

Vladivostok Sunrise

Mary Mother of God Mission Society Vladivostok Russia Modesto California

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Kids in native costumes at the Seminar

“Orphans at Play” Seminar

By Melissa Bridges

For many months, the Vlad Mission, CARITAS, Sails of Hope, iOrphan, and Orphans at Play have worked together to develop a seminar geared toward improving the lives of orphans in Russia. At last, March 20 – 22, 2013 was an exciting time in Vladivostok because the work of this partnership came to fruition in the form of an informative 3-day seminar!

The first day of the seminar began on March 20th with an extensive tour of the Sails of Hope facility. Participants were able to view, first hand, the variety of services and therapies that are provided for the children and families who go through the Sails of Hope program.

On the second day of the seminar, we welcomed our keynote presenters – an absolutely fascinating pair of researchers and early interventionists from St Petersburg, Russia. Drs Svyatoslav Vasilievich Dovbnya (“Slava”), a pediatric neurologist, and Tatiana Yurievna Morozova (“Tanya”), a clinical psychologist. Together, they spoke

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.

about brain development, the impact of early stress on development, attachment, fetal alcohol syndrome, and many other topics that are so relevant to orphans in Russia. Participants at the seminar included social workers, doctors, psychologists, and program directors. Everyone in attendance was challenged to “think outside the box” with regard to everything they knew – or thought they knew – about children, child development, and how early experiences can positively or *negatively* impact a child for his or her entire life.



Seminar attendees

We also heard an excellent presentation from Jess Wolsterhoff and Megan Bresnahan, a speech language pathologist and occupational therapist, from the University of Minnesota. Jess and Megan shared their expertise from the perspective of working with children from internationally adoptive situations. Many children they work with, on a daily basis, have been impacted by life in an orphanage. They shared many of the challenges faced by children left in cribs for long periods of time as well as how to prevent some of those challenges by providing simple experiences for young children.

On the third day of the seminar, the group of participants toured a bit more of the Sails of Hope facility and took part in a round table discussion about the information learned from the seminar and future direction for the Vladivostok region. One of the very exciting things witnessed was professional networking, which does not seem to be a concept often put into practice in Russia. It was heartening to learn how informative the training was perceived by people from various agencies, as well as how participants had the deep desire to learn more and more. The commitment was made to pass information learned along to co-workers and other professionals.

Much of the content presented at the three-day seminar was quite different from traditional Russian beliefs held about child development and early experiences. Based on the question/answer session at the end of the second day, it seemed that many people in the room experienced some

level of shift in their understanding, which is a great starting point! We are hopeful that it is the beginning of a permanent change that will last beyond the seminar and end up being a spark that will go toward some serious permanent change in the structure of the country’s orphan care. Of course, serious structural change will take some serious time and effort. But in the short term, we are hopeful that information will be shared and will strengthen the desire to incorporate programs like the Grandma Mentoring Program into the lives of the children who reside in baby homes and orphanages in Vladivostok and perhaps even in other parts of the country.

[Here is more information about the seminar presenters



from the Russian side: Slava, a pediatric neurologist, and Tanya, a clinical psychologist, have worked together in the field of early intervention for the past 15 years. They completed their postgraduate education in the European Union and work throughout Russia and other post-Soviet countries disseminating best

practices in child welfare. Slava and Tanya are often featured speakers at international child development conferences. They were scientific consultants for the film "The Road Home" and "Early Relationships and Child Development," documentary films about the importance of attachment and how to keep babies and toddlers with their birth families and out of orphanages. In 1998 Slava and Tanya co-founded the St. Petersburg Early Intervention Institute, one of Russia's pioneering centers for treating young children with developmental delays and disabilities. Currently they see individual clients, conduct evaluations and research, orchestrate project development and management, and provide training seminars for Russian and international organizations. They are both great professionals, and we were glad to have them with us. --ME]



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

News about our Seminarians in Indonesia

By Deacon Inosensius Hetu, C.J.D.

On January 20, 2013, I went to Maumere, Flores Island, Indonesia for doing vocational promotion in the General High School and also in Bajawa and Ende. Thanks be to God, the headmaster and teachers really welcomed our presence. The school gave me the chance to talk with the students who are going to graduate in May, 2013.

On January 29, 2013 I visited our nine seminarians in Preparatory Year at Saint Paul Seminary, Mataloko. A new rector Fr Yanto, OCarm welcomed me and he gave me time to talk with our seminarians. I also had time to share about our community in Russia and in Surabaya with all the seminarians. I stayed there for two nights and we had a great time sharing about our vocations, and supporting each other in following Jesus and becoming priests in our community of Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord. These nine seminarians will come to our community in Surabaya, Indonesia for their next formation.

On February 4, I visited five of our seminarians in their homes and met with their families. These five seminarians will join our community in Surabaya this coming March 4, 2013 for the preparation for college seminary. I also had a meeting with our five seminarians who are studying in Ledalero Major Seminary. We were talking about improvements to their study, and about our communities in Surabaya and Russia. They will join our community after graduation. Those were my three weeks on Flores island. And may the name of our God always be glorified through this journey, my encounter with students, seminarians and also their families.

March 01, 2013 was a busy day for Indonesian community. After renting a temporary house at the end of February, we directly moved the furniture from Mr Tara's house. Mr. Tara and Mrs. Jumini are very kind persons. They always help us to find the furniture that we need. As newcomers in Surabaya, we don't know the places to buy furniture. If we go alone to buy, the prices will be twice or three times as high. We thank God that He sends people to help us.

It was easy to move the furniture because we already have a minibus. Our seminarians who prepared things for the coming of our aspirants were Jacob, Yohanes, Ignasi, Levi and I. Inspired by the Rule of St Augustine, "The first purpose for which you have been come together is to live in unity in the house and to be of one mind and one heart

on the way to God", we worked on it all togetherness and we did it happily. We are aware that as a new community in the Church we lack many things, but we believe that God will provide for us. Lord God, bless our home, bless our benefactors and their families and homes!

Now I would like to inform you what we did during the last three weeks after the Indonesians aspirants arrived in Surabaya. They joined the parish choirs. They sang well at the Good Friday Liturgy. They are also participating in the charity works of the parish, including visiting the



Jacob Dambe drove the minibus from Jakarta to Surabaya.

orphanage to play football together with the kids. It was so interesting!

I assisted our parish priest as deacon during the masses from Holy Thursday until Easter Sunday. On Saturday night I sang the Easter Exultet for more than 2000 people attending. After Easter, on April 4, our aspirants moved to the other rented house which was really empty. We spent a lot of money buying furniture.

The lessons for the aspirants began on March 16. The lessons are Liturgical Introduction, Bible Introduction, Public Speaking and Writing, Augustinian Spirituality, The Canons Regular in Jesus the Lord in Community Life, and English Grammar. They did not have classes during Holy Week.

Yesterday, April 9, we brought our minivan to the repair body service. They will repair some seats and the body which is already broken. We have to do it because if there is a heavy rain some of us will get wet. It will take around 3 weeks to repair it. During this time our seminarians will use a city bus to attend mass on Friday and Sunday in the parish. Other days we will attend mass in diocesan seminary nearby. May the name of the Lord be praise for ever and ever. Amen! In God's Love—Brother Ino.

Opportunities

♥ Our **Seminarians' "Get On The Bus" Fundraiser** is coming along with many blessings! To date, thanks to you, the seminarians have raised \$6500 to purchase the used van needed to transport the first group of seminarians to the seminary. Now they are working on raising enough for the mini bus to transport the larger wave of seminarians coming this Fall. To date, \$15,105 of the total \$34,500 needed for the van and minibus has been collected. That puts 12 of the 28 seminarians on the bus! Thanks be to God! You may watch as each of our seminarians makes it on the bus through the weekly updates on our website. Thank you to all for helping our seminarians!



♥ Contact the mission office on how you can become a "Guardian Angel" for a **seminarian**. A comprehensive budget is available for review. Our lovely benefactor in NY, Julianne Immordino, continues to make beautiful **Swarovski crystal** rosaries to **help our seminarians!** Julianne will donate a crystal rosary or rosary wrap bracelet to donors who give \$500 or more in support of our seminarians. Donors may choose which of these faith gifts to receive.



♥ Several women have been sewing to help the mission. They create exquisite Bible, Magnificat and prayer book covers and rosary cases made from **priests' vestments no longer in use**. These special articles used to raise funds for the mission. If you have worn and vestments no longer being used, please send them

to the mission office in Modesto. Just a note, we sometimes receive vestments still in very good condition. These vestments are sent to Russia and used in our mission, or are sent to other missionary priests in mission territories. Thank you for your help!

♥ Another FOCUS team is heading to **serve in Vladivostok** this summer! We've received quite a few inquires from individuals and groups interested in serving on a mission to Vladivostok. We welcome visitors and mission teams to help the parishioners and those in need in and around Vladivostok. Serving the mission by spending time with



the orphans, helping in the Hospice hospital for the elderly, participating in group activities with the children who have very little in their lives, and assisting in building renovation projects has always been a very special and life changing experience for those who join a mission team and those they touch in Russia. If you are interested, you may find out more on our website www.vladmission.org, under Mission Teams or, please contact our office at usoffice@vladmission.org.

♥ By popular request, an **Our Lady of Vladivostok pendant** has been created. Fashioned by Bliss

Manufacturing, these medals have the detailed image of Our Lady of Vladivostok on the front and the Most Holy Mother of God Cathedral on the back. "Our Lady of Vladivostok, Pray for us" encircles the Icon on the front. Medals come 1 in. with a 24 in. chain, or 3/4 in. with an 18 in. chain. Both sizes come in Sterling Silver or Pewter with stainless steel chains. Each medal and chain comes in a velvet jewelry box. Pewter medals are also available



without chains and boxes. Fr Myron has the same medal inscribed in Russian available in Vladivostok. Please contact the mission office for more information or to order yours just in time for Mother's Day and Father's Day!



♥ **S.H.A.R.E.S.** cardholders are keeping up their fantastic momentum! They earned another \$3,124.60 for the mission in the 4th quarter! Thanks be to God! Help us even more by passing these FREE SHARES cards to your friends, family, co-workers and ministry members. Encourage them to shop at Save Mart, Lucky's, FoodMaxx or SmartFoods and use the card. Simply present your card at check out and these stores donate up to 3% of your grocery bill to the mission. It costs you nothing! It's a great way to help! Call or email the mission office and let us know the number of cards needed! Thank you! **Thanks be to God for our benefactors!**

News Notes

by V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D

● Readers recall that the Vladivostok Fire Department insisted that we had to install a new fire system in the church and in the monastery. So far it is done in the church, but that has been a problem! The system doesn't like it when we use incense, so we've had three fire alarms during Sunday Mass so far. Now we think we have it fixed, and there were no problems during the Easter Vigil

with all those candles and incense! Now that the system is working well in the church, we will begin installing the system in the monastery building. Thanks, benefactors in America and in Russia!



Installing the fire alarm system

- In December I had the pleasure of visiting our seminarians in Surabaya, Indonesia. They are attending the seminary together, working on their bachelor's degrees in Philosophy. They rent a house together so that they can have common prayer and meals, and even entertain the neighborhood kids with a soccer game every Saturday afternoon. It was a great trip which gives a lot of hope for future priests to work where needed.

It was a great trip for me, both as a religious, and as a pioneer here in Russia, because, with the lack of vocations in Europe and America, Russia will suffer without priests

if we don't find or grow some. So it is exciting that there are so many vocations nearby in the Philippines and in Indonesia, and that some of these guys want to work in Russia after ordination, and others will serve in other



Seminarians in Surabaya greeted me and the new deacon, including one wearing a native costume.

countries (even in America?? Why not?) after their ordinations. But we'll have the expenses of their seminary training.

My worry is paying for all the tuition expenses which going to the seminary entails. I don't mind telling you that some of them wanted to go to the seminary a long time ago, but were unable because of the poverty of their families. But we need priests, so please pray for them and please help me if you can with their expenses!

But why not Russian vocations? There is some interest, but with 7 abortions per woman and 80% divorce rate there just aren't many kids! And parents want grandchildren. You will always have more vocations when families are larger! Europe is in the same pickle as America and Russia.

Meanwhile, Deacon Inosensius, the superior in Indonesia, is scheduled for ordination to the priesthood in Surabaya on August 15, and continues his doctoral program in Development. Our six candidates now in Vladivostok are scheduled to begin novitiate on the Feast of the Ascension. Two of them are just a year away from ordination to the diaconate. They will all appreciate your prayers, and your rejoicing with them as they make progress as religious.

- We've had the pleasure of the presence of the Sisters in Jesus the Lord, too, for three months. Now they will be in Kansas City until June when they return to Vladivostok, hopefully permanently. Russian Island is waiting for them, and I'm sure they will be a hit with the students of the Far Eastern Federal University.



Sr Stella working at the Hospice.

- Our Soup Kitchen Program is off to a fresh start for this year, with great new plans, and we are expecting to serve more people than last year. And the lady in the picture is holding a certificate that she plans to give me to thank me for all the help we do for the poor of our city. But really, I do very little! It is our benefactors like you and our volunteers who do it all.



These folks are delivering boxes of food!

- It was an historic day when Pope Benedict XVI left the See of Peter. The parishioners were reacting to all the sensationalism of the Russian press, and were somewhat agitated about all of the “end of the world” hype, but we were able to calm them down at Sunday Mass. Of course

the falling meteorite in Chelyabinsk contributed to their anxiety! Meanwhile, we Meanwhile Deacon Inosensius continues his doctoral program in Development. Are praying for the new bishop of Rome: Pope Francis.

- We had five adult baptisms at Easter, four adults entered into full communion with the Catholic Church, and four children were baptized. First Communion for the children are scheduled for Corpus Christi, and we are expecting Bishop Kirill for the Sacrament of Confirmation soon.



Good Friday Washing of the Feet



Some of those baptized at the Easter Vigil.

- Planning has begun for this summer’s 17th Annual Far Eastern Catholic Youth Conference, and FOCUS is planning to attend.

- We are working to open two more Women’s Support Centers, one on Russian Island and one in Spask Dalnii.

Welcome Seminarians to Vladivostok!



Ignasius Rino, musician



Agustinus Brusen, teacher



Harben Forte, scholar



Bede Paquingan, Male Nurse



Jacob Dambe, agriculturist



Yohanes Marinus, businessman

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From the development desk...

Dear Friends,

Each year Fr Myron and Fr Daniel travel to the United States. They are invited by dioceses or sister parishes to speak during weekend Masses and collect a second offering to help the mission. While in the USA to spread the news of the Church in Russia, Fr Myron and Fr Daniel visit sister parish groups, speak to ministries and schools, and visit family and friends.

Fr Daniel will be in the USA in June, Fr Myron the month of September. Both priests are available to speak on weekdays to local groups and schools in the areas where they are visiting. They are also available for news and radio interviews, in person or by phone. Please contact me in Modesto to reserve a date for our priests to speak or interview in your area, 209-408-0728 or usoffice@vladmission.org

Fr Daniel will be at the following parishes:

June 22/23 – St Joseph Parish, Modesto, CA
June 29/30 – Immaculate Heart of Mary, Brentwood, CA
July 6/7- Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Papaidou, HI
July 13/14- St Mary's Parish, Eugene, OR
July 19/20 – St Joseph Parish, Salem, OR
July 27/28 – St Bridget's Parish, Las Vegas, NV

August 3/4 – St Leo the Great Parish, Winston-Salem, NC

Our Russia mission is very blessed to receive speaking assignments from the Diocesan Offices of the Propagation of Faith in the US. As their time in the US is limited, Fr Myron and Fr Daniel are very much in need of assistance from priests in the US who would like to speak about the mission's work during weekend mission preaching assignments. Most critical help is needed from Spanish speaking priests. If you are a priest who can help, please contact me at the mission office. Thank you!

God bless you! Sincerely,
Vicky Trevillyan, Mission Coordinator-209-408-0728



2012 - Fr Myron teaches about the mission to a group of young students during his visit to Ohio.