



Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



Mary Mother of God Mission Society: Reviving the Roman Catholic Church in Eastern Russia
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An American in Khabarovsk at the Youth Conference

by Isaac Hillaker, a college sophomore from Iowa.

I have attended countless Catholic conferences in the United States, from my hometown of Des Moines, Iowa to my nation's capital of Washington DC. This was my first time in Russia, as well as my first conference out of the states. I, alongside fellow students from America, took an overnight train from Vladivostok to Khabarovsk, which was an exceptional cultural experience as well as being tiring.



The Chapel at the parish in Khabarovsk

I was not completely sure what to expect at this conference, besides the low attendance by my American standards. The conference was an eye-opening experience for me for a number of reasons. First, it was more than a foreign conference, it was an international conference! Besides having Russians and Americans, the adults, young and old, came from Indonesia, the Philippines, India, and even Columbia. This turned the conference into something more special for me, seeing all these people brought together from around the world united by their faith.

The second reason this conference was substantial were the Russians themselves. As the practice of Christianity was illegal under Soviet rule, most Russians had to either practice their faith underground or risk imprisonment or even death. Sadly some never knew Christ, due to these



Teresa Nuar of FOCUS led the American delegation. Brother Nikita Pushkaryov is translating to Russian.



laws. Even today, Catholicism in the Russian Far East is small, though it is growing. Being able to share my story with others of my Church, especially others who face daily hardship greater than mine was possibly my favorite part of the conference--meeting and teaching others from around the world, sharing my faith with them, letting them know that they aren't alone, no matter how much their culture says otherwise.

The third reason was the quality of the speakers. The talks, the group discussions, and the one on one conversations made this conference a genuine pleasure to attend. Subjects such as Theology of the Body and discerning vocations, even though I had heard them before, were brought to new light, as I witnessed others learn them for the first time.

The fourth and final reason I wish to convey is this: the friends that I have made through Christ, Americans and Russians alike. The wisdom and power of Christ placed me in Russia of all places, and He gave me more friends than any major conference in America ever did. We are all connected by the social media, so we will hopefully stay in close contact.



Group Discussions were important.

I hope it is possible for me to again attend this conference, whether it is in Khabarovsk or Vladivostok, so long as I do God's will for His people.

Returning to Lesozavodsk

By Teresa Nuar, FOCUS Volunteer



This summer I led a group of college students and fellow FOCUS Missionaries to Far East Russia for the second time. I led the same trip with FOCUS, (The Fellowship of Catholic University Students) last summer and after being so profoundly impacted by our week in Lesozavodsk, I knew I had to go back again this year. Spending a week in Lesozavodsk taught me so much more about love and sacrifice than I could have ever imagined.



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Last summer, the week with the kids in Lesozavodsk was a mixture of adventure, joy and sacrifice. I couldn't speak much Russian at all, but that didn't matter to the kids – they still knew that we loved them and we were there to spend time with them. There were mosquitoes, it was hot, and we weren't exactly staying in a resort or anything special, yet none of that mattered! The fact that we were able to show the kids a small part of who God is through our love for them in that short week made everything else completely worth it. It was in that moment when I realized that any sacrifice is made so sweet when you live with love. Love makes everything much sweeter and much easier. No sacrifice is too hard, when you do it with love. Those little rascals captured a special place in my heart, and I knew then, that I would never forget them and that I needed to come back. When we're not there, they usually run wild and free, doing whatever they want all day. However, when we are there with them they know that they can't do those wild things, or else we will send them home. And for as much as they usually do whatever they want, they try so hard to be good for the week we are there, because they love spending time with us too! It was incredible to have that effect on the little rascals, even if it was for such a short time!

This summer was even better than the last time I was there. Yes, it was still hard, and I was tired for most of the week, but we went to love those kids and tell them stories about God. I remembered most of the kids from last year, and most of them remembered me too. One of the first days we were there, one of the older kids asked me why I had come back again this summer. Being very honest, I told the group of them around me that I had come back because I loved them, and I wanted to see them again. Needless to say, they were taken aback by this. They didn't know how to respond, but they did understand that they were special and important. They probably don't have people tell them that they're special very often.



Being with those kids for a week taught us so much about love too. It is easy to love your friends and your family, because it is easy, it is usually comfortable, and you can leave when it gets hard. That week stretched us outside of our comfort zones to love the kids even when they were being rascals, not listening, or just fighting amongst each other. And you learned to love your fellow mission members even when you got on each other's nerves. Being stretched by God is always hard, but never impossible, because His grace is always sufficient for us – and it was in remembering these truths that helped me learn and grow as we spent time with the kids all week.

It was a crazy week with the kids running all over the place, doing crafts, singing songs led by the Sisters, and taking them down to the river, because they had endless amounts of energy! But it was in those moments of personal connections that I know we made a difference in their lives and that they will remember these times for the rest of their lives. People don't remember what you say, as much as they remember that you cared about them. Those kids might not remember anything we told them, but they did know that we travelled halfway around the world to play with them for a week, because we cared about them. And before we left they asked us if we were coming back next year!



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

News Notes

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

● **Construction projects:** Our sisters are working on their convent here in Vladivostok, and so are our sisters in Jakarta! We need to do something for our seminarians in the Philippines. The construction of the new church in Nakhodka is also in progress.

● In Vladivostok our maintenance crew has been busy working on the conversion of our heating system from **fuel oil to gas**, now that LPG gas is available in Vladivostok. We have four furnaces which heat both buildings, the church and the parish center. The furnaces have to be relocated from the church basement to an above-ground area so that the gases can't accumulate. The storage tanks also have to be changed. Gas will be cleaner burning for our city environment, and cheaper to buy. Thank you to the Papal Foundation that we can make this conversion!

● In Indonesia at our **seminarian residence in Maumere** they are putting the finishing touches on the temporary building to house the seminarians which is made of bamboo in the old style of homes before concrete. Congratulations to Fr Inosensius and the seminarians for beginning the new school year in the temporary quarters. With termites and hot, muggy weather, we have to plan on a permanent building, if we can find the funds.



Making a fence around the temporary seminarians' residence building in Maumere

The whole Maumere community with Fr Inosensius Hetu



The dining room/common room in the temporary building in Maumere, Indonesia

● The feature article in the journal "Religious Life" (July/August 2015, Vol. XXXIX No. 4) was **written by Sr Maria Stella Whittier, C.J.D.**, a member of our Vladivostok parish. Entitled "On Mission to Russia with Love", the article gives a good summary of our Sisters in Jesus the Lord's history, charisma, and their works and plans in Russia and America.



The logo of the Sisters in Jesus the Lord of Kansas City

Man's Best Friend

Galina is our parishioner in a distant city. She is in her 80's, and came to the Russian Far East from Poland when she married a Russian soldier. She has not been in Poland since, and has lost track of all her relatives there. All her children have already preceded her in death, and her grandchildren live far away. She is now handicapped, and can't leave her single room 4th floor apartment. I usually visit her every month for Holy Communion and the Anointing of the Sick. Her only companions were her telephone and her poodle "Boss". Boss recently died, at 22 years old, and Galina was completely lost without him. She called and said, "Father, please, please bring me a dog to keep me company! I am so bored!" Where to get a dog? I looked in the want ads, and the very first add was for a mini-taxa puppy which anybody could have for free. I knocked on the door and was met by a lady with this adorable little puppy which she simply handed to me. I thought "Druzhok" (Little Friend) would be a good name for him, but when I brought him to Galina she exclaimed with joy and said, "His name will be 'Parol' (Password)." Now she doesn't call on the phone as often—Parol keeps her company!

--Fr Myron

- Our cook **Nadezhda** who has been feeding us for nearly 20 years suddenly got a very bad infection and her health went into a downward spiral. She was in intensive care at the Thousand Bed Hospital for weeks here in Vladivostok, and was not expected "to live through the night" at first. Now she is gradually coming out of it. We are hoping and praying for the best. I was glad to be allowed to enter intensive care to anoint her. Soon she will leave the hospital.

- **Brothers receive minor orders. Brother Jacob Dambe, CJD**, received the minor orders of lector and acolyte on August 18 at Pastor Bonus Seminary in Pontianak, Indonesia. It is his final year in the seminary, so now we are planning for his ordination to the diaconate and priesthood. Hopefully he is the first of several ordinations to be held in 2016.



Bishop Augustine of the Pontianak Diocese was the ordaining prelate.

Brothers Edwin Intan, C.J.D., and Harben Forte, C.J.D., received their minor orders of Lector and Acolyte on October 4, the Feast of St Francis, together with Capuchin Franciscans in Tagaytay, Philippines where they are living while they study. The brothers enjoy living with the Capuchins, and we are grateful to the Capuchins for taking in our brothers. Congratulations all!



Brother Harben and Brother Edwin in the Capuchin chapel

Major Projects for Major Donors:

Projects that **still need funding**:

1. A permanent **house for our seminarian** community in Maumere, Indonesia.
2. A permanent **house for our seminarian** community in the Philippines.
3. Repair of the **building on Russian Island** for the convent of our Sisters in Jesus the Lord who are working at the Far Eastern Federal University here in Vladivostok, Russia.
4. Funding to purchase space for our proposed Assisted Living Center for the **elderly in Lesozavodsk**, Russia.
5. Repair of the way our **bells are hung** in the steeples in Vladivostok.

Opportunities

♥ Give an eternal gift! **Mass requests** celebrated in Russia may be sent to the mission office for your loved ones or special intentions. Suggested stipend is \$15 per mass.



♥ Does your parish have worn out **priests' vestments** ready for recycling? Please don't discard them! Our mission revitalizes them into bible and prayer book covers, rosary cases and prayer book markers. These make special gifts. If your parish has vestments or altar clothes you no longer use, we would be very grateful for them. Used vestments still in wearable condition are sent to Russia or passed on to other mission churches.

♥ Might you consider **sponsoring one of our seminarians** for one year or part of a year? You'll receive personal email news and communication from your seminarian. We have been blessed with many faithful vocations to our order of Canons Regular In Jesus The Lord, and our sister order. Each of our seminarians is in need of individuals or groups who can sponsor them through prayer and financial support while in the seminary. The annual cost for 1 seminarian for education, books, transportation, and humble living expenses is \$10,774.

♥ Organize a mission cookbook and/or Russian icon and gift **sale at your parish** for the Christmas season to help

the mission. We will provide the materials! Contact the mission office.

♥ CA and NV please use our free **SHARES card!** SHARES card users have earned an average of \$900 per month for the mission. Thank you! Anyone in CA or NV who shops at Save Mart, Food Maxx, Smart Foods and Lucky's grocery stores can help. It costs you nothing to participate. Present the card at the grocery checkout. Save Mart will donate up to 3% of your grocery bill to the mission! You can hand out cards to your friends and family to use, too.

♥ When shopping Amazon, use Amazon Smile! Mary Mother of God Mission Society will receive 0.5% of your purchase from Amazon. Please see our website www.vladmission.org for more details on how to sign on.

♥ By popular request, we have an **on-line gift store!** We offer gifts that will remind us of our beautiful Catholic faith in every area of our lives. We've posted a few of the most popular items to begin with and will be adding more media and gifts regularly. Thank you for your interest and support in developing this project. All proceeds benefit the mission. Find our store at www.store.vladmission.org. Like us on **FACEBOOK Gifts of Faith/Modesto**

♥ Remember our ever popular **Abundant Blessings Cookbook** as part of your Christmas giving! Proceeds go to our seminarians' education fund and our Women's Support Centers. Diverse and beautifully arranged, our collection of family recipes was submitted from the many cultures and countries of our priests, seminarians, sisters, and families in celebration of our mission's many blessings. Patrons are ordering in multiples and 2nd and 3rd repeat orders once they try the delicious recipes and see the beautiful layout. Here are some of the distinctive features in our heirloom quality cookbook.



- 498 tasteful international recipes tab divided into 8 geographic regions of the recipe's origin - Asia & India, Australia & South Pacific, Europe, Mediterranean & Africa, Mexico & the Caribbean, Russia, South & Central America, USA & Canada
- Beautiful roses and OL of Vladivostok icon adorn the jacket
- Sturdy three ring cover, thickly padded and washable
- 16 pages of cooking helpful hints
- Space for notes and room to add your own recipes
- Personal touch of family stories within recipes
- Pictures pages of our mission family
- Cost: Only \$25 each (includes S/H in continental US)

Last chance for your FREE BONUS Christmas in Vladivostok Music CD with each book. Ends Dec. 31st

For the holidays, here are yummy dessert highlights from each of our international sections:

Asian and India - Sticky Banana Cake with Toffee Sauce, Cambodia, Sok Maly

Australia and South Pacific - Pavlova (Meringue Cake), New Zealand, Kristie Nelson, Modesto, CA

Europe – Rugelach (Hanukkah Cream Cheese Cookies) Ashkenaz, Marianne Moran Methuen, MA

Mediterranean and Africa – Baklava, Greece, Vicky Trevillyan, Modesto CA

Mexico and Caribbean – Coconut Kisses Candy, Puerto Rico, Chef Victor M. Collazo, San Juan, Puerto Rico

Russia – Russian Tea Cakes, Russia, Fr. Dan Lapolla, Ontario, Canada

South and Central America - Xipa (Guarani Indian Bread), Paraguay, Kristie Nelson, Modesto CA

USA and Canada – Chocolate Chinese Noodle Candy, USA, Great Grandma Anna Mae Blackmore, Los Angeles, CA

Order several copies from our website or online store!

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with many of their very friendly and professional staff. You may remember reading about the very faithful and effective FOCUS mission teams who have been coming to Vladivostok each summer to participate in the summer youth camps and who have helped create programs for the needs of the children in Lesozovodsk. We are very grateful for FOCUS and the young adults who have greatly helped our mission and the young people of Russia! You can read more about the work of FOCUS and their college and mission ministries at www.FOCUS.com.

We're always looking for volunteers who would like to put their talents to use for the mission. Here are a few ways you can get involved and be missionaries right where you are!

- Mission speaker – Speak at parishes or ministry meetings about the mission
- Conference representative – Distribute literature at Catholic Conferences
- Organize fundraisers – make contacts with our sister parishes and help coordinate fundraising activities
- Hold a cookbook, icon sale, or other fundraiser at your parish
- Ask your pastor to distribute a few copies of our bi-monthly newsletter at your parish or request any vestments intended to be discarded.

Of course we provide any training and information you need.

I invite you to contact me at the mission office at 209-408-0728 or usoffice@vladmission.org. I will enjoy speaking with you!

We thank God for our many, many blessings! Have a very blessed Advent and Christmas season.

Sincerely, Vicky Trevillyan, National Coordinator

Baby Talk

From the Women's Support Centers



You would be shocked to find out how important our Women's Support Centers are!



Or you could just take the philosophical approach.

Vladivostok Mission
Mary Mother of God Mission Society
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Modesto CA 95357-0835

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Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Modesto CA
Permit No. 19

Return Service Requested

Baby Talk
From the Women's Support
Centers



Maybe a passing stork will put a
worm in here.

[Maria born March 21 15]



Some of the Board members, Fr James West, Fr Doug Grandon, Vicky Trevillyan, Tyler Kolden, Fr Myron Effing, Fr Stephen Bauer, Dr Robert Moran, and Susan Gray

From the development desk...

Dear Friends, Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas! It's going to be an exciting upcoming year for the mission!

In October, the 10 members of the Executive Board of Mary Mother of God Mission Society met at the headquarters of FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students) in Denver, CO. During our board meeting, among several topics we discussed Fr Myron's

upcoming retirement in February coinciding with his 75th birthday, how to improve the efficiency of our national office as we continue to grow, and new ways to promote the mission. You'll be reading more about the wonderful future plans in upcoming Sunrise issues.

One of board members, Tyler Kolden, works full time at FOCUS. We were given a tour of their offices and met
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