



Mary Mother of God Mission Society

Reviving the Catholic Church in Eastern Russia

Dear «MailName»,

June 15, 2010

“Ohhhhh, the doctor is worried!” is a joke that Fr Dan tells about a remark by a nursing home patient when asked how she was feeling. I guess that pretty well describes my feelings as we go into summer, which is always a time of reduced donations! So thank you for your donation! It will help keep us afloat during the lean times. Fr Dan left on a fundraising trip to the U.S. I’ll have to hold down the fort here by myself while he is gone. Of course Fr Sebastian is in Nakhodka—not far away—if we have an emergency need. So our two seminarians and I will be here praying for you. Plus, add another seminarian who is visiting us from Rome for the summer!

Speaking of seminarians, Brother Patrick just gave me his bill from the university for his Russian lessons for the next 7 months: \$1522.29. He is a very good student, and his Russian pronunciation is wonderful. The university does a good job.

On the Feast of Corpus Christi we had First Communions for three of our Most Holy Mother of God kids. And next will be First Communion for two more from St Joseph’s parish. All the Sunday School kids helped at the Sunday Mass, doing the readings, the Prayer of the Faithful, and the collection. Here is a photo of the three.



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Besides having been in bed with the flu, I've been busy working for AA. We are trying to work toward having a 12-step rehabilitation center here in Vladivostok (the nearest is in St Petersburg, 8 time zones away.) And I'm also serving on the governor's committee to make recommendations about what to do about alcohol and alcoholism in our state. It's a huge problem, of course. My interest is on the two "ends" of the problem: education and rehabilitation. I think that if kids are taught the scientific basis for alcoholism, and the symptoms and early warning signs they can begin to deal with the disease themselves. And then there should be programs of help for those who do get addicted. I always say, "Too bad I'm not an alcoholic!--If I were I probably would understand the disease much better." Meanwhile AA celebrated its 75th anniversary as a movement, and I attended the Open Meeting and celebration here in Vladivostok, which was attended by about 159 people from Siberia and the Far East, with the largest delegations from Khabarovsk and Vladivostok.

We are also working on the annual Far Eastern Catholic Youth Conference which is scheduled for Khabarovsk in July. The theme of the Conference this year will be "Witness"--How the Church, the Bible, our families witness the faith to us and how we in turn witness our faith to others. I got interested in the theme after reading the book "Jesus and the Eyewitnesses" by Richard Bauckham. It is a tough book, but well worth reading for those who may have been dismayed by the text critics.

Fr Dan just finished three nights of organ concerts. The organist was Dr Alexei Parshin from Moscow. It was his fifth concert series with us. It was a sell-out crowd, and people are very grateful. After each concert someone talks to us about how to become a Catholic. Maybe some people put off the religious questions in life, but since they were here for a concert, they have a chance to ask questions.

We just heard of the death of Sr Leta Zeller from St Francis Xavier parish in Poseyville, Indiana. She visited us last summer and made a donation of a clothes drier from the hospice, which suffers in the summer from too humid a location for clothing and bedding to dry. I'm sure she will have plenty of people to recommend her to St Peter at the gates. Eternal rest grant o her, O Lord!

Thanks for all your help! Every day we remember you in prayer. God bless you!

Yours truly,

V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.