



# Mary Mother of God Mission Society

## Reviving the Catholic Church in Eastern Russia

Dear Benefactor,

September 15, 2024

September 2 was the first day of the **new school year** in here Vladivostok, so we had the blessing of students and teachers after the noon mass on September 1. I'm usually amazed that we seem to have more teachers than students in the parish! I always give them—students and teachers alike—a big red apple (I guess it is the “American” in me.) (Hello, Johnny Appleseed!) I suggest to the teachers that I hope each student will be as attractive as that apple, and to the students, that each subject is as attractive as that big red apple, too! (Of course they can't wait to start munching!)

Meanwhile, we've renovated two **new classrooms** for our children's catechism classes. They were storage rooms earlier, but I guess we have less to store there since all the public stores are full of stuff these days. And, with Fr Nikita being gone to help in the parish in Blagoveschensk and then on vacation to his family in Rostov-on-the-Don, I got to teach the adult catechism classes. It was great fun! The first lesson was answering initial questions, and then giving a history of the Catholic Church in our part of Russia, and the history of our parish. The second was an overview of the Bible, and the third one about the stories of creation in Genesis 1 to 3. Now I'll have to give it over to someone else, as I will travel to America for preaching and for the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of Mary Mother of God Mission Society.

On September 5<sup>th</sup> Bishop Kirill Klimovich of our Diocese of St Joseph in Irkutsk appointed Fr Vicky Samuel, C.J.D. to be **pastor of two parishes**: Annunciation in Arsenyev and Nativity in Ussuryysk. These parishes are about an hour or so away from Vladivostok, so Fr Vicky will be doing a lot of driving (See note about cars below!) These parishes were founded by myself nearly 30 years ago, and were then served by Franciscans from South Korea. More recently they have been served by Franciscans from Europe, but their community is now suffering from lack of vocations in Europe, so they have to relinquish these parishes. Fr Vicky has been serving as assistant priest in Vladivostok and Lesozavodsk, and as Catholic Chaplain for the Far Eastern Federal University here in Vladivostok. He is from St Mary's Parish in Sialkot, Pakistan, and completed his theology studies at the National Catholic Theological Institute in Karachi. He served his novitiate with us and completed his seminary education in Pakistan. He was ordained a deacon and then priest four years ago. As my helper priest in Lesozavodsk he has been leading the annual children's retreat there, and hopefully can continue to do so. His English and Russian are excellent. He says, “The kids taught me how to speak Russian!” But I said, “Watch out what you say, because some of those kids' Russian is pretty off-color!”

A wonderful benefactor has offered to match donations for the **cars that we need**, as the old ones are getting to the end of their useful lives, and, of course, Russia is big and the parishes are far apart, so we use the cars a lot! In fact, we will need them even more soon, as we take over three more parishes: Arsenyev and Ussuryysk, as the priests who have been working there are leaving Russia. And a yet undetermined parish where our Father Patrick Napal, C.J.D. will be serving—yet to be decided by the bishop. If you want to donate for this purpose, just mark the check “For Cars.” I just noticed on one of the cars how rusty is the trunk lid, and rust is all around the bottom of the doors and chassis—It already had an engine change. The other one, our “long distance” Toyota Wish, is really on its last leg, and now the air conditioner went out, and we are told by the mechanics that it can't be repaired because the car is too old and there are no spare parts

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for it. I tell the priests who are leaving for parish work to take some cash along, in case they have a breakdown and have to be towed!

September is the month when **new men join us** to be priests and members of our order, the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord (CJD). This year we are expecting six new members here in Russia. In December, the three who joined us last year can take their first vows, and then move on to their final seminary preparation for priesthood. Currently we have five brothers waiting for ordination to the diaconate here in Russia. So we continue to need your help by prayer and financing for all these seminarians. More guys are writing me asking to join us here in Russia, and more dioceses are writing asking for priests! And more young men are writing to me hoping to discern their future! And we need more mass intentions, too!

And of course I have to say "Thank You!" to all the folks in America who attended masses and programs for our mission through **Fr Dan Maurer's** presence in America for this past month. He has now returned to us. It will be my turn in October. See you there?



**Easley and Emery Trevillyan**

For a little bit of happy news, our National Coordinator in Modesto has just given birth to twin girls! Congratulations to Jessica Trevillyan and husband Mason. Here is a photo for you!

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 July 2024 *Vladivostok Sunrise* 178, go here:** <https://vladmission.org/s/178>