

Vladivostok Sunrise

Mary Mother of God Mission Society and Vladivostok Mission

Issue Number Ninety Seven January 1, 2011



Our Three Novices: Arnulfo Undona, Innocence Hetu, and Patrick Napal

The Catholic Church in Eastern Russia

After the revolution of 1917, Siberia became a showplace of the new Communist era, a land without churches and without God. Under Stalin, all Catholic churches were confiscated, and many were turned into the most degrading uses imaginable.

Two American priests, Fr. Myron Effing, CJD, and Fr. Daniel Maurer, CJD, arrived in Vladivostok in 1992 to help re-establish the Church in this region. **They founded or re-founded 11 Catholic parishes in an area covering over 500,000 square miles.** With the foundations laid, additional priests and sisters are joining the work, and parishes are slowly growing and multiplying.

Our Three Novices

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

On December 7, the eve of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, we had the joy to invest our third novice, Brother Innocence Hetu, C.J.D. Novitiate takes a year, so he expects to take his first vows on December 8 of 2011. Meanwhile he continues his novitiate program and is studying Russian with the other two novices.

Brother Innocence is from Flores Island of Indonesia. He has actually finished the seminary already, but his ordination has to wait until his permanent membership in an order or diocese. Meanwhile he had been teaching theology in Indonesia, and visiting religious orders until he found the one that the Lord had in mind for him. He came from warm Indonesia to the ice of Far Eastern Russia, but he is adapting well and beginning to speak Russian.

Brother Arnulfo Undona, C.J.D., entered the novitiate on August 14, just before the Feast of the Assumption. He comes from Davao, Philippines, and, as the oldest novice, has had quite a lot of experience, especially working among cancer patients in the Philippines. He also loves sacristy work, and loves to spend time in prayer, so he is often the first into the church in the morning.

Brother Patrick Napal, C.J.D., is also from Davao. He entered the novitiate on the Feast of St Joseph last March, so he will soon take first vows and then be off to the seminary. He already speaks Russian and is often the reader at the Liturgy of the Hours. Here in the house he is famous for his pastries, for which Fr Dan says, "He has "bread karma". He speaks seven languages, and finds communication very easy, and is currently teaching an English course here in the parish.

Brother Patrick tells the story that one day on the way to the university he saw a man with only underwear walking in the snow in the cold, his bear feet and knees bleeding. Evidently he had been thrown out of the place where he was drinking, as is not unusual. The police had been called and they began to surround the man to capture him, but he eluded them. Brother Patrick, in his habit, seeing the danger for the man's health in the cold, himself went up to the man and touched him on the shoulder. Immediately the man surrendered to him, and then to the ambulance crew that had just arrived. Brother Patrick said "the human touch" was what the man needed. Brother Patrick always has a human touch for whomever he meets, not excluding even the neighborhood dogs and cats.

Our Benefactors:

[In recent "thank you" letters, I've been bragging about our benefactors. Here are some stories to confirm my brags!—M.E.]

Catherine's Fund

"Blessed be Jesus Christ! Hi Father! Hi Vicky!

"I just made a donation of \$120 for Adopt-A-Birth, but it's the story that goes with it that is so inspiring. I do hope you will enjoy it. It is all true. And, I only contributed half of the money!

"My dear friend Gloria has an 11 year old daughter whose name is Catherine. She has always been so special and surprising spiritually. About 2 weeks ago I was telling Gloria and Catherine all about the Mary Mother of God mission, the poverty and deprivation of some of Russia's people, and what Fr Myron and Fr Dan and all the great workers and volunteers are doing. Catherine was rather quiet but moved--one could see it on her face.

"I was describing my Guardian Angel child Alyona, who lives near Lesozovodsk, Russia to Catherine and Gloria, both of whom have been praying quite hard for her, her mother Anna, her two brothers and her father in jail. When they heard how cold it gets, and that Anna sometimes must put the children in the orphanage so they will have warmth and food, they were horrified. Catherine left the kitchen quietly and I continued speaking about this to Gloria. She reappeared with two twenty dollar bills. I was speechless. I had a feeling she wanted to donate because, after speaking about Alyona's family, I described how with a mere \$20, one could sponsor a birth and help pay for a basic medical kit for mother and baby, thus helping yet one more woman choose life. Well, Catherine acted with complete decision. She, at 11 years of age, decided she would sponsor 2 births and therefore, help 2 women to choose life.

"Her mother was surprised as well but said that if Catherine wanted to donate, she was free to do so. I did not want to put pressure on a future saint but, with tears in my eyes, did ask her repeatedly if she felt pressured by my fervent descriptions or if she was really sure. This is one highly intelligent 11 year old. She stands nearly 5'5" already and looked me directly in the eyes and told me, "I'm sure."

"So, after much going back and forth, I finally and with some reluctance but great inner joy, accepted Catherine's amazing donation. I then promised her I would match

what she gave me. So, instead of helping to save two babies, now she could save four. She beamed.

“Why is this \$40 so amazing? Because Catherine has to earn these twenty dollar bills by doing extremely menial tasks for nearly nothing. She does dishes and mops floors for quarters, wipes young siblings bottoms (do forgive me Father, but, this proves how hard she has to work for mere dimes and quarters!), does countless loads of laundry, bakes bread, makes breakfast, babysits and on and on and ON the list goes.

“So, for Catherine to give up TWO twenty dollar bills, is like one of us grown people giving up a week's wages. This is no small donation.

“A week later Catherine approached me and handed me ANOTHER twenty dollar bill. At that point I had to go and challenge Gloria. We had a long talk about it. I did not want to be "taking" all of this little girl's money no matter how noble the cause. After a discussion that included tithing, learning to save, being a good steward, appropriateness, etc. Gloria reassured me that as ALL of Catherine's basic needs were provided to her by her parents, she was free to give as abundantly as the Holy Spirit moved her. So, I left that day overcome by this additional donation.

“Now Catherine has donated \$60 and I the matching dollars, but, in truth, I feel I've done none of the donating. I feel the entire \$120 was her donation. We feel pleased that we may have helped to save 6 babies from death and 6 mom's from the possible spiritual death of abortion. We know this is only a small, small portion of what the mothers and babies need but I feel that God will bless this effort on our parts and multiply it in His own providential way.

“I so wanted you both to know what your great example, hard work, love, care and suffering have done to some souls out here in San Francisco. A young girl was moved to give all like her Lord, a mother was given hope to see her young daughter growing in holiness and a certain classical soprano was moved to tears and to give more because of the pure gift of a child. YOU have done that for us. We are all grateful, me especially.

“I promised Gloria and Catherine that I would write you both and let you know the significance of the donation made tonight. I hope you enjoyed hearing it.

“In Christ and Mary, Frances in San Francisco

[Any other benefactors want to match this little girl's donation? Mark your check “Catherine's Fund” She will be excited to know about it.]

The Morans' Blanket Project

Dr Bob Moran first contacted us with his interest in HIV in Vladivostok. Bob and his wife Marianne are both university professors and are parishioners of St Monica Parish in Methuen, MA. Bob's enthusiasm as our speaker and conference representative really rubbed off on others as he educated fellow parishioners about our work. Last spring, the parish focused on helping the orphans and Women's Support Centers. Here's the incredible and humbling result and what Bob reported to us.

“At the beginning of 2010, St Monica Parish Knights of Columbus in Methuen, Massachusetts was searching for a way to help the Vladivostok Mission. Our Pastor and Council Chaplain, Fr Patrick Armano suggested that with all the second collections around the holidays, we should try something else. As a result, the St Monica Council #14725 Knights of Columbus teamed up with St Monica Pro-Life Office and planned to have a two weekend drive during which parishioners could drop off a "few" blankets and linens to ship to Vladivostok to help the orphans and the mothers.



Marianne Moran, sorting through the many donations so they could be packaged for shipment.

“All of us were overwhelmed a few weeks later by the wonderful and obviously heartfelt generosity of the many

Parishioners of St Monica in giving blankets, bed linens and clothing for the orphans and for the Women's Support Centers. The final tally was some 36 shipping containers (800 pounds) of bedding, linens, blankets, and blanket material!"

Special thanks go to Fr Patrick Armano, Bob and Marianne Moran, Michael Walsh, Chancellor and Rick Dube, Grand Knight of Methuen Council 14725. (The Methuen, MA Council is celebrating its second Anniversary in April 2011) and Kathy Garon!

Fr Armano, Kathy Garon of the Pro-Life Office and Bob Moran of the Knights of Columbus pose together as the last of the materials are sent to the K of C Office for packaging and shipment to Modesto.



Bicycle Ride Across America!

This summer, John Woodhall and Kevin Rick are planning to ride their bicycles on an amazing trek across America, as a fundraiser for the Vladivostok Mission. The trip will begin the first week of June, and the plan is to allow six weeks to ride from Auburn, California to Washington, D.C. Leave: June 3, 2011

Return: July 8, 2011

John is a member of St Patrick Parish in Grass Valley, California. He is a retired high school teacher, coach, and an accomplished mountaineer and biker. John got the idea to use the bike ride as a fundraiser after he heard Fr Dan talk about the plight of the Church in Russia under Communism and the support now needed to rebuild from that devastation. "To ride with a purpose is a great

opportunity to help in the effort to revive the Catholic Church in Russia."



*Kevin
and
John*

Kevin Rick is a junior high school teacher in Auburn, California, and a former high school student of John's. He is an accomplished teacher, biker, and mountaineer.

The ride will start in Auburn and follow highway 49 to highway 50 over the Sierras. They will travel primarily on highway 50 (called the loneliest road in America) (See Wikipedia "US Route 50") as well as take some back roads to Washington, D.C. Also, sponsors will be able to follow the riders' progress via an online GPS system. A few of the towns on the route are: Grand Junction and Pueblo, Colorado; Dodge City and Hutchinson, Kansas; Kansas City and St Louis, Missouri; Cincinnati and Athens, Ohio; Parkersburg and Clarksburg, West Virginia; Winchester and Arlington, Virginia; and Washington, D.C.

Presently there are only 2 committed riders, and we are hoping and praying for more. If you are interested in riding or "sagging", please contact John at (530) 713-1011. Riders from other states are also welcomed for all or a portion of the ride. Departure date: June 3, 2011. Return: July 8.

If you would like to support this exciting adventure, you can donate either by check or online through Mary Mother of God Mission Society and mailed to the mission office, or donate online at www.vladmission.org Please make the note: "Cross Country Sponsor" on your donation.

All donations will go directly to the mission in Vladivostok, and are tax deductible.

If your parish or home is along the route and you would like to offer a place of rest for our riders, please contact the mission office at 209-408-0728, or John.

God bless John and Kevin! St Christopher, Pray for us!

A Quilt Prize!

Fr Myron's home parish of St Joseph of Vanderburgh County, IN are raising funds for the Omega Project by offering an absolutely beautiful handmade king size quilt! The Omega Project is a major focus for evangelization, especially because the 100,000 student new federal university is being constructed on Russian Island. Fr Myron must raise \$300,000 for the Omega Project before he can even think of opening an Omega Center on Russian Island. More details about that forthcoming.

Here is a photo of the quilt. Donna Hamilton from Good Shepherd Parish pieced the quilt and the ladies from St Francis Xavier and St Wendel parishes quilted it. This is the second quilt that Donna has made for the mission.



King size quilt offered by St Joseph Parish

If you'd like to have your name in the drawing for the quilt, send a donation for the Omega project to St Joseph Church - Vladivostok Mission, 6202 W St Joseph Rd, Evansville, IN 47720-7836

If you have any questions, contact Paul Hasselbrinck at Hasselbrinck@insightbb.com, or (812)963-3468

The Dennis Egan Family

Long-time benefactors, the Dennis Egan family from South Carolina, represented us at the annual Diocesan Eucharistic Congress in Charlotte, NC. This photo was caught and sent to us by John Sonnen, who attended the Congress. The Egan family were instrumental in the production of the film about our mission that many benefactors have seen, and which has been featured on EWTN. Thanks, folks, for your long term service!



Dennis and Pam and children

Opportunities

♥ Need an icon for a gift? Contact the Modesto office. We have quite a selection of icons and religious goods.



♥ Hooded sweatshirts available. *Vladivostok, Russia* in Cyrillic lettering on front. Sizes S-3X. \$30-\$35.

♥ Hand crocheted baby blankets, matching Baptismal gowns, caps and booties, and crocheted table doilies and runners from the Lesozovodsk Women's Support Center for sale. Proceeds to the Women's Support Centers. See our website for more information. www.vladmission.org



News Notes

by V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D

● How is this photo for remembering your baptismal day? Little **Maria Mislinski** is wearing her baptismal garment and cross, and admiring her baptismal candle on her first anniversary of baptism!



- **Christina and Anna Voyak**, sisters from Australia, visited us this summer. Their grandmother, Albina Kachanovskaya, was a Vladivostok parishioner before the Revolution who escaped Communist terror by emigrating with her family. Albina wrote her memoirs about her life in Russia, and we are anxious to publish them for our readers. Stay tuned!



Christina and Anna with Fr Myron before the picture of the parishioners that their grandmother Albina knew.

A moment of fun came when the sisters told about their grandmother's recalling that the boys of the parish used to joke about a certain woman parishioner's hat. I was happy to how them a photo of the hat!!



See the offending hat in the open doorway of the temporary church in about 1921.

- **Soup Kitchen** – Because the major funding from the Sisters of Charity of St Anne in Spain is no longer available, the soup kitchen has had to close until funding can be found. The 60 elderly patrons who frequented the Soup Kitchen will not receive a daily meal from this

program. "The Little Way" foundation in England gave us some funds to tide some of the most desperate patrons over, but so far we haven't found the regular funding.

- Right now we are struggling to help **two parishioners who have serious diseases**, one Alzheimer's, and the other compulsive psychosis. There aren't facilities dedicated to these types of problems in Vladivostok, and so we have scramble to try to meet their needs. Neither of them have families in this region of Russia. One is currently in the hospice where we regularly work, and the other is living in a stairway, as he can't hold a job for long, because he doesn't believe he needs the medicine that the doctor gives him, and then he gradually becomes ineffective on the job when he doesn't take his medicine.

- Recently I gave to give a talk at the **Governor's Forum on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse**. While there are anti-narcotic clinics here, there isn't a local rehabilitation center for alcoholics. Only high priced private clinics are available, and few can afford that. Alcoholism is a major social problem in Russia where the average consumption is 14 quarts per year of alcoholic equivalence per person. I reviewed for the Forum the symptoms of alcoholism and the early warning signs, proposing that more work needs to be done with the youth of Russia about the early warning signs. I also reviewed the advantages for the government of having government rehabilitation centers.

- Remember I told you about the foundation that is willing to give us 1/3 of the cost of the **fire safety equipment** required by the Fire Department here, if the Russian benefactors will give 1/3 and American benefactors will give 1/3? Each "third" is \$9233.00. So far we've collected \$2735 for the American third, and \$2426 of the Russian third. We have until March to collect the whole amount. If you'd like to make a donation for this, mark your check "Fire Safety."

- A highlight of my Fall trip to America was the **blessing of our office in Modesto**. Our office has had to move several times, and it spent the last two years in a garage that was cold in the winter and hot in the summer. Vicky and her volunteers have suffered and sacrificed so much for us. Here is a photo of the new office entrance.

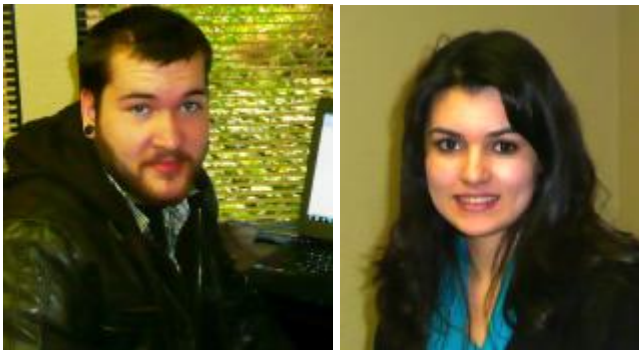


Fr Myron sprinkling the entrance with holy water.



There is room for some retail sales in the office.

If you call the office, you might get volunteers Mason Trevillyan or Nalleli Padilla on the phone, if not Vicky Trevillyan.



• The seminarians took charge of Christmas decorating this year. This is the Christmas tree in the parish house.



• Producers of the film **“Military Pilots”** contacted us to ask if they could shoot a scene for their film in our church, as “one important scene takes places in a Catholic church in Belgium, and yours is the only Catholic church here in the city.” The hero of the film, returning from battle, goes to meet his girlfriend who is praying in the church. It was a treat also for members of our Omega film club to attend the filming to see how it is all done. It is expected that the film will be debuted at the Meridian Film Festival in 2011.



How to Communicate with Us

Internet

Russian language: www.catholic.vladivostok.ru

English language: www.vladmission.org

Sisters in Jesus the Lord in English: www.cjd.cc

Office in Russia: Phone and FAX: 011-7-4232-26-96-14

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Vladivostok Sunrise gives you up to date information about the Church in Eastern Russia. Contact our office for your free bi-monthly copy.

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

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From the development desk...

Happy New Year Everyone!

We've had so many blessings, thanks to our wonderful volunteers from all over the world. Many hands make light work! Hundreds of volunteers worked hard to educate others about our mission throughout the year. They arranged and spoke at a record 35 conferences and ministry meetings, and 39 parishes throughout the US, Canada, the Philippines and Australia. Our volunteers organized fundraising dinners, receptions, and movie presentations at their local parishes, held plant, bakery and icon sales, organized jog-a-thons and blanket drives to help the orphans and poor elderly, began prayer groups to pray for the mission, hand-crafted hundreds of rosaries, religious jewelry and vestment articles, scheduled special appearances for our priests' during their visits to the US, labeled and mailed over 74,000 copies of the Vladivostok Sunrise newsletters for Fr Myron, hand-folded over 100,000 brochures, maintained our website, updated our mission DVD and burned hundreds of copies to distribute, and the list goes on and on! Thank you volunteers and supporters! What a blessing you all are! You are very much appreciated. I'm looking forward to praying and working with all of you again in 2011. The growth of the Catholic Church in Russia depends on all you do.

If you'd like to help, here are just a few areas where you can help. Maybe you have more ideas? Please contact me at the mission office! 209-408-0728

- Pray for the mission!
- Seamstresses needed to help our two volunteers, Julianne Immordino from NY and Barbara Fitzsimmons from CA, sew bookmarkers, book covers or rosary cases from discarded priest vestment articles. Materials and samples provided.
- Join our wonderful newsletter crew in St Paul, MN. Insert envelopes, label, and seal newsletters 1 day every 2 months. Please contact Gerald Alfveby at 651-274-7977.
- Volunteers needed to distribute literature from our mission booths at Catholic Conferences.
- Have a book faire and Russian icon sale for the mission or special mission program. Raise awareness of the Church in Russia while fundraising with religious goods! Supplies provided.
- Join a parish or university group to our Vladivostok mission this summer or fall. Form your own team!
- Help our volunteer, Bruce Gnatowski with scheduling speakers for conferences and mission talks. Can be done from home through email and internet.

Thank you. A Very Blessed Feast of Mary, Mother of God to you! God bless you. Sincerely, Vicky Trevillyan