



# Mary Mother of God Mission Society

## Reviving the Catholic Church in Eastern Russia

Dear Benefactor

December 26, 2012

Happy Feast of St Stephen, and Happy New Year! I'm so grateful to Almighty God for you and for all our benefactors, but also for the remarkable things that are happening just now! On December 15 our Brother Inokenty Hetu, C.J.D. was ordained to the diaconate as a step to the priesthood! I have to show you a picture!



*Fr Myron, Bro Arnulfo, Bishop Jaucian, Deacon Inokenty, and Bro Patrick*

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I went to Manila for the event, and then on to Surabaya, Indonesia, where I met with our newly forming community there, which currently has six members, and more on the way. That was also a great experience! Then I visited the orphanage in Jakarta where two of our postulants are helping the sisters, teaching music, and playing soccer with the boys. Also a remarkable experience! All of this is such exciting news 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 (I'm nearly 72 years old now, and Fr Dan nearly 62.) So it is exciting that there are so many vocations 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 countries (even in America??) after their ordinations. But we'll have the expenses of their seminary training, but I know God will provide, and these seminarians are so terrific. I should know—I worked many years in the seminary in the U.S. before my work here in Russia. I don't want to count my chickens before the Autumn (as the Russians say), but we probably will have four Filipino and 5 Indonesian novices this year here in Vladivostok, and that means 9 more guys in the seminary next year. All these guys are from traditional Catholic families, and most of them are older and have their degrees and work experience already. Fingers crossed! Thanks be to God!

Thank you for your Christmas donations! May the Lord be equally generous with you in the New Year! Our parishioners had such a happy Christmas (even though it was a work

National Office: 1736 Milestone Cir • Modesto CA 95357 • 209-408-0728

U.S. e-mail: [USOffice@vladmission.org](mailto:USOffice@vladmission.org) • Russia e-mail: [myron@catholic.vladivostok.ru](mailto:myron@catholic.vladivostok.ru)

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day in Russia, so the “Midnight” Mass was even more packed than usual.) And now Fr Dan is putting the final touches on the four Christmas concerts, three of which are already sold out. By the way, here is a photo of the beautiful poinsettias that Fr Dan and Tatyana raised on our window sills so we would have them for Christmas. Fantastic—and free! (Yes, that’s the snow just on the other side of the windows!)



Actually the reds are very brilliant—they don’t show as well in a photo, probably because there is an interference effect on the surface of the leaves (sort of like peacock feathers.) By the way, this is only half of them!

Friday I go to say Christmas Mass at my parish in Lesozavodsk. Poor parish in Lesozavodsk! A thief broke in and damaged things, and stole a heater and some other things. That on top of the fire that was in the building a month earlier which was set when a thief stole the major electric cable to the building. Then we lost at the auction for the purchase of the building where the parish is located! Someone else richer than us bought the building, so now we are wondering what will happen to our poor parish there. Or maybe we’ll have to move out to different premises! I wonder what God has in store for us. The questions are now urgent, so decisions have to be made. Because of the fire below, wet cloths froze to the floor when the ladies tried to wash it! And Nakhodka is expecting to get land again soon for its church. That will be another expense.

We are looking forward to the arrival of the sisters in January to work in the new university. Plans are going forward on the preparation of their living and working space. We are about done with the new sewer line to the building, and then we have to finish the bathrooms and put in the new electric cable. Then we can finish the interior spaces, and a Women’s Support Center will open there, too.

Wow, a lot of work still lies ahead. Pray for us. We will be praying for you, especially on the Feast of the Most Holy Mother of God, January 1! Happy New Year! God bless you.

Yours truly,

V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.