



Mary Mother of God Mission Society

Reviving the Catholic Church in Eastern Russia



Merry Christmas to you and all of yours!

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Dear Benefactor,

December 15, 2023

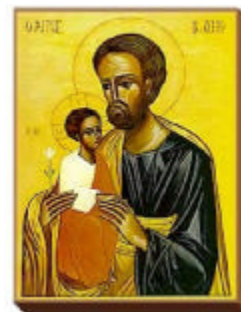
With Christmas on its way I want to wish you and yours a merry Christmas and say thank you for your prayers, help, support, and donations this past year! Happy new year, too! As I write this, the brothers are putting up Christmas decorations. Even though the Orthodox don't celebrate Christmas until January 7. But we are looking forward to Christmas Midnight Mass, especially because it is one of the two days in the year when our Russian parishioners and our Vietnamese parishioners celebrate Mass together. Otherwise they have mass in their own languages. (The other time is Easter.) We may start a Tagalog mass in the Spring, as the number of Filipino parishioners is also increasing. Hopefully our Brother Edwin will be ordained a deacon in the Spring, and then a priest. He speaks Tagalog. It is never a dull moment around here as our vocations from many countries keep things hopping! God bless you for your financial support!

Right now I'm thinking of some of the big families that our Women's Support Centers help. Five kids! Seven kids! And winter is here so there is heat to pay for, and food expenses become larger as the kids grow! Clothing is not such a big problem, as the Centers also collect and provide used clothing. On the other hand, wouldn't it be nice to get a new shirt or skirt at Christmas? Or new shoes? Or even a new toy for the youngsters?



A piece of news for you: Our Brother Peter Nsama, C.J.D. has received his minor orders in preparation for ordination to the Diaconate. Brother Peter is our first African vocation! He is really a great student, so great that the seminary in the Philippines that he is attending asked him to stay on when many seminarians were sent home in connection with the epidemic. He is from Uganda, and, of course already spent a year with us learning the Russian language. After ordination he will be welcomed by our African parishioners who are studying medicine at the Far Eastern Federal University. Congratulations, Brother Peter!

Recently we've had requests to open a Women's Support Center in Artyom, a suburb of Vladivostok. And I've been dreaming of opening a site in Artyom for St Joseph's Parish. St. Joseph's has existed for a long time already. We used to have Mass in the Second River section of northern Vladivostok. When we finally had the historic church of Vladivostok renovated and opened, St Joseph parishioners preferred to attend the sparkling new church instead of Mass in an apartment. So we had St Joseph's Sunday Mass in a café owned by the father of a parishioner. The café was located closer to Artyom. But when Fr Mark Dao, C.J.D. was ordained, we began having Mass in Vietnamese in Vladivostok, so all but one of the St Joseph's parishioners began attending the Vietnamese mass in Vladivostok—They were Vietnamese. So we began a monthly St Joseph's Mass for the one Russian parishioner as she was handicapped.



St. Joseph icon from St. Joseph's Parish, Artyom

But now Artyom is growing rapidly, and also is the whole area around Artyom because the Vladivostok Airport is there, located on the continent instead of on the peninsula like Vladivostok (to avoid sea fog.) So land prices there are better and many companies are locating there, so that the number of Russian parishioners is growing again. What I would like to do is to buy a commercial property on the first floor of a building in Artyom so that the Women's Support Center could be located there, and on Sundays we could start having Holy Mass there, too. No use thinking about a church there until the parish grows significantly. So we'll be looking for donors for the St Joseph's Parish in Artyom. Currently Mary Mother of God Mission Society supports five parishes, and offers priestly support to about seven more, in addition to the Women's Support Centers, and to seminarians who want to work in Russia after their ordination as priests. My home parish in Indiana and Fr Dan's in Michigan were both St. Joseph's Parishes. We hope he will bless this project!

Thanks be to God that we have more priestly vocations, so I have proposed to our Bishop Kirill that we could take on more parishes now here in Russia.

Thanks again for your great help! **God bless you in the New Year!** Yours truly,

V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D.

To make a donation or order a Mass using your bank card, go here:
<http://vladmission.org/get-involved/donate/>

To read the November 2023 Vladivostok Sunrise 174, go here: <https://vladmission.org/s/174>