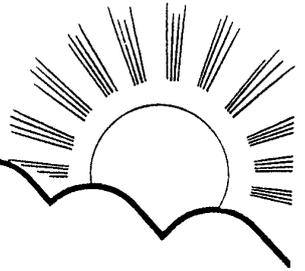


Vladivostok Sunrise

Mary Mother of God Mission Society Vladivostok Russia St Paul Minnesota

Issue Number Fifty One May 1, 2003



Teen STAR Begins In Russia Another First For Vladivostok

by Rev Daniel Maurer C.J.D.

From March 12 to 16, 2003 the Catholic parish of the Most Holy Mother of God in Vladivostok hosted the first ever Teen STAR teacher training seminar in Russia. Teen STAR founder and director, gynecologist Dr Hanna Klaus, M.M.M., M.D. of the Medical Mission Sisters led the week-long seminar, held in the historic Catholic cathedral. Dr Klaus is also the executive director of the Natural Family Planning Center of Washington, D.C.

The "STAR" in the program's name is an acronym standing for "Sexuality Training in the Context of Adult Responsibility". The program is aimed at teenagers from the ages of 13 to 18. Ideally it is offered to 14-15 year old students throughout the course of one school year. (Official website: <http://www.teenstar-international.org/>)

The program is based completely on the moral and doctrinal teachings of the Catholic Church and uses the information known as the Billings Method of Natural Family Planning to teach young people the importance of their developing sexual maturity and the need to become responsible adults according to the will of God.

According to published government statistics of other sex education programs and careful analysis of pre-program and post-program questionnaires given to all teenage participants since it was founded in 1985, Teen STAR is the only sex education program which can be clearly shown to limit sexual activity before marriage. In the United States the most



Sister Hanna Klaus, originator of TeenStar
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St Joseph's Parish is Official

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

On February 2, 2003, the Feast of the Presentation, Bishop Jerzy Mazur officially issued the decree establishing St Joseph's Parish in the Second River area of Vladivostok. On March 16 Fr Daniel Maurer had the honor to bless the renovated apartment where the parish chapel is located. There is of course no church building at the present time. Fr Myron Effing is the pastor, but he was in America at the time, at St Joseph's sister parish of St Joseph in Modesto, California. He also had a chance to visit St Joseph's parish in Salem, Oregon which has also been supportive of our efforts for many years. St Joseph's in Modesto has provided nearly half the funding for the new parish apartment. The rest of the cost is currently a mortgage.



St Joseph put in a "personal appearance" at the blessing.

Julia who lives in the apartment as guard did the first reading.



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Christina, our young translator and pro-life worker helps Sr Hanna with the lessons.

The lessons took place in the Vladivostok cathedral.



common time of the onset of premarital sexual activity is the summer after a teenager turns 14. However, those 14-year-olds who have become sexually active before participating in the Teen STAR curriculum tend to stop their pre-marital sexual activity; and those teenagers who have not yet become sexually active before they participate in Teen STAR, tend to postpone the onset of their sexual activity until after marriage or until reaching a significantly older age.

This means that because of Teen STAR there are more young people learning how to respect their bodies and use them according to God's plan. It also means that there are greatly reduced rates of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases among teenagers who have participated in Teen STAR. They will live healthier and longer lives and will understand the joy of fidelity to their spouse in marriage. Their quality of life will be greatly increased in uncountable ways, physically, emotionally, spiritually, socially and intellectually.

A prerequisite part of any Teen STAR program is a series of separate parent meetings and student meetings and personal interviews with each student. It is a requirement of the program that no student can participate without his own consent nor without the consent of his parents or legal guardian. Training seminar participants are taught how to conduct these meetings and personal interviews with students and parents.

The program was founded in the United States 18 years ago after a 5-year process of a needs assessment, program analysis and professional curriculum development. Since then it has been implemented in over 30 different countries with great success in highly industrial countries in the west and in developing countries in the east and in the southern hemisphere.

31 people from various cities and towns of Primorsky Krai attended the teacher training seminar. Many of the participants are affiliated with one or more of the Crisis Pregnancy Centers that our parish chapters of CARITAS have founded and sponsor since the first one opened in Vladivostok in 1998. Among the participants were junior high and high school teachers, social workers, youth camp staffers and a gynecologist. The majority of participants were Catholics, but there were also representatives from protestant confessions.



Participants were from a variety of religious backgrounds.

Of the 31 participants, 26 completely the post-seminar examinations successfully and received official teacher training certificates which authorize them to teach the program for one year. During the course of the first year, Christina Pavlova, our Vladivostok parishioner who is the Primorski Krai coordinator of the program, will put together regional meetings and a central follow-up seminar, the purpose of which will be to encourage the teachers and to help them with any questions about their understanding of the program's contents and method and with any difficulties that might arise in the schools or institutions in which they are offering the Teen STAR program.



Group photo to complete the conference.

Since the beginning of the training seminar the Teen STAR program information has caused a strong and overwhelmingly positive reaction on the part of the participants and others who did not attend the seminar but who have come to learn about the program from those were lucky enough to be there. Participants have told this author all of the following comments:

"This material is the most important material that we can pass on to our young people."
 "Where was access to this knowledge when I was 20 (or 10 or 30) years younger?!"
 "This will make an immense and positive difference in how our young people will understand the gift of their sexuality and how to use it wisely to live happy and healthy lives."
 "The is the best seminar that I have ever attended."

Not only the program, but also the presenter, Sister Hanna, made a huge and positive impact on the participants. Most people thought she was at least 20 years younger than she turned out to be. Everyone commented on her kindness and serenity, on the depth of her scientific and spiritual knowledge, and on her ability to teach such important material clearly to people, some of whom had no previous scientific background for it.

Now, if local coordinator Christina can succeed in keeping up the interest of the accredited teachers so that they can faithfully and clearly pass on the information and values of Teen STAR, it is certain that this program will flourish, becoming a great source of healing and strength for hundreds or even thousands of people who may not have any other chance to learn the whole truth of sexual morality and to receive the information that can help them to live healthy, wholesome and chaste lives in whatever vocation the Lord may call them to as adults.

**Remember
 “Mary Mother of God Mission Society”
 in your will.**

How to Communicate with Us

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Please do **not** send any **donations** of any kind directly to Russia. For donation information, see below.

Letters without donations can be sent to:
 Most Holy Mother of God Catholic Parish
 Volodarskovo 22
 690001 Vladivostok RUSSIA

Office in America:

Phone and FAX: (651)227-0208 and (651)690-5139
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Internet: English language: <http://www.vladmission.org>

Donations of money and **letters** should be sent to:
 Mary Mother of God Mission Society
 1854 Jefferson Ave
 St Paul MN 55105-1662

Or you can donate from your credit card through our web site. Your donations are tax-deductible. You will receive any required receipt for IRS tax purposes by return mail.

Donations in kind. If you have items that you think we can use, please contact Mrs Sandra Sonnen at the Mission Office in St Paul giving a complete list of items.

Vladivostok Sunrise Edited and Produced in Russia by V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D. Printed by the Sisters of St Peter Claver, St Paul, Minnesota. Assembled for mailing by Nativity Parish, St Paul, Minnesota. Mailed by Mary Mother of God Mission Society, St Paul, Minnesota. Authors are noted if other than the editor. A full color version of the *Sunrise* is available at <http://www.vladmission.org>

News Notes continued from Page 7.

City social service agency to attend on Sundays in order to see how the children are in need. We are hoping to start a Scout trip among these children who so lack for parental attention and normal educational experiences in life. Their families live in one-room apartments, so they feel they are underfoot and spend most of their time on the streets. After the feed, the parish shows the children's comic series "Superbook" which is a retelling of Bible stories for children. The television and video machine were provided by a grant from Our Sunday Visitor.



The banner from St Joseph's in Modesto, California adorns the back wall of the chapel.

Parish organist Olga Zotova and soloist Roma Komov added a meditation to mass.



After the Mass of Blessing parishioners had tea.

Suddenly the neighboring apartment became available, too. So we quickly purchased it in order to expand the space for St Joseph's. The new area gives a kitchen and two meeting rooms. Already AA and the Scouts are using it. Parish teas can be held there also. The Koch Foundation provided half the funds for the new space, the rest being also a mortgage.

We are hoping to unite the two apartments with a new common entrance. There are no funds for this at the present time. A Women's Support Center with a hotline to the whole city continues to operate at St Joseph's.

Group picture after mass. Fr Valerie, who was in charge of transforming the apartment into a chapel is left of Fr Daniel.



Our Benefactors...

St Joseph's Parish in Modesto, California

Just some pictures to show St Joseph's sister parish and their work on behalf of their Russian parish.



Fr Joseph Illo, r, is pastor. We are expecting him and some California parishioners to visit Vladivostok this summer.

You have to be a professional when you work for the mission!

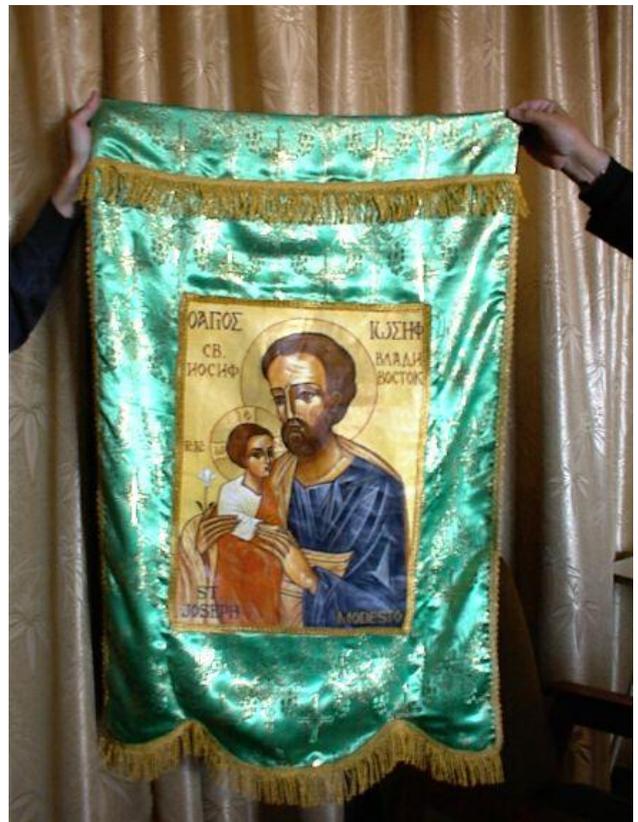


Parish hall ready for a charity dinner.



Modesto parish Mission Committee met with Fr Myron in 2002.

Slave labor for a good cause.



The Sister Parish banner from Russia hangs in the entry of the church.

News Notes

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

- Father Valerie, the Orthodox priest who has been helping me with construction at St Joseph's Parish in Second River, called me to say that he has some ideas about how we can start the Boy Scouts here. We really need to work with the boys, so many of whom do not have fathers or older brothers at home, and who never meet a man teacher in school because there are almost no men teachers in schools. While I was in Evansville, Indiana, I visited with the Buffalo Trace Council of the Boy Scouts, and they also gave me many good ideas of how to start. I was staying at Sacred Heart Parish in Evansville, and the Scouts there just set up their Christmas tree sales. I watched all the goings on which also gave me ideas for Russia. Before the Russian Revolution we had the Sea Scouts in our parish here, so beginning the Scouts will still be part of the restoration of what was, rather than the beginning of something new. My problem is that I have never been a scout myself, so I'm not sure how to proceed.

- We are planning our summer activities, and perhaps some of our benefactors would like to join us for these events:

1. Pilgrimage on Foot from Nativity Parish in Ussurisk to Annunciation Parish in Arsenyev June 27-July 6.
2. Pilgrimage by Bicycle from Slivovsky House in Sod-Gorod (Vladivostok) to Visitation Parish in Lesozovodsk July 10-18.
3. Annual Far Eastern Catholic Youth Conference at Slivovsky House in Sod-Gorod (suburb of Vladivostok) July 20-26.
4. Children's Camp at Slivovsky House in Sod-Gorod including the Feast of the Assumption August 7 – 16.

You can get more details by contacting our Stateside office. See "How to Communicate With Us", page 3.

- On February 8 Alcoholics Anonymous celebrated ten years in Vladivostok. The event included an open meeting, and then a party here in our church social hall. Gradually the movement is gaining members and spreading to other cities of our state. We have tried to help lay the groundwork with our more than 90 lectures in the various schools of our state about "The Theory of Alcoholism", in which, maybe for the first time, Russian students hear that alcoholism is a disease that has symptoms, early warning signs, and methods of treatment, among which the most successful is AA. We are still helping AA to battle to receive a building to be used as a 12-step rehabilitation center on Russian Island. So far the building is still empty and available, but the government is out to lunch.

- The date sort of went unnoticed, but the last issue of the *Sunrise* was Number 50! Looking back I'd like to say thank you to those brave volunteers who have made it possible, from

Julie and Rob Flynn in Washington State who singlehandedly printed and mailed earlier additions, to the great group of volunteers at Nativity Parish in St Paul, Minnesota, who continue to send you the *Sunrise* today. Thanks also to the authors, especially Fr Dan who does a wonderful job of writing about our lives here in Russia. Sometimes people think that the *Sunrise* looks old-fashioned, that the print is too small, that we could be more "snazzy", but I keep thinking that our benefactors need information and pictures most of all. Too bad that the photos still have to be B&W, but you can view the *Sunrise* in full color on the internet: www.vladmission.org

Nativity parishioners who assemble this newsletter. It takes two full days every other month. Thanks, volunteers!



- On Thursday, March 22, we had a very nice meeting with Catholics United for the Faith of Tucson, Arizona. We were able to view the video and report on the progress of the translation of the "Faith and Life" Series of catechisms from Ignatius Press which was originally produced by CUF. We also had a meeting with our old friends of CUF-Phoenix, but I forgot to take a picture!

Tucson CUF with Fr Elmer Torborg, 4th from right who represents our mission in Arizona.



- Gradually the last of the stained glass windows from our "Windows Project" are being completed. Here is the plan for the Crucifixion Window in the small chapel.



- In Russia, shocking percentages dealing with abortion and birthrate: According to Vladimir Kulakov, head of the Scientific Center for Ob and Gyn, the nation's leading gynecologist, the story on pregnancy outcome at this time is as follows: 10% are lost in miscarriage, 30% go to term and deliver a child, and 60% are killed by abortion. (<http://www.lifeissues.net>, Number 145)

- We were surprised on Holy Thursday by the announcement in Rome that the Holy Father decided to give the Diocese of St Joseph in Irkutsk a new bishop: Bishop Cyril Klimovich, who replaces Bishop Jerzy Mazur as our bishop. Bishop Cyril was formerly the assistant bishop to Cardinal Swiontek in Minsk-Mohilev, Belarus. We do not know when the new bishop will formally take his cathedra.



Our new bishop Cyril Klimovich

- At last and after a long effort our archivist Miroslava Igorevna Efimova has completed her booklet about Bishop Slivovsky. The first 500 copies will roll off the presses during the first week of May. We are hoping we can do a translation

and make it available in English, too. Congratulations, Miroslava! I promised her a bottle of champagne when I have the first copy in my hands!

- Congratulations to the Parish of the Nativity in Ussurisk on the blessing of their new parish center including a new chapel. The blessing was held on April 27, Fr Myron as Dean of the Vladivostok Deanery officiated. Fr Christian Lobanovsky, O.F.M. who is pastor was pleased to see about 150 people who attended the blessing, including many of his Franciscan brothers from Korea and Siberia. Also in attendance was the provincial superior of the Sisters of St Paul of Chartres, Sister Sophia from Seoul, as well as a representative of the City administration. After the mass there was a picnic for all. The new chapel is on the North end of the city where there will be room for future expansion, including, some day, a real church.



Nativity Parish's new building in Ussurisk.

Pastor Fr Lobanovsky in the parish chapel.



- Parishioners in Visitation Parish in Lesozovodsk have begun to feed children from the surrounding apartment buildings every Sunday after mass. About 30 hungry children come for a dinner of spicy noodles, a sweet roll, a piece of fruit, and a cup of tea. Naturally we'd like to expand the menu, but we don't have a license to cook. All the children are undernourished and many suffer from dental problems, and from infections. Their parents are often alcoholics, or simply don't have money to feed their children. We've invited the

[New Notes continue on Page 3.]

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From the development desk...

Dear Friends of the Vladivostok Mission,

- We have 59 parishes where a mission representative will speak this coming summer and early fall. A number of the parishes have come as a result of parishioners mentioning our mission to their pastors. We have a letter on file each year in June at the mission office in each diocese requesting missionary speaking dates. The NCCB has asked parishes to host a missionary once a year. We have had great response and support. Please see our web site for places and dates.
- Fr Myron and/or Fr Dan will be in the States from August through November. If you would like one of the priests to meet your pastor, let our office know and we will work a visit in. Both priests will be crisscrossing the US and Fr Myron will be in Hawaii. Midweeks are often empty for the priests and they welcome an opportunity to visit benefactors and possible sources of future help.
- We plan to be at Catholic conferences this summer. Please let us know if there is one in your area.
- Thank you all who responded with goods for the container that is currently being shipped to Vladivostok. There were so

many items sent and my porch was emptied 4 or 5 times by volunteers, but I am unable to thank you all personally.

- If your parish might wish to hold a clothing drive for the mission please contact me at the office.
- Another possibility is to fill a 40 foot container for our Bishop Slivosky Center being readied on the outskirts of Vladivostok. We are in need of bedding, mattresses, linens, and outfitting a restaurant style kitchen to cook for 200 kids and adults at functions that will be held at Sod Gorad, the former Communist Pioneer camp that is now owned by the Russian Mary Mother of God Mission Society! It is such a huge building I call it the "Castle".

God love you and your family,

Sandra Sonnen
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