

# Vladivostok Sunrise

Mary Mother of God Mission Society and Vladivostok Mission

Issue Number Eighty Nine September 1, 2009



*“You are my Sunshine” at the Children’s camp. Nastya Koptelova has our attention.*

## Summer’s Spiritual Programs

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

Summer is a great time in Russia, as people are tired of winter’s cold and they hanker for vitamin D after winter’s “hibernation.” So summer is a good time to “get away” for retreats, especially for the young. This summer’s program included the Children’s Catechetical Camp, the Far Eastern Catholic Youth conference, The Mother’s In Prayer retreat, and Rachael’s Vineyard’s Retreat.

**Children’s Catechetical Camp.** Compared to previous years, this year’s camp took younger children, including kids from Arsenyev and Lesozovodsk, in addition to Vladivostok. Sister Marina Malinina, SCSA, our Sunday School director was the leader of the camp, and many mothers and fathers went along to help. It was held on Popov Island, a part of the City of Vladivostok.



*The Vladivostok Islands are beautiful in the summer.*

*There were a few chilly days.*



*The children's handicrafts*

**13<sup>th</sup> Annual Far Eastern Catholic Youth Conference.** This year it was held at a rural broken down camp near Blagoveschensk. This in the territory of the Transfiguration Parish and right on the Chinese border. Fr Daniel said it was the best Conference yet, and perhaps just because of the physical difficulties: there were clouds of mosquitoes in the swamp near the rivers, and the toilets were non-existent. The problems seemed to bring the youth together as they studied the themes of John Paul II's Theology of the Body, and "God in Me and I in God." Besides the 22 youths, three priests and five sisters attended the retreat.



*Youth Conference group photo.*

*Trying to figure out the Gospel episode by acting it out.*



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



*The new sisters for Khabarovsk arrived in Russia just in time for the Conference. They are Sisters of the Incarnate Word from Ukraine. Here three of them are teasing a participant by showing they are ready to dress her in their habit.*

*You CAN learn something about the Gospel from the TV—provided you produce your own program.*



**Mother's in Prayer** gather every Sunday before mass in their various parishes to pray for their children and grandchildren. Their annual retreat was held on Russian Island (also a part of the City of Vladivostok), and they were accompanied by some fathers, too.

**Rachael's Vineyard** held their second summer retreat at St Joseph's in Second River. The growing popularity of these retreats means we will need to make some changes to the parish premises to house more people.

These retreat programs are very important, especially for a people who have had little or no catechetical experience in



*Chores.*

*Holy Mass is always a highlight of every retreat.*



their young years when religion was forbidden here. We would be able to do more of them--unfortunately we weren't able to have an Omega retreat for university students this year--but we need more space and facilities to do them. We are hoping that our premises on Russian Island can be expanded and renovated for this purpose. Once the new bridge being constructed to the Island—to be completed by 2012—the Island will be regularly accessible by car and bus--An ideal place for retreats and weekend happenings for our growing parishes and their spiritual and catechetical needs.

## How to Communicate with Us

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**Vladivostok Sunrise** Edited and produced in Russia by V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D. Printed in St Paul MN by Sexton Printing, Inc. Assembled for mailing by Nativity Parish, St Paul, Minnesota.

## A New Home for Sisters in Jesus the Lord

*by Sister Catherine Marie, C.J.D.*

On the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, June 19, 2009, Sisters in Jesus the Lord gratefully received a decree of approbation from Most Reverend Robert W. Finn, Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph granting them diocesan recognition as a Private Association of the Faithful. In a letter dated April 30, 2009, Bishop Finn said, "I would be prepared to accept sponsorship of your foundation as Private Association of the Faithful, with the prospect of becoming Public Association or perhaps more over the next years." The sisters moved to the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph on July 28, 2009. Their new residence is located at the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Raytown, Missouri. The pastor, Fr Steven Rogers, and his parishioners have given the sisters a warm welcome and are proving to be a most generous and thoughtful parish family. The sisters are very happy in their new home and extend their thanks to all who have in any way supported them in the past six years, and to those who helped them move and settle into their new home. Please join them in thanking Our Lord for such amazing blessings. And see our new contact information above, and the photo of the moving crew.



*The moving crew: Kansas City, here I come!*

## Opportunities

### ♥ Want to help at the hospice or at Orphanage #3?

This is a list of needs that the last American groups of volunteers left for me:

1. A wider wheelchair
2. three or four baby highchairs
3. sleepers
4. clothes for primis
5. depends and pampers
6. somebody could make some bibs for the kids and elderly
7. Both places need a clothes drier (Russian type of electricity)
8. New plastic windows and SCREENS are needed in the hospice.
9. nightgowns and pajama bottoms for hospice adults.
10. Slippers for hospice adults.

The groups visited orphan homes in various cities. They said that the most needy homes were Vladivostok. Contact the mission office to join our mission team traveling to Vladivostok in October!

### ♥ Smart Giving – A Double Tax Break

By donating stock, you could effectively get a double tax break: You not only receive a charitable deduction for the amount of your gift, but you also avoided having to pay taxes on any gains since you'd bought the stock. This combination can give high-income taxpayers nearly 50% in savings. But now that the market has fallen sharply, you have to be careful with gifts. In particular, watch out for these pitfalls:

- **Short-term gains.** Giving away stock you've owned for less than a year doesn't give you a full tax break. If the value of the stock has gone up, you only get to deduct what you paid -- not what the shares are now worth.

● **Losing stocks.** If you have a loss on your shares, it's smarter to sell them and give away cash. That way you keep the benefit of a capital loss.

● **Donate.** Consider donating appreciated stock that you've held for over one year for the potential of a double tax break.

**Two Phone calls** – Donation of stock is quick and easy. 1. Call Vicky Trevillyan at the mission office (209) 408-0728. She'll be happy to give you the short instructions, then simply call your broker. More questions? Please call Hugh Dillon at (763) 923-2239

♥ Your gift may be doubled if your employer has a **matching gift program**. See your Human Resources Department. And you may save time and postage by having your donation automatically submitted from your checking or savings account or credit card each month.

♥ **Sponsor a needy child** regularly. You would be a "Guardian Angel" for doing so. Contact us for details, and we will match you up with a child in need. Christmas and birthday presents for "your child" are welcome, too! You can mail them directly once you get the photo and address of the child from us.

♥ We could use a good light **sewing machine** if someone has one that they don't need.

♥ Order your ***Harsh Vineyard: A History of Catholic Life in the Russian Far East*** by our parishioner Miroslava Efimova with translation by Dr Gerri Kelly from our Modesto office or our website and receive a discounted price of \$18.00 plus S/H.

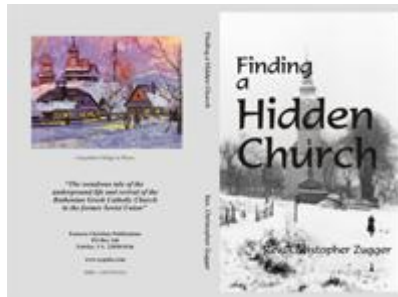
♥ We've added a few names to our **Speakers Bureau** recently! Thanks be to God for all the laity, religious, and priests who continue to give of your time speaking at parishes or representing us at conferences and Catholic organizations. We like to be invited to as many parishes as possible to speak about our mission. Most times a second collection is taken to keep the parishes in Vladivostok going. Our speakers have a few minutes during each Sunday Mass to talk about our work in Russia. Upcoming events where we need speakers: September 20-23 Nat. Catholic Dev Conf, Arlington, VA September 24-27 Nat. Council of Cath. Women, Jacksonville, FL. Becoming a member of our Speakers' Bureau is quite simple. Please call Vicky at the office in California, or send her an email.

♥ Seamstresses needed to **sew rosary cases** and book markers from discarded priests' vestments. Easy straight stitch. Contact the mission office.

♥ Live in **California**? Contact the mission office to get your SHARES card. Just by presenting this card every time you shop at your favorite grocery stores, Save Mart, Lucky, Food Maxx, or Smart Foods, they will donate 3% of your total grocery bill to the mission. IT'S NO COST TO YOU. The more you use the card, the more the mission receives. We received a \$1544 check for last quarter! It works! Thank you!

## News Notes

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



● [Father Chris Zuger's](#) new book, ***Finding a Hidden Church***, is the result of eight years of interviews and research covering the history of the Ruthenian Greek Catholic church in the USSR and independent Ukraine. Here you will find not only background history of the Church before 1945, but the heroic witness of Blessed Theodore Romzha (killed in 1947), Bishop Petro Oros (executed 1953), Bishop Alexander Khira who died in Kazakhstan, and scores of priests, their wives, their children, and other people who fought to keep their beloved Church alive in a hostile society. For ordering information, see <http://www.olphnm.org/>

● It's a trying time at the **hospice** where our volunteers work. Perhaps you heard that in European Russia many elderly died in a nursing home fire where there was no fire emergency equipment and where the windows were locked. The next day there was another fire in the building next door to that one, which means that there was an arsonist at work. But the result is that the Ministry of Emergency Affairs had a major fire department check of all nursing homes in Russia. The hospice probably does need some upgrading as far as fire safety is concerned, but where to get the finances? 21 of 32 patients there are indigent. One of our volunteers there is an American practical nurse. She says that she is impressed by the commitment of the staff and how they work with patients who really have nothing. (Actually the staff also has practically nothing because their pay is very low for working with indigent patients who can't pay for any

perks or tips.) It won't surprise me if the hospice will be asking us for help with new fire safety equipment.

Besides our volunteers, this is an expression of thanks to those benefactors who help us care for these poor people. The patients need such simple things as house slippers, bibs, pajama bottoms, and housecoats.



*A typical hospice meal.*

- The bells aren't ringing yet! The **steeple**s are almost done. They are working on the last spires, and then they will work on the transept spires. We are anxious to have the final blessing when the bishop can come and we can say "Amen" to the church restoration program—a long 16 years! I was wondering how to thank those who have been praying and hoping with us to finish this great project. Maybe you have an idea for me?



*Looking up into the steeples with our four bells hanging, hoping to sound soon.*

- Sr Maria Stella says of her visit here earlier: "We had a wonderful walking tour of the city by one of the students

of the parish. We visited the new **Orthodox** Cathedral, dedicated last year, the university, and saw the old synagogue (It was closed, unfortunately.) The highlight for me was going to the Orthodox diocesan offices, where there is a seminary and a theological library. Our guide took us to the library, and it turns out that the library is run by an Orthodox nun, Mother Esther. She was delighted to meet us, and when she heard that I am in the process of becoming a nun, she gave me a big hug and invited us to return anytime for tea and cookies! She showed us the half-shelf of Catholic books that they have--3 copies of the parish history, and a copy of the Catechism of the Catholic Church in Russian, among others. It was such a wonderful surprise to be greeted so warmly, since we have heard of many instances of hostility from the Orthodox towards Roman Catholics. We plan to return for tea."

- We've had great **groups visiting** this summer, including a group from our sister parish of the Immaculate Conception in North Little Rock, Arkansas and another from Vanderburgh County, Indiana. They have all had a great time, in addition to the work they have done while they were here. We also have two seminarians from Rome visiting—are they great men!



*Seminarians Benjamin Jones and Matthew Grady assembling new cribs at Children's Hospital #3.*

- Next it's the **new school year**. Already the government social department is asking us to help with back to school needs for poor children. We like to help if we can—Our benefactors are the key to that.

- Three **seminarians** have arrived for this school year, and we are expecting two more to visit to see if they can discern a future with us in Russia.

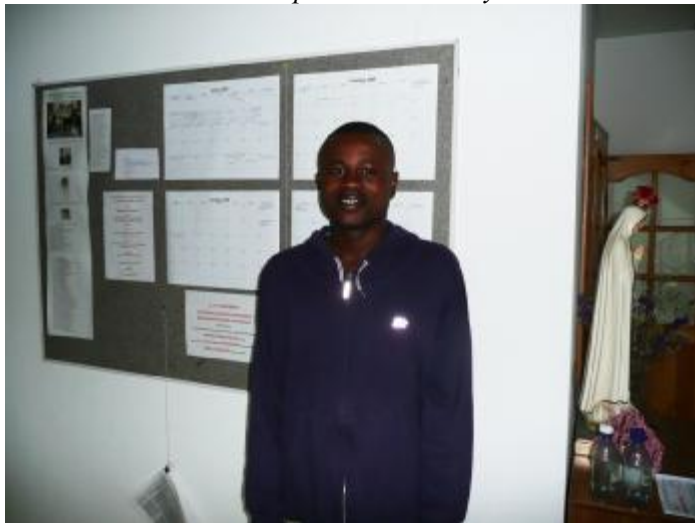
Brother Xavier is from Manila, The Philippines. He has a lot of life experience in business, and has worked in many countries of the world. He speaks four languages and is

now adding Russian to his list. He has long had an interest in the Canons Regular, our type of religious life. He entered our novitiate on August 14, so as to take his first vows next year on the Feast of the Assumption of our Lady. Earlier he was a visitor, and now he has come to stay.



*Xavier is quite good at organizing projects and people.*

*Patrick serves at the hospice on Thursdays.*



“Patrick” is a native of Nigeria and finished his philosophy degree in preparation for the major seminary. It was quite a feat to complete all the necessary documents both with his government and with the Russian government in order to be able to get acquainted with us and Russia. Now is a favorite of the kids at Children’s Hospital #3 where he is working every day as a volunteer. And he is searching for a soccer team to join here in the city.

Jesus has completed two years at the major seminary, although he himself is from Mexico. After a process of discernment, he came to the conclusion that he wanted to work in Russia, so he has come to us to learn the Russian language and to further discern his vocation to work in this country.



We are excited to have these seminarians! Benefactors will appreciate that this is an additional financial burden on the mission. What a nice burden to have!

*Besides being a full-time student, Jesus helps teach Spanish in the Omega program.*

- As a matter of principle, we have been struggling for many years to try to increase our income within Russia itself, so as not to be dependant always on foreign aid. Recently our charitable organization Caritas had its first development conference. Beverly Williamson from Marian Educational Outreach of Evansville, Indiana, came to lead a two-day seminar on the theme “What is Development?” Russians from several organizations and parishes attended the seminar, and they were certainly enthused about their new understanding about how to go about promoting their work and doing fundraising within Russia itself.



*Caritas representatives attended from our whole deanery. Beverly is second from left in the front row.*

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Dear Friends,

We've had many great ideas from supporters like you on ways to help Fr Myron and Fr Daniel in Vladivostok! Some pastors and parishioners have chosen to help bring our faith to Russia through "twinning" or sister parish projects in their parishes. Becoming a sister parish is easy and is a very powerful source of help to the mission.

If you would like to have a sister parish affiliation, check with your pastor. We have a simple information packet and DVD about the mission we could send. The amount of involvement can be as little or as much as your pastor agrees to. We can provide a Sister Parish Project Brochure Template to personalize with your parish name and use for promoting your project! You can network with other sister parish organizers for help and ideas. Here are some ideas other sister parishes have implemented. Use one or all!

- Regular prayer or Holy hours for the mission in Russia.
- Place a supply of Vladivostok Sunrise newsletter in your vestibule or insert in your weekly bulletin.
- Write one paragraph each month for your parish bulletin about the work in Vladivostok.

- Have one of our speakers come to your parish to talk during meetings, or after Masses about the mission.
- Teach about the Catholic Church in Russia, lessons plans are available for catechism, youth groups, and home school, grades K-12.
- Help the children get involved by making projects to send to Russia.
- Have a second collection to go to your sister parish.
- Form a travel team from your parish to work and visit in the mission parishes of Eastern Russia.
- Set up Recycling project: Cell phones, lap tops, ink/toner, cans, newspapers.
- Organize a fund raising dinner or auction and have a mission speaker talk.
- Organize a Plant/Craft/Bake or Religious Goods Sale after Masses. Just in time for Christmas. We can provide the religious goods to you through our mission gift shop.
- "Adopt" a parish or support a specific program. For examples, your Pro Life committee or KofC helping the Women's Support Centers, or your Seniors or Youth Group helping orphans or Adopt A Grandma programs.

You can do it! Thank you! God bless you!

*Vicky Trevillyan* 209-408-0728

[www.vladmission.org](http://www.vladmission.org)