.

Our “Mary Parishes”

by Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.

It was a daunting task even to think about our small Russian parish having its historical Cathedral church building back in our hands, let alone removing the added floors and restoring the whole building! Naturally, we asked our patronness, the Most Holy Mother of God for help!

The first help came from the United States, whose patronness is the Virgin Mary under the title of The Immaculate Conception. American Catholics, through the annual collection taken for the Church in Eastern Europe, gave us \$30,000 to pay for the initial expenses of receiving the building and securing it--as far as we know, the first church to be received back in Russia!

Parishes under the protection of the Most Holy Mother of God have come to our help as we continue the long task of restoring the Cathedral, a process which will still take years to complete. St Mary's Parish in Little Falls, Minnesota, was the first Mary Parish to give us a large unrestricted donation, \$15,000, which was partly used on the church building. The parish is known for the vigor of its sons who have become priests, and regularly contributes to worth missionary causes--a wonderful example for all!

Our list of Mary Parishes and sister parishes continues to grow. We pray for them and with them, and especially that God will give them many vocations to the priesthood, something that we and the whole world need. As Jesus was dying on the Cross he gave John to his mother, and in this way entrusted every priest to Mary, and Mary to every priest. After all, Mary is the Mother of the Church, and priests we call “Father”.

“Thank you” to the pastors of our Mary Parishes for their encouragement and support as we Americans reach out to help reestablish the Church in Russia. Likewise, thanks are due to those laymen who help their pastors with special collections and special projects for Russia.

Only in Vladivostok are we so lucky as to have a church building. In Bolshoi Kamen the parish has a three room apartment, thanks to benefactor, Mr John Bold of Solano Beach, California. In Khabarovsk an anonymous donor has rented an office for the parish, so that it can at least have a door with the Catholic parish's name on it. But all three of our other parishes don't have a single place to lay their heads--they only rent a hall for mass when there is money enough. We are still hoping that benefactors will be able to supply the first dwelling places for our other parishes, too!

We have invited our “Mary Parishes” to make a beautiful banner of their parish which we can use in our processions on the feasts of Mary, to celebrate our common patronness. We

hope that the list of “Mary Parishes” will read like a litany of Mary in her honor for the perpetual memory of those parishes who have helped us in our time of need. Ask your parish to help us, especially if it is dedicated to Mary! Here is a list of our Mary Parishes who have come to our aid by their prayers and donations to date. May the list grow longer!

Our “Litany of Mary, Most Holy Mother of God.”

Squantum MA	Star of the Sea	Father Daniel Crowley
Nashua NH	Immaculate Conception	Father Denis Horan
Woodcliff Lake NJ	Our Lady Mother of the Church	Father Thomas Arminio
Mount Vernon NY	Our Lady of the Victory	Msgr Thomas Scanlon
Glenville NY	Immaculate Conception	Father Thomas Connery
Buffalo NY	Coronation	Msgr Eugene Radon
Buffalo NY	Queen of Heaven	Msgr Joseph Coughlin
Pittsburgh PA	Madonna of Jerusalem	Father Michael Vecchio
Bangor PA	Our Lady of Good Counsel	Father John Fitzgerald
Washington DC	Annunciation	Msgr James Montgomery
Bethesda MD	Our Lady of Lourdes	Msgr William O'Donnell
Woodbridge VA	Our Lady of Angels	Father Paul Burns
Land O' Lakes FL	Our Lady of the Rosary	Father Stephen Dambrauska
Erlanger KY	Mary Queen of Heaven	Father John McGuire
Owensboro KY	Blessed Mother	Father Phil Riney
Carey OH	Our Lady of Consolation	Father Pius Poff
Shoals IN	St Mary	
Detroit MI	Annunciation	Father Valentine Gattari
Edwardsburg MI	Our Lady of the Lake	Father David Otto
Niles MI	Mary of the Immaculate Conception	Father Stephen Naas
Twin Lake MI	St Mary of the Woods	Father Henry Dondzila
De Pere WI	St Mary	
Menasha WI	St Mary	Father William O'Halloran
Big Lake MN	Our Lady of the Lake	Father Richard Wey
Cook MN	St Mary	Father Brian Schultz
Avon MN	Immaculate Conception	Father Steven Binsfield
Holdingford MN	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	Father Steven Binsfield
Little Falls MN	St Mary	Father Richard Landsberger
Grove City MN	Our Lady	Father Robert Clark
Braidwood IL	Immaculate Conception	Father William White
Gibson City IL	Our Lady of Lourdes	Father William Smith
Morrison MO	Assumption	Father Eric Schlachter
Chamois MO	Most Pure Heart of Mary	Father Eric Schlachter
Louisberg KS	Immaculate Conception	Father Stanley Loncaric
Leigh NE	Saint Mary	Father Francis Kubart
Slidell LA	Our Lady of Lourdes	Msgr Howard Hotard
Sulphur LA	Our Lady of LaSalette	Father Joseph Decoteau
Houston TX	Holy Rosary	Father Victor Brown
Houston TX	Notre Dame	Father Hubert Kealy
Mountain Home ID	Our Lady of Good Counsel	Msgr James Hallissey
Tucson AZ	Our Mother of Sorrows	Msgr Thomas Cahalane
Albuquerque NM	Our Lady of Perpetual Help	Father Christopher Zugger
Belen NM	Our Lady of Belen	Father Frank Prieto
Niland CA	Immaculate Heart of Mary	Father Manuel Mesa
Soldotna AK	Our Lady of Perpetual Help	Father Richard Tero

From the Editor

by Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.

In this issue of *Vladivostok Sunrise* a lot is said about big donations and big donors. They have been indispensable for us and for Russia. At the same time, much has been said about our local Russian talent and our efforts to pay our own way, as soon as that might be possible. But I'd like to say thank you to all those donors who help us, even in smaller or simpler ways. We can't do without you! Many letters say, "I'd like to give more, but I'm on a pension", or "on a budget", or "that's all I can give." The same is true here in Russia: Some of our elder parishioners, on pension with little to eat, still insist on giving just a bit to help with the restoration of the church that their grandparents built before it was taken away from them. The Lord approved the widow's mite, and said it was the best donation of all!

When we first came to Russia, Father Dan and I had only \$800 between us, two suitcases apiece, and a debt, because the \$800 was borrowed, and we also had to borrow money to buy our plane tickets. And in debt is where we still are! Even though the number of our benefactors has increased to nearly 1300 persons and parishes, the inflation rate in Russia has kept us from resting on our laurels. If prices in Russia had remained what they were five years ago when I made my first trip, then our donors could have supported the whole diocese by now! At that time, bread cost eight rubles per loaf, but today 3,400 rubles. I remember having dinner at a fancy restaurant in Magadan with Fr Austin Mohrbacher on my first factfinding trip. We had champagne, caviar, and a complete dinner, and the total bill was 60 cents!

But that is a thing of the past. Prices here are now the same as in America, and even higher for some things. Prices will likely get higher than they are in America, since the huge government bureaucracy eats up taxes while not producing anything. Naturally, I worry about money a lot. Father Dan says, "Just like a typical pastor!" I'm not supposed to worry about it. But our faithful employees have to feed their families, we have to pay our heating and electricity bills, we have to make progress on the restoration, our five other parishes need development, we must promote vocations and teach our children, and we must develop our own Russian fundraising system without capital. What, me worry?

So I want to say thanks to our donors whose day in and day out sacrifices and prayers mean so much to us. Thank you, dear reader, for caring about us in Russia.