



Mary Mother of God Mission Society

Reviving the Catholic Church in Eastern Russia

Dear Benefactor,

May 31, 2024

Happy Pentecost and Happy May, the **month of Mary!** I'm sorry if you have been waiting for a thank-you letter from me, but we had a problem with the post office, and then our computer system for information in Modesto was undergoing an upgrade, and that took longer than we hoped! We used the old system many years already, but it took time to get used to the new one. We are grateful to Jessica Trevillyan in Modesto for all the time and headaches involved with the new system. And thank to our board member, Tyler Kolden, who helped with lots of advice!

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I thought you might like this photo of "Misha" (= Michael) showing off his **baptismal garment** after his baptism at the Easter Vigil. (I think the neck is cut a little big!--It almost slides over his shoulders!)

Easter masses were full this year. The Vigil Mass in Russian and Vietnamese, then Easter Day Mass in Russian, and then Mass in English, and then one in Spanish! So many masses because Vladivostok's universities are a big draw from Africa and the Philippines and South America! Little did we expect that when we started our work here thirty two years ago!! Of course, God knew, which is why He sent us here with your help! By the way, our C.J.D. priests also served Easter Sunday Masses in the cities of Nakhodka, Romanova, Lesozavodsk, and Arsenyev!! And **this summer** we are scheduled to help in Ulan Ude, Sakhalin Island, Khabarovsk, and Blagoveschensk, plus all the above places. Our priests are busy. And we are getting requests for Vietnamese priests in America, England, and Russia!

One result of our **need to travel**, besides plane tickets to the faraway places, is the wear and tear on our cars! Last year you helped us to buy a new minibus, which is now in constant use. We have four other cars, two of which are getting at the end of their lifetimes. The little car is used mostly for in-town work, like shopping, doctor's appointments, etc., but it already has had a change of engine! The chassis is now rusting out. The Toyota Wish is also going on its last leg. It is used for long distance travel like going to Nakhodka, Khabarovsk, and Lesozavodsk. We have to replace these two cars, and we are looking for help! 😊 (Got any friends who could help, too??) The minibus that you helped us buy on last year's Giving Day has been a God-send!

On April 14 **Brother Peter Thang, C.J.D.**, took his simple vows for three years here in Vladivostok, finishing his novitiate. He is from Vietnam where he served as an English teacher before joining us. He also studied Chinese. He will now go to the seminary in Vietnam to study in his native language. Hopefully he will return to us for ordination. He is also known here for his interest in physical education, maybe doing more daily exercises that any of the rest of us! (or even all the rest of us put together!)



Brother Peter signing his vows.

This year the plan is to have the **Youth Conference** in Yakutsk, a city built on permafrost up in the North, sort of like Alaska, including the native peoples. I haven't heard a proposal for the theme of the conference yet. But it is always important, and the youth are upper high school students and college students, so their future is ahead of them. We always speak about marriage and family life and about religious vocations, too. I'll give you some pictures after the event. The children's retreat in Lesozavodsk is also coming up.

Now the **new Women's Support Center in Ussurysk** is up and running! We've had the first "adopt-a" baby request from there, too. The "Adopt-a" program is popular with American benefactors, so we are somewhat behind in sending baby pictures. Actually maybe that is a good sign,

as it means that the Russian government is more able to care for women in need. One of our parish families with five children just adopted two more! I promised help when and if they need it.

Sr Stella, C.J.D. is busy this weekend with a **Rachael's Vineyard Retreat**. They are well attended here, after so many abortions in the Communist era. She has been doing the retreats over Russia. Meanwhile their building on Russian Island has been completely renovated, so now we will soon begin Sunday Mass there again for the University students who live just a mile away from there on the Island. Meanwhile the Friday night student program and supper here at the church is going strong with up to 40 university students from a variety of countries attending.

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. It also means we need more mass intentions and stipends.

God bless you, and God bless you again for your financial support! We'll use it as wisely as we can!

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 May 2024 Vladivostok Sunrise 177, go here: <https://vladmission.org/s/177>