



Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



Mary Mother of God Mission Society: Reviving the Roman Catholic Church in Eastern Russia
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Parish Heroine Faithful to the Last

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



94 year old **Regina Stanislavnaya Stanko** died on March 16, 2016. She was our oldest and “last” parishioner, as she was a member of the parish before the Revolution and before the closing of the parish under the press of Communism. She was born on March 6, 1922, in Vladivostok, baptized by Fr Karol Slivovsky in the Most Holy Mother of God Catholic Church. Her family was always close to the priests of the parish, and faced the sorrow of seeing them arrested and sent to camps or exiled. When the by-then Bishop Slivovsky was exiled to Sedanka outside Vladivostok in June of 1930, she was sent by her family to deliver milk products to him from their own cow every day by train. It was her family who arranged the funeral and the burial of Bishop Slivovsky in January of 1933. At that time she was *(Con't on Pg 2)*

Theology in Context

By Brother Patrick Napal, C.J.D.

During our seminary semester break, I took a trip from Davao City to Davao Oriental, which took 6 hours by mini bus. There I visited communities of poor people who are the survivors of the super typhoon "Pablo" three years ago. One is a small village in Cogon Boston, a community of 40 households. Their houses are now beautifully done, donated to them by a housing program which was a joint effort of government and non-government agencies. *(Con't on page 2)*



The local folks of Cogon Boston

The Chapel of the Immaculate Conception



(Continued from Pg 1) eleven year old, and her story is corroborated by another parishioner who was also at the burial, though they didn't know each other. When she visited us in Vladivostok she could easily remember the house where he lived and died, and she remembers the cemetery marker of his grave, and the photo of the marker she brought with her told us of his birth and death dates. The family was punished by authorities and fled to Tomsk in Siberia to distant relatives. It was her dad and then the family who saved the personal items of Bishop Slivovsky which she has since given to our parish treasury. Later Regina was a participant in World War II as a medical nurse, and so she is a Hero of the Soviet Union as is shown by the medals that she wore.

A dedicated parishioner and in general a remarkable person, she was always interested in what was happening in our parish and in Vladivostok. As the "last" of our parishioners from before the repression of Religion in Russia, with her passes a generation of tried and true Catholics, and we remember them and pray for them, many of whom died as martyrs and without receiving the Sacraments, as there were no more priests. Eternal Rest grant to her, O Lord!

Theology in Context (Con't from pg 1) So they have houses, but they don't have food to eat. The land is very poor, so they have to walk under the scorching heat of the sun for the 2 or 3 kilometers to their hand-to-mouth gardens. They have plenty of cassava, which is their food for breakfast, lunch, and supper. Everyone in the community is very thin--bones of their bodies are showing, and everyone is hungry. I bought some bread for them, enough to feed 100 people, and some juice in a soft packs. The place was quiet as there were only few people in their homes by the time we arrived. Most of the men are forced to leave their families to work just to earn something for their families. So the majority in the community are women and children. Since they were only few of them home when I arrived, each had their fill of the bread that I brought for them. Everyone was happy. They said that it is very seldom that they could eat bread, especially good and tasty bread like what I brought.

It was funny when a 2 year old boy, who just arrived from their garden with his mother, came to our small gathering behind the community chapel and we immediately gave them some bread. But upon seeing the juice in a bag, the boy asked in a loud voice saying, "Give me some soy sauce." Everyone laughed, because he thought that what he was holding in his hand was cassava, and they normally eat cassava with soy sauce! The poor boy did not realize that he was eating bread.

In their garden, they also face difficulties. The crops are being attacked by rats and monkeys. So it is really a big problem for them.



Brother Patrick and the gifts

Another place I visited was the District Hospital. The Hospital is in Cateel, Davao Oriental. I visited the sick, and witnessed that the Hospital is very poor. In fact, when I was there, a beautiful baby was born prematurely early in the morning and died at about 10:am. I talked to the doctor who said that the baby could have been saved if their hospital were fully equipped. The hospital has no incubators for babies, which is why the baby died. The mother and the doctor asked me to baptize the baby, but I explained to them the since the baby is already dead, we can only pray for her. So we offered some prayers for the baby and for the consolation of the mother.

I am sending you some pictures of this trip, so that you may at least see the faces of these folks. I am wearing gray there, since the roads are very dusty and besides, the service we used was a pick-up truck, so we were in the back, outside, where dust and dirt would easily stick into my white habit.

The trip was a beautiful experience all together The simple joy of simple people and the encounter with God in the people I visited, in the simple joy expressed in beautiful smiles of simple people. It was indeed a true encounter of a Great God.--that is my own way of theologizing it. Thanks be to God!

[Would there be a donor who would like to give a baby incubator to that hospital? --ed.]



Indonesian Guardian Angel Foundation Cross Country Adventure 2016

By Sister Marthina Tongli, C.J.D.

Photo by Recharky Atoktere

A month before Easter some of the volunteer teachers announced an activity to collect used bicycles for our orphans, one for each “angel”. The bikes would be useful for life skill training, physical training, and even leadership and science class.

The response was amazing! 15 bikes were gathered from all over Jakarta, Bogor, Tangerang, and Bekasi, Indonesia. So many sponsors and helping hands to pick up and fix the bikes!

A week after Easter 2016, Sunday April 3, the kids were really excited. They had already prepared and packed the night before. The news was that they will have a bike trip. They didn’t know that each one of them would also get a bicycle—all their own!

Around 12:30 at noon we brought the kids to <http://www.idadventure.com> basecamp where all the

bikes were fixed and stored. When the time arrived and we gave the bikes to them, they were so joyful. Each choose the bicycle they liked and every kid got the one they liked.

They decorated the bikes with balloons and colorful paper, and they made a promise to look after their bikes. They enjoyed the short bike skill training by Mr Cornelius Koko, their guide that day.

They tried the bikes all over the yard, making sure it would suit and fit them. They got really excited when they found out that the next challenge was to go on their first 10 K cross country trip.

Sister Bona joined their first Cross Country on a bicycle. It was a great success; the kids loved it. That day for sure would leave beautiful memories. They peddled 10 K, slowly but surely. The route was nearly flat, but some climbing, and down hill. Some of them fell, including Sister Bona but they managed. They are still adjusting to the new bike and the route.

For the boys 10 K is nothing, with two pit stops. That day we saw them laugh so we know they were

authentically happy, even when they fell or were full of sweat, trying to keep up. It was amazing to see their stamina. A 15 or 20 K bike trip is really a possibility next.

We arrived at the Canonesses' house in Auri around 4:30pm. We were served cool lemonade--it felt like heaven. We were back home around 5:30.

We thank you, the bicycle benefactors, sponsors, and volunteers of GAF. It meant a lot for the orphans! The adventure on the 3rd of April 2016 might already only be a bit of memory, but the bike they will still enjoy, and all the volunteers and security and safety officers who helped them experience the love that they share will for sure stay forever in their hearts. Thank you!

News Notes

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

- What with oil prices so low, this is a time of **economic crisis** in Russia—about half of what the government budget expected! You know Russia is one of the world's largest producers of oil and gas. So many women are turning to our Women's Support Centers for help! When Vicky Trevillyan was here from our office in America, she brought with her two suitcases of children's clothing—They were snapped up instantly. Also, the Guardian Angel kids' parents are so grateful for the benefactors who are helping them just now. The people here are so grateful for whatever help we can give. Our prayers go out for those who can help. We've opened another Women's Support Center in Romanovka, and continue to help the many children in Lesozavodsk and Romanovka, which is where the poorest children are. I'm wondering if we don't have to begin the soup kitchen for elderly poor already, as the government pensions are so small, and elderly who don't have families to help them will be in big trouble. How important families are!

- Here in Russia, Fr Sebastian is now the **pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in Romanovka**, too. (You remember he is also pastor in Nakhodka where he will be building a new church building.) He has plans for Romanovka, too, including a new Women's Support Center there (crisis pregnancy center) and the purchase of a place so that the parish can have a place for classes for kids and a social hall for events. This has been so lacking in that parish. I'll try to get some pictures for next time rather than using a thousand words.

- We received the following letter from Trisha Labbé, Director of Religious Education at **Holy Ghost Parish of Hammond, LA**: "The children of Holy Ghost Parish in Hammond, Louisiana celebrated their First Communion on January 9, 2016. As part of their First Communion Offertory, the class chose to donate to Vlad Mission Grandma Mentoring Program in honor of one of their

The Honest Thief

Anna and Victor have been our long-time parishioners. They have six children. Victor has leukemia and often needs chemotherapy from which he suffers terribly. So Anna has much of the work, and since the kids are growing, their car is very important to them. They had a hybrid which is very fuel economical. Wouldn't you know? One morning they awoke to find the car missing! Their documents were inside. After months the police could find no trace of it. One day Anna's documents that she is a multiple mother appeared in their mailbox! Apparently the thief felt remorse that he stole from such a mother, so he returned the documents. Still no trace of the car! Replacing it will cost about \$8000. Anybody want to help?

fellow classmates who lived in one of these orphanages and benefited from your program the first 18 months of his life. On behalf of the 2016 Holy Ghost Catholic Church First Communicants, please accept this donation of \$495. I also included one of the notes from one of our first communicants. As always, we continue to pray for the orphans and all children in need. Thank you for all you do to support children by giving them a nurturing, loving environment. Yours in Christ, Trisha Labbé

- On November 16 our Bishop Kirill Klimovich of the Diocese of St Joseph in Irkutsk visited the Sisters in Jesus the Lord convent on Russian Island, and he **blessed the house and chapel** during Mass with the sisters. Bishop Kirill said, "It is a great joy and grace that the Lord sends his servants so that they can work in the praise of God and for the salvation of people. I'm thankful to God that such holy days happen in our diocese. We need such helpers as these sisters. I am glad to bless you and wish you new vocations!"



Fr Sebastian, Bishop Kirill, Sr Mary Catherine, Fr Myron, Sister Stella Marie, and Sr Mary Faustina, after the blessing.

On the Island and in Vladivostok the Sisters work with

youth and children, They help at the Hospice, and they are a big factor in the liturgical music at the several parishes in Primorye. They serve the students at the Far Eastern Federal University, among whom are many foreigners from around the world, including Catholics. They also operate the Rachael's Vineyard retreats, in conjunction with the Women's Support Centers of Primorye.



- I still have a big impression from my trip to Indonesia. Here is a photo of our seminarians there, together with Fr Inosensius and Fr Ferdinandus. They are standing in front of the **temporary building** which is their home, which they built with their own hands this past year! When I was there last year, it was just a jungle. Now it is home to our 27 seminarians. Of course we need to build a chapel and a permanent building when we can. Because of overcrowding, they are building a 2nd temporary building now, to house the students who are writing their theses for their degree. The monastery is so overcrowded that the students can't find a quiet enough place to do their research and write their papers. We rented a small nearby house for a month until the new temporary place could be built. As Fr Dan told folks at my 75th birthday party,



Wall raising for the dormitory for the Theology students.

“Earlier we had so few vocations we didn't know what to do, but now we have so many we don't know how we will feed them!” A great problem to have, no? It will be great when the first Indonesian or Filipino priests will be able to come to Russia as Fr Dan and I are aging. And maybe even several Indian and Vietnamese priests, too! Counting the days! And they are not wasting any time in Indonesia. I received a photo of the seminarians already raising the walls on the temporary building for the Theology students!

- On March 19 Brother Harben Fortes, C.J.D. graduated with his Bachelor of Theology degree from the Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay, Philippines. We are grateful to the Capuchin Franciscans for giving him and our Brother Edwin Intan, C.J.D. a place to live while they are in the seminary there. The Capuchins operate Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, a huge busy parish, and one of the favorites in the area for weddings. We'll soon need our own house in the Philippines as our seminarians there increase in number.



Bro Harben with the statue of St Arnold Janssen, the founder of the Society of the Divine Word, at the the seminary in Tagaytay

- One of our benefactors regularly sends a donation, and adds the instruction, “Put some **fern and cut flowers** for the Blessed Virgin.” I'm sure it pleases her very much!





2015's Kids Saved at the Women's Support Centers

- Easter 2016 in Vladivostok



"Palm Sunday" with "pussy willows" in Vladivostok



Getting their baptismal candles in Vladivostok, Easter 2016.

Baby Talk
From the Women's Support Centers

Now I lay me down to sleep....
[Timur June 20 2015]

Mary Mother of God Mission Society
 Russian language: www.catholic.vladivostok.ru
 English language: www.vladmission.org
 Phone in Russia: +7-4232-26-96-14
myron@catholic.vladivostok.ru
Daniel@catholic.vladivostok.ru

Office in California: Phone: +1-209 408-0728
 Mary Mother of God Mission Society
 1736 Milestone Cir
 Modesto CA 95357
usoffice@vladmission.org

Opportunities

♥ **Bilingual** volunteers are much needed for weekend mission preaching and talks. If you are fluent in Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean or Polish, we need priest and lay speakers for an occasional weekend parish talk. We provide the training, information and travel to the parishes. Please contact the mission office for details.

♥ Organizing a parish, Catholic conference, or other event to celebrate the **100th Anniversary of the Fatima** appearances? We have a select team of representatives including our priests, deacons and board members who are available to speak at your event. Contact the mission office for information and portfolio of speakers.

♥ Ever thought about a **mission trip** to Vladivostok? Mission work in Russia is a deeply moving experience. Staff from our USA office can assist you in forming a team from your parish or university or arranging for you to join one. We have one group traveling September 13 to October 1, 2016. Will you be part of the adventure? Contact our mission office for more details.



Mission team from California stops to pray at mass grave site of martyrs killed during Communist times.

♥ You can help our seminarians **build the seminary in Indonesia!** Contact the mission office for details.

♥ Please consider one time, monthly, or yearly **sponsorship of one of our seminarians.** 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 of Jesus the Lord (www.vladmission/vocations) as well as our sister order (www.cjd.cc). 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.

♥ Save time and money. Sign up to donate by **automatic monthly deduction** from checking or credit card. Contact the mission office for details.

♥ We're gearing up for our 2016 **conference season.** If you enjoy meeting other faithful Catholics, we need you! Please join our volunteer pool to attend Catholic conferences and distribute literature and information about our mission. Let us know if there is a conference coming to your area!

♥ Hold an icon or cookbook fundraiser for the mission!

♥ You can help our priests while giving an eternal gift! **Mass requests** celebrated in Russia or Indonesia may be sent to the mission office for your loved ones or special intentions. Suggested stipend is \$15 per mass.



♥ Ask your pastor to place a few copies of our bi-monthly **Vladivostok Sunrise** at your parish to share the news of the important work of the Catholic Church in Russia. We'll be happy to send them.

♥ When shopping Amazon, use **Amazon Smile!** Designate **Mary Mother of God Mission Society** as your charity of choice. The mission will receive 0.5% of your purchase from Amazon. It costs you nothing to participate. Please see our website www.vladmission.org for more details on how to sign on. Thanks to you, we received 310.19 from AmazonSmile already!

♥ CA and NV Important **SHARES card program changes!** The program is now Escrip/SHARES. The SHARES cards are no longer being used. Now all you do is enter your phone number at the checkout counter and the mission will receive up to 3% of your grocery total when you shop at Save Mart, Food Maxx, Smart Foods and Lucky's grocery stores. As always, no cost to you! So, please continue with the program by registering your phone number online. To register your phone number in a couple of quick steps, please go to www.escrip/shares and follow the sign in prompts. Select **Mary Mother of God Mission Society** as your charity. From then on, all you do is punch in your phone number at the check out counter and the mission to receive up to 3% of your grocery total! If you do not use a computer please call the mission office for assistance.

♥ Remember our ever popular **Abundant Blessings Cookbook** as part of your special giving! Diverse and beautifully arranged, our collection of international recipes comes from the many cultures and countries of our priests, seminarians, sisters, and mission families in celebration of our abundant blessings. \$25 per cookbook covers shipping in the continental USA. Proceeds go to our seminarians' education fund and our Women's Support Centers. Order from our mission website, www.vladmission.org, online store, www.store.vladmission, or contact our office.



For more information regarding any of our opportunities, please contact Vicky Trevillyan at our USA office, usoffice@vladmission.org, 209-408-0728.

Vladivostok Mission
Mary Mother of God Mission Society
1736 Milestone Cir
Modesto CA 95357-0835

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From the development desk...

Dear Friends,

I pray you received many blessings during the Lent and Easter season.

“Construction” is the buzz word these days! Thanks to many of you Our Lady of the Pacific Church building in Nakhodka and the seminary and chapel in Maumere, Indonesia projects are moving forward.

• The land for Our Lady of Pacific Church is being cleared and leveled at this time. By the time this article is published the concrete reinforcement will begin. Fr Sebastian (above) stands on the construction site.



• Construction of the temporary seminary buildings in Maumere, Indonesia are progressing rapidly, with our 28 seminarians and 2 priests providing the back breaking labor! As funding allows, Fr Ino would like to build permanent buildings. After visiting them in Maumere in January, I could see the critical need for housing and places for study for our seminarians and priests. The

community in Maumere is nothing short of blessed with so many vocations and faithful young men. Not only are they committed to study and formation of their vocation, they are very hard working and love to serve and teach the local people of their villages. As Fr Ino says, “We are not here just for ourselves, but for the people.” Go to our website to see a beautiful Power point prepared by Fr Ino of the Maumere land and monastery development. Included is a beautiful tribute to Fr Myron and to you, our benefactors.

• We need your help to pay back the loan for the Maumere monastery/seminary land. The 4.5 acre parcel cost \$194,000. We have collected \$27,855 so far to repay the loan. We pray you can help with the monastery project and land loan.

You may donate online with credit card or Pay Pal at www.vladmission.org or by sending a check or money order to the mission office in Modesto. Please make the check to Mary Mother of God Mission Society. Please note “Maumere” when making your donation. You can find future updates on our website. First and foremost please pray for us. We continue to pray for you. Many thanks for your support. God bless you and your families.

Sincerely, Vicky Trevillyan, Mission Coordinator
usoffice@vladmission.org, 209-408-0728