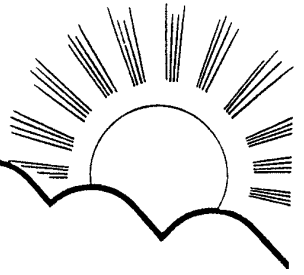


Vladivostok Sunrise

Mary Mother of God Mission Society Vladivostok Russia St Paul

Issue Number Fifty Two July 1, 2006



Bishop Cyril Klimovich, D.D.

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

We have a new bishop, Bishop Cyril Klimovich, who was appointed by Pope John Paul II to take the place of Bishop Jersy Mazur who was refused a visa to return to his diocese by the Russian government. As Dean, I represented our deanery for the investiture ceremonies in Irkutsk on June 15, and, as the oldest dean, received the honor to greet the bishop in the name of all the priests of the diocese. This is what I said:

Dear Bishop Cyril, I want to greet you in the name of all the priests of the Diocese of St Joseph in Irkutsk, a diocese which includes not only Eastern Siberia, but vast regions of the Far East and of the South. We wish you good health and pray for your strength to minister to such a large diocese, which will entail many travels and inconveniences. God has called us priests to work here with you, giving us a noble calling to work in a place whose recent history is atheism, but where religion has long and deep roots, and where there is more tolerance between nationalities and religions who have all suffered together for their faiths. Here we know that we, and especially you, our bishop, are not at the summit of power and worldly

influence, but rather we are at the service of our people and the Gospel, as our Lord Jesus Christ has taught us, especially when he washed the feet of his disciples to give them an example that we are to follow. Love and service are the foundations of our lives. We most heartily wish for you, our bishop, love and respect from your priests and your people because you, too, are here to serve, and not to be served. Our effort and our hope is to offer you every respect and trust as you begin your service, knowing that we have dedicated our obedience to you. This people now looks to you for the preaching of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ in its fullness so that your Church of St Joseph can be a living witness to Christ in this age so as to bring to the Lord much fruit at harvest time. We look forward with hope and trust that the Lord has given us a good bishop whom we will love and respect.

Bishop Cyril (in Russia first names are used for all deacons, priests, and bishops) is a very energetic man, not very tall. He was born in Kazakhstan in central Asia, but is a citizen of Belarus, so he doesn't need a visa to enter Russia. He was served several years as assistant bishop to the Cardinal in Minsk. He is a warmhearted "people's bishop", so I'm sure he will be popular here.

We had a good private conversation in which I explained our plans for Vladivostok and the Far Eastern region of Russia. He was delighted to hear about our plans to begin the new religious communities. And he was especially happy to hear about our success with vocations over these twelve years (currently eight women in formation, two men in the seminary, and one man ordained.)

The highlight of my trip to Irkutsk for the installation was our deans' meeting with the new bishop--The diocese is divided into five deaneries. The bishop had never met us before, and was anxious to hear a summary about our regions of the

diocese about which he also knew very little—How many Catholics? How many parishes? How many buildings? What kind of people? How many vocations? What kind of problems?

It was really a wonderful review of all that the Church has been doing in our end of Russia during these last twelve years, from Vladivostok to Magadan to Norilsk to Krasnoyarsk!--The largest diocese in the world, with great extremes of weather and climate, many varieties of nations from those who have been Catholics for a thousand years to those who still haven't heard the Gospel even for the first time! All the evangelical and catechetical efforts, all the acts of charity and social causes, all the attempts at education and formation—it really was a great vista! And you, our benefactors, and I have been part of it!

The problems always seem insurmountable, but then they always do. The bishop asked each of us to list the cities that still need priests in each of our deaneries!--Where will we ever get so many? Please join us in prayer! With God all things are possible.

News Notes

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

- Thanks to Linda Souers of Phoenix, Arizona, our CARITAS volunteers who work in hospitals now have spiffy new CARITAS symbols to sew on their white frocks. Linda has a computerized sewing machine. The symbols have to be scanned into the computer and then the sewing machine does a lot of the work of embroidering the patches. Thanks, Linda!



The patches are sewn on one piece of cloth, and then they are separated for attachment to clothing.

- Congratulations to our benefactor Susan Gray on the publication of her new book, ***How to Find and Win Federal Grants: The Complete Guide for Nonprofit Organizations***. “This is the book you’ve been looking for. Over 200 full-size pages long and written in plain, user-friendly English, it not only assists you in your search for grants, but also helps you develop projects and proposals worthy of federal funding.” You can check <http://www.federalgrantguide.com> for more details. Congratulations, Susan!

- Bill Tierney who works as a custodian at Assumption Church in St Paul MN has a hobby and apostolate of finding statues at antique stores and buying them, refinishing and refurbishing them. He made a banner of the Vladivostok icon of the Most Holy Mother of God in oils and sewed it himself. He is a master at copying icons. These banners with icons are used in Russia for

processions, especially processions with the Blessed Sacrament.



Some refurbished statues that Bill Tierney donated to our mission. The master at work.



- Our parishes are making progress. Fr Dan took my place in Lesozovodsk in May, and he came back impressed with how happy the parishioners were on their feastday of the Visitation. There were many children at mass, he says. Part of the reason is that the parish has begun a program for undernourished kids. It doesn’t cost a lot, but is a big help when you are 10 years old and growing! I liked the parishioners’ initiative. They feed the kids every Sunday afternoon. Usually it is an apple, some ramen, bread, a sweet roll, and a piece of candy. I asked them to add some canned fish or meat to the menu. We can’t serve a regular hot meal because we don’t have a license for the kitchen to serve the public. Perhaps some of the kids will be coming to our summer camp in Sod-Gorod this summer. We are hoping to begin a Scout troop soon in Lesozovodsk, too.
- May 19 was a red-letter day for Miroslava Igorevna and our parish of the Most Holy Mother of God! It was the day that the printers brought the book she has long been working on about the life of our pre-Revolutionary Bishop Karl Slivovsky.

Congratulations, Miroslava on a well-researched and easy to read story of one of our saints.



Miroslava with her book, "Karl Slivovsky, Bishop of Vladivostok".

- On May 8, 2003, Father Anthony Badura, who was the Administrator of the Diocese of St Joseph in Irkutsk during the vacancy of the Episcopal seat, assigned a new priest to Vladivostok. Father Sebastian De Silva was assigned as a second assistant to Fr Myron, the first being Fr Daniel. After 12 years of hardly seeing any other priests, our parishioners will now have the services of Fr Sebastian. Father is on loan to our diocese from the Diocese of Meerit in India. He has been in Russia for a year learning the Russian language. He has served in Chita and Petropovlovsk Kamchatski before coming to Vladivostok. Welcome, Fr Sebastian!

Fr Sebastian De Silva still studies Russian every day. He lives in the second belltower, opposite Fr Daniel.



- In April John Paul Sonnen represented our community of the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord at the conference of Institute for Religious Life in Chicago. A lot of interest was expressed in

our mission. He said, "The conference was great. It was great to get the word out; people were eager to hear about the work. The first questions asked were about the progress of native clergy there." Sister Julia Kabusta represented the new community of Sisters in Jesus the Lord at the conference, too.



Our table at the Chicago conference. Sister Julia at the Sisters' table.



- On the Feast of Pentecost I had the Sunday Mass at St Joseph's parish in Second River. It was obvious that the parish is coming together. The kids sang two solos during mass. At tea after mass, the kids put on a skit, and there were games for all. John Paul Sonnen from St Paul was just here to visit and brought all kinds of gifts for St Joseph's, including religious good, two flags for the new Scout troop, a jar of crunchy peanut butter (which was a first for many parishioners), and a big set of coffee mugs for tea. His visit will be long remembered. We are looking forward to the visit of parishioners from our sister parish in California which is promised for October. We are hoping they will help work on the entrance of the parish's apartment, as well as participate with the Scouts and help with charitable projects.

- Poor Nakhodka is still without a building. We've been looking at what is available to buy, but so far nothing reasonable has turned up. I say "poor" because they only get mass once a month, and they don't have a church. Now they are talking about buying land (which is now possible in Russian cities) and building a church. They deserve it—they have suffered the longest without a priest and without a building. Funding??

- Father Daniel is now getting some relief from his work. He has hired a full-time person to help him in his parish in Romanovka, especially because it is time seriously to begin the building program for the new church. His new helper is Igor Rodzyuk who just finished the catechetical course in Gaming, Austria, offered by the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio. It is a big breakthrough for the Romanovka Parish of the Holy Trinity.



- "And the Winners are... ..Mark Manzo, Xenia, OH, Joan Maurer, McClean, VA, and Dean and Dar McClurg, Tipp City, OH. Congratulations to all of you for your generous support of the Mary Mother of God Mission Society! I am happy to say that TOGETHER we raised \$10,130 to support the pro-life pregnancy crisis centers in Vladivostok, Russia." With those words Dee Baltes announced the winners of her local contest to raise money for pro-life work in Russia. The prize? A week at her Gulf of Mexico apartment in Florida next winter! "It was YOUR generosity that made the first center possible and now, because of YOUR continuing generosity, the pro-life mission will continue! May God bless you abundantly!" said Dee in her "thank you" letter. There were 452 entries and 3 happy winners. Thanks, Dee, for your continued support and determined interest.



The view of the beach from Dee's apartment.

- On the sad side of things, we will have to put off finishing the repairs on the facade of the building, even though the scaffolds are in place, and put off working on our rectory until next summer. The first reason is lack of funds at the present time, due to decreased donations, which seems to be the result of the Church scandals in America, the poor showing of the economy, and the war in Iraq. The second reason is the lack of workers. Most Chinese workers have not returned to Russia this summer due to changes in the visa process, and due to SARS. The result is that a lot of work is

not getting done this year. Many vegetable farms and other construction projects in the city are also hurting. Labor is scarce although there are many unemployed! The reason is the high level of alcoholism—many unemployed people who simply can't or won't hold jobs. They are too accustomed to the old socialist society where people got paid whether they worked or not. We can't afford to pay people for not working! Naturally we hope there will be a way out of our situation, but we have to wait for God.

- The Youth Group of the Most Holy Mother of God Parish has been meeting monthly under the guidance of Sister Alicia. During Lent there was a weekly meeting of repentance and preparation for Easter. It is the Youth Group which has produced several plays. Now they will take the summer off except for the Far Eastern Catholic Youth Conference which is scheduled for July.



Catholic Youth Group

How to Communicate with Us Office in Russia:

Phone: (011-7)-4232-26-96-14

FAX: (011-7)-4232-26-96-16

E-mail: myron@catholic.vladivostok.ru

daniel@catholic.vladivostok.ru

CARITAS@mail.primorye.ru

Internet: Russian language:

<http://www.catholic.vladivostok.ru>

Office in America:

Phone and FAX: (651)227-0208 and (651)690-5139

E-mail: usoffice@vladmission.org

Internet: English language:

<http://www.vladmission.org>

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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.

Our Historical Parishioners:

Sygismund Berzhinsky

*By Miroslava Igorevna Efimova,
Parish Archivist*

Sygismund Vladislavovich Berzhinsky was born of a peasant family on April 9, 1892 in the village of Kromkov Tulovitsky, a little way from Suhachyevsky in Warsaw County, Poland. He had a brother Cazimir and a sister Felixa. When his father, Vladislav Berzhinsky died, his mother married Adam Zalepsky, and soon Sygismund had four more sisters, Vladislava, Stanislava, Anna, and Adelia. Little Sygismund graduated from the little parish school and dreamed to continue his studies, but his many siblings meant that there weren't funds for that, and so he simply began to work with his stepfather.

This part of Poland was included in the Russian Empire at the time, so in 1913 at 21 years of age Sygismund was drafted into the Czar's army and he was sent to the Russian Far East. At first he served in the 2nd Fort Regiment on Russian Island opposite Vladivostok, and then he was assigned to the construction company on the mainland.

Sygismund decided to follow his dream of getting a high school education, so late at night and sometimes all night he concentrated on the textbooks of his various high school courses. His friend Gorobetz and his teacher, retired Sergeant K. Malinovsky helped him. In three years Sygismund finished a four-year technical course, took his exams and received his diploma. That was immediately reflected in his army service, because he soon was given the job of clerk which, at the time, was a very respected position.

When Poland was given its independence in 1917 a Polish Committee was organized in Vladivostok, the president of which was a Mr Poplavsky. Later the Committee was made into a Polish consulate, and all the Poles were invited to receive Polish citizenship. Sygismund decided to proceed, and he received Polish passport 54, so he was now living in Vladivostok as a citizen of the Polish Republic. But in 1927 for some reason unknown to us Sygismund turned in his Polish passport and took Soviet citizenship.

When he left the army in 1918, Sygismund worked in various companies as a manager. In two years he married a charming 16-year-old Polish

girl, Sophia Duchnick. She was from a poor family from Alexandrovsk on Sakhalin Island in which there were nine children. When her father, Carl Duchnick died, the family moved to Vladivostok to their grandfather's where her mother married a second time. Because of the family financial situation, they sent Sophia to live with the family of Dorothy-Anna Grochovsky whose husband was a sailor so that most of the time he was at sea. They sent Sophia to study at the Most Holy Mother of God school, and when it was closed, she went to the public school. Sophia recalls that the family situation was very difficult. There was a lack of clothing, shoes, and simple foods, but her family lived peacefully together. Sophia liked music, and began to play the violin and to sing. She joined the choir at church which the family regularly attended. It was she who saved the wonderful photograph which showed Bishop Slivovsky with a group of First Communion children. The picture shows the large marble crucifix which stood over the high altar. Behind the bishop and to the right, in a white dress with a white veil, is standing our slightly sad Sophia, Sygismund's future wife. That photograph was the final evidence that allowed the return of the crucifix to the church in 1996. Sophia married early, maybe not fully mature, but in the Berzhinsky home there was happy laughter and music. Sophia played the violin, Sygismund played the cello, and everybody sang. Never mind the poverty, the Berzhinsky family lived in love. They had four children, Bronislav in 1927, Ghennady in 1930, Adelle in 1932, and Stanislava in 1937. They lived on Pichtovoy Street in a private home surrounded by a garden and orchard which gave enough food to supply the family for the whole year.



Sygismund had to work hard, and needed to find additional odd jobs. By day he worked as a manager and at night he worked in a band that played for dances and in clubs.

The Berzhinsky Family

During the 1920's Vladivostok was overrun by rapidly inflating paper currencies, so

people tried to save valuables and silver money, although it was forbidden by law. Silver Mexican dollars were currency in nearby Manchuria. In 1932 as Stalin's repression was reaching fever pitch, Sygismund was accused of dealing in silver money and was arrested. Considering Sygismund's confession, his family obligations, and the fact that he was suffering from tuberculosis, his case was dismissed.

Sophia and Sygismund, being enthusiastic Catholics, always went to mass and already had two of their children baptized when the atheist forces in Vladivostok began to force their way upon believers. Father Gregory Yerkevich was arrested and Bishop Slivovsky was exiled from the city to the wooded settlement of Sedanko. A group of committed lay parishioners faithfully continued to go to church where they said prayers and prayed the rosary. Soon the city authorities demanded of the Catholics that they pay taxes for using the church building, a tax which was so high that the poor parishioners could not pay it. Thus they were deprived of their church which was built exclusively on the funds of the Catholic Church and on donations of parishioners. According to the official government documents, the Catholics simply "abandoned" their church.

Of course the Catholics could not live without the faith, so when the church was taken away they occasionally gathered in the larger homes of parishioners, for prayers, but that didn't go unnoticed by the authorities. On September 2, 1937, Sygismund Berzhinsky and other parishioners were arrested and accused of forming a counterrevolutionary underground Polish religious organization. The case was handled quickly and the sentence was cruel: death by gunshot. The sentence was carried out on February 3, 1937 at 6 pm. Sygismund was 45 years old. He is one of the martyrs of our parish.

Many years passed before these innocent executed people's cases were reopened and their sentences reversed. In 1958-9, at their families' request, the government opened the cases and found that "this group of people were not an organized group, but simply acquaintances who met together for prayer in the Polish church." There was no evidence in

the file to show that Father George Yerkevich founded a counterrevolutionary nationalist organization. On July 30, 1959, by order of the Military Court, their case was closed for lack of evidence of a crime.

So Sygismund Berzhinsky and our other Catholics were "rehabilitated." Today, outside the city in the woods there stands a gravestone and cross commemorating the burial of these innocent victims. Their actual burial site is unknown. The Russian organization "Memorial" placed the cross so that their children and grandchildren would have a place to commemorate their deceased. The Orthodox and Catholic priests occasionally have services there. Sophia Michaelovna Berzhinsky is our parishioner today—94 years old.



Sophia Michaelovna Berzhinsky as she appeared on her First Holy Communion picture taken with Bishop Slivovsky—the "Miracle Picture" that she saved all through the dangerous times of the Communist repression of religion.

Mission Speaking Dates for 2003...

Where you and your friends can hear about our mission.

<u>Dates</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Parish</u>
Jn 28-29	KY	Monticello	St. Peter
28-29	RI	Warren	St. Alexander
28-29	WI	LaCrosse	Roncalli Newman
July 5-6	MN	Warroad	St. Mary and
others			
12-13	KY	Melbourne	St. Philip

12-13 Prov	PA	King of Prussia	Mother of Div	20-21	MI	Sandusky	St. Joseph
19-20	IL	Effingham	Sacred Heart	20-21	NE	Boys Town	Imm Conception
19-20 Paul	IN	Indianapolis	Sts. Peter and	27-28	CO	Pagosa Springs	Imm Heart of
19-20 others	MN	Greenbush	Bl Sac and	Oct 4-5	CO	Durango	Sacred Heart
19-20	WI	Trempealeau	St.	4-5	IN	Munster	St. Thomas More
Bartholomew				11-12	CO	Cortez/etc	St. Marg Mary/etc
26-27	IN	Valparaiso	St. Eliz Ann	11-12	VA	Annandale	St. Michael
Seton				11-12	WI	Fountain City	Imm Conception
26-27	KY	Somerset	St. Mildred	25-26	IN	Garrett	St. Joseph
26-27	MI	Bay City	St. Maria	Nov 1-2	KY	Nicholasville	St. Luke
Goretti				8-9	FL	N. Palm Beach	St. Paul of Cross
26-27	MI	Bay City	Visitation				
26-27	PA	Riegelsville	St. Lawrence				

(Continued from Page 8...)

Aug 2-3 Paul	IN	Shelbyville	St. Vincent de
2-3 IC	OH	Dayton	Our Lady of the
2-3 Ros	MN	Hallock/Lanc'ter	St. Patrick/H
9-10 Joseph	IN	Indianapolis	St. Ann/St.
9-10	OH	Kettering	St. Charles Bor
16-17	NE	Omaha	St. Rose
16-17	NY	Trumansburg	St. James
16-17 Sea	SC	Hilton Head	St. Francis by
23-24	IN	Auburn	Imm Conc
23-24	MI	DeWitt	St. Jude
23-24 others	NE	Walthill/Win	St. Joseph &
23-24	NY	Penfield	St. Joseph
30-31 Joseph	NE	Aurora/Giltner	St. Mary/St.
30-31	OR	Milwaukie	Christ the King
Sep 6-7 Nativity	CA	Menlo Park	Church of
6-7 & others	MN	Roseau/Ba/Be	Sac Heart
6-7 & others	NE	McCook	St. Patrick
13-14 Guadal	CA	Santa Paula	O Lady of
13-14 (Span)	FL	Tampa	St. Joseph
13-14	NE	Hastings	St. Michael

- The mission needs retired priests to travel in the summer to parishes around the country where we have been given mission speaking assignments. Fr Elmer Torborg from St Cloud MN and Mesa AZ travels 5 months a year for us and does a wonderful job. Fr Dan and Fr Myron each are coming 2 full months to help fill the assignments, which means they aren't available for work in Russia during those months. If we had more priests who might do 2 or 3 a year it would help so much. Lay people are also needed. If you have a speaking ability and might have 2 weekends a year it would help us. We have 20 laymen, a deacon, a sister and several other women who help us, but many travel great distances on a week end. We provide transportation costs. Not only is there a second collection taken which is the second most income the mission receives, the newsletter donations being the first, but the exposure to speak about the mission, prayer support, possible vocations, and volunteers is a great opportunity.

- We need a person to work at home on our web site. We have installed Microsoft FRONTPAGE PROGRAM. See our website, we have a helper who will be with us only a few months more to help.

- Fr Myron wants to start a St Vincent de Paul clothing collection program. A coordinator is needed to facilitate parishes to hold a drive and fill a container. No experience needed. I have done four so far and have learned much.

- Two volunteers are needed to stay in Vladivostok for an extended period of time to help the Russian parishioners start the stores in the St Vincent de Paul method. Housing in the parish apartment will be provided.

- Volunteers living near NAEIR headquarters in Galesburg IL., the tri-cities of Moline, Rock Island, Davenport, IA., Burlington, IA., or Peoria, IL are needed to visit the warehouse two or three times a year to gather free construction materials and a variety of medical and other needed items for shipping to Vladivostok.

- Ellen Grybeck from Bellingham WA has offered to help me with tours and mission teams. She has recently returned from Vladivostok.

- We have 7 travelers going to Vladivostok this summer. Watch for updates on our web site as they return with their pictures and stories.

- A special thank you to St Agnes Parish in St Paul, Minnesota who have given us free office space in their convent the last two years. It is a wonderful place to be. This huge building has many requests for usage, but they have been generous to our mission.

- Our friends Dee Baltes and George Riess are scheduling many events in their Cincinnati-Dayton-Kettering area of Ohio. Both have visited our mission several times.

- Coronation Parish in Grandview, MO wants to sell a framed picture of our Coronation window in their parish, the window which their parish purchased for us. Two women from the parish are traveling three hours by car to tend the mission table at the Family Resource Conference in Wichita this month.

- St Philip Benizi Parish in Oregon City, OR recently asked Sr Julia to fly from St Paul to speak at all their weekend Masses to tell about her trip to their sister parish of the Holy Trinity in Romanovka, Russia.

- Sr Julia and Kelly Whittier attended a

conference in Atlanta, GA for the mission and the new association of women. There were 20,000 attendees!

- Rose Bucher is attending a home schooling conference in Seattle for us. She is also hosting a woman parishioner from Romanovka with her sick baby. Healing the Children of Portland are diagnosing and treating the baby.

- Joe Shorba is putting on a week of meetings for Fr Myron when he visits Hawaii in November for fundraising. So are three helpers in Portland, Salem and Eugene OR for Fr Dan's visit in Aug-Sept. A parish in Salem is hosting a evening mission with Fr Dan.

- A group of travelers from St Joseph's parish in Modesto, CA is visiting Vladivostok in October. They are the sister parish to the new St Joseph's Parish in Second River area of Vladivostok. This parish is also hosting Fr Dan in September with a special fund raising dinner.

- I will be in Washington DC- Annandale area from Aug 1-8. I hope to see the local helpers there.

- Our son, John Paul, just returned from 2 weeks in Vladivostok. As usual, a traveler is in between there and here for several weeks when they return and John is no exception. No one comes home quite the same. I hope we can offer all of you an opportunity to visit Russia. Please see our updated tours and mission teams heading on the web site.

- On page 6 are the dates and places where Fr Myron, Fr Dan and speakers are going for the mission during 2003. You are invited to come.

God love you all,
Sandra and David Sonnen
Mission Desk
651-227-0208
email: usoffice@vladmission.org
www.vladmission.org

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From the development desk...

Dear Friends of the Vladivostok Mission,

- When Fr Myron asked Dave and I to help him we never expected the great things that we have witnessed in the nearly four years we have been at the mission desk. The wonders of heavenly intervention leading, directing and caring for the priests, parishioners and helpers in the world. We humbly thank Our Lord for the opportunity to assist these two American priests in Russia. On a Sunday evening recently I was at the MSP airport to pick up Fr Torborg and I saw another of our speakers, layman Ray Metzger coming in from his mission assignment running to catch a shuttle to his home in Rochester MN! I was taken aback by the sense of the many helpers this mission has around the country.

- I am in need of a few more helpers, some might work in their homes.

- A benefactor has urged us to start a advertising on line, where companies would donate a penny for every hit they received on a link to our site. I need someone to call or write to every business on our newsletter list offering this kind of advertising. If our supporters went into their advertising link, the company would generate a penny for the mission for every hit they counted. Its called "giveaminute.org" Its generated by Catholic

online. One mission, the Tarahumara children's hospital receives \$6000 a month from their hits!

- I need someone to help generate 3 different size copies of the icon of Our Lady of Vladivostok, get them matted and framed and be ready to fill orders and mail. We will sell them on our internet site.

- We have a T-shirt ready to be printed with the icon on it. We have sold 1500 in the first order. A person would need some storage space for the 1500 shirt order and be available to fill orders we take off the internet.

- We need persons willing to travel to Catholic conferences around the county, people who are willing to attend a table with our literature. It's hard work, long hours but the rewards are great for the mission. Our goal there is to interest parishes to sponsor a speaker to visit their parish. Travel costs, hotel and conference fees are covered by the mission. You may attend the conference meetings. We have our sights on a conference July 11-12 in Anaheim CA and in Sept in Idaho Falls ID. If you have a local Catholic conference might you consider hosting a table for the mission?

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