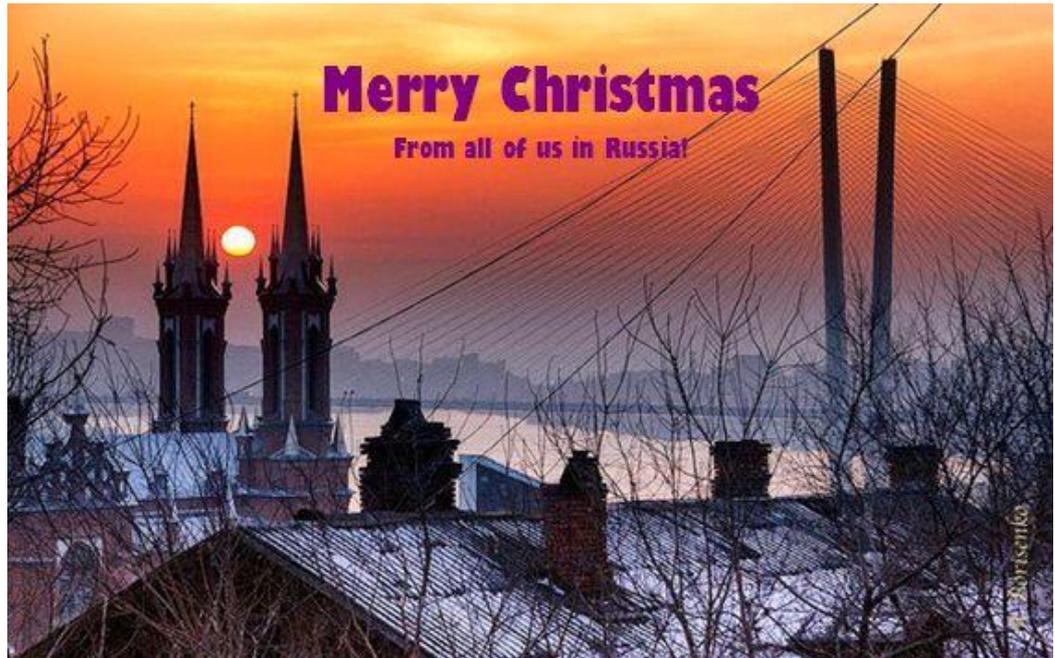




# Mary Mother of God Mission Society

Reviving the Catholic Church in Eastern Russia



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Dear Benefactor

November 30, 2013

Merry Christmas! May the Lord hear all your prayers for Christmas! I hope you like the photo above of our church in the sunset. To me it looks Christmasy. I'm here in Indonesia just now, and yesterday in the car there was a beautiful CD with American Christmas music. It really put me in the spirit.

So what am I doing in Indonesia? Bishop Vincentius Wisaksono of Surabaya invited me to talk about the founding of our religious community in Indonesia, too, where there are many vocations. The good news is that it is all decided and now the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord and the Sisters in Jesus the Lord are approved for the Diocese of Surabaya! It looks as though we can expect to have vocations every year for some time, as the young people respond to the call. Father Inosensius Hetu, C.J.D. and Sr Marthina Tongli, C.J.D. will be the superiors in Indonesia. The seminarians will attend Divine Providence Seminary here before ordination. There are benefactors to take care of the work of our communities here in Indonesia, too. We hope there will be vocations, not just for Indonesia, but also for Russia and elsewhere! I'll be returning to Russia by December 8, to carry on our work and communities there. So much still to be done!

Thank you for your donation for our work in Russia! These are important times, so your alms and prayers are very important to us and to the whole Church. We would like to do even more in Russia, but so much depends on your help, and on the future of our seminarians. We pray for you every day, and it is usually the seminarians who are the first to pray for you!

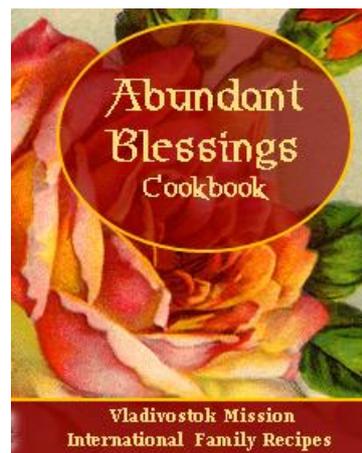
Speaking of Christmas, I only learned in Russia the meaning of the Christmas tree—It is the Cross, the wood of a tree whose seed germinated about the same time as Jesus was born so that they were both 33 years old by the time of the Crucifixion. As the Cross was adorned with the body and blood of Christ, so the tree is decorated to celebrate that it was chosen for so great a task. So if anybody tells you it is just a pagan symbol, you know how to correct them!

We passed another milestone! The 1500<sup>th</sup> Adopt-a-Birth child is a twin girl named Arina. She and her sister Nina (#1501) were born on August 1. Adopt-a-Birth children are born from women who come to the Women's Support Centers for help when they are trying to avoid an abortion. Congratulations and many thanks to our benefactors who provide funds for Adopt-a-Birth. Of course she is only the 1500<sup>th</sup> to receive this particular kind of help. Our Women's Support Centers have helped thousands more avoid being aborted. We will soon open another WSC at the Far Eastern Federal University on Russian Island. Plans are nearly complete. The place is nearly ready. I'll try to give you some pictures soon. Now we have to select the staff.

If you haven't decided what to give as a Christmas present to that friend who has everything, consider our new cookbook! Vicky can send it to you from our office in California. Here's a picture of the cover:



*Little Arina still in the incubator, the 1500<sup>th</sup> Adopt-a-Birth child*



*Yep, some of my recipes are in it..*

Our Bishop Kirill was in Vladivostok for Confirmations on November 10. Nine parishioners were confirmed, including several older folks who had been baptized in Belorus as children, but only now being able to be confirmed. It was a happy day for them.



*Bishop Kirill and Tatyana*

We'll be praying for you. God bless you, and have a happy preparation for Christmas. Thank you so much for being there for all of us! Yours truly,

V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.