



Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



Mary Mother of God Mission Society: Reviving the Roman Catholic Church in Eastern Russia

Issue Number One Hundred Sixty Four March, 2022

The First Pastor of the Russian Far East*



Fr. Kazimierz Radziszewski, sitting between the Lutheran pastor and the pastor's wife—our only picture of him!

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

The Russian Far East became part of Russia in the 19th century, after the annexation of some of Chinese Manchuria (1858-1860). That's why the Russian Far East isn't in Siberia, regardless of what English maps say. Siberia (in the center of Russia today) became a part of Russia in the latter 16th century--That's a 200 year difference! Primorsky Territory was established as a separate division of the Russian Empire in 1856, with its administrative center in Khabarovsk. It was especially the construction of the Trans Siberian Railroad which spurred the development of the Russian Far East. The first complete railroad went through Manchuria, from today's Vladivostok to Harbin in Manchuria, and on to Chita in Russia again. Then it went around Lake Baikal to Irkutsk in Siberia as it continued toward Moscow.

Catholics in the Russian Far East arrived from Europe for several reasons. The first is the Railroad, the construction of which required many specially educated people, including geologists, engineers, and construction experts. They were more available in the Catholic territories in the west of Russia, because education was better there. The second is the military. The Tsar preferred to send the Catholic recruits to the Far East, far away of any temptation to participate in revolutions against him which were a feature of life in western, more recently acquired, lands of Russia. And then there was the prison island of Sakhalin to which were sent some of those who had in fact participated in rebellion. The Tsar, as head of the Russian Orthodox Church, was concerned for the salvation of his Catholic subjects, and so there were official government programs to provide spiritual care for Catholics by providing Catholic chaplains and churches. The Russian Far East was within the jurisdiction of the Catholic Archdiocese of Mogilev which is today in Belarus, and of the nearest Catholic parish, which was in Irkutsk, near Lake Baikal in Siberia.

The first Russian settlement in the Russian Far East was at the mouth of the Amur River on the Pacific Sea of Okhotsk. It was the place where Franciscan Fr De la Brunier had been martyred by natives earlier when the land was still Chinese Manchuria. And now there were many Polish Catholics among the settlers. A second settlement was made at Nicolaevk on the Amur, and then, further up the river, at Blagoveschensk. It was clear that the Far East needed a European priest, as the pastor in Irkutsk could not possibly tend to his own big parish, and



The Russian Far East (Wikipedia)

Most Holy Mother of God Pray for Us

make the long, exhausting trips to the Far East. So the Catholics of the Far East were without the Church and sacraments for extended periods of time.

The solution was found in a volunteer from Ulla in Belarus, Fr Kazimierz Radziszewski, ordained from the Minsk Seminary in 1863. He immediately began to collect church goods and finances for the long trip to the wild Far East. He was approved as pastor in Nicolaevsk by Tsar Alexander II in February of 1866.

Arriving in Nicolaevsk 18 months later, he found that he had no home and no money to buy anything! He lived in an abandoned hut which even required a lot of work to make it barely serviceable. The first masses were held in a run-down shack which he named the “Chapel of Ss. Cyril and Methodius.” And so began his work which lasted more than 25 years—constant travel to Catholics throughout the Far East including Sakhalin Island, sometimes even travelling by dogsled! His pay was not enough to provide his own sustenance, so he supported himself by fishing and preserving salmon and other seafoods, and by knitting clothing, even for sale. His was a life on the road, or on the river.

Eventually, the Russian Navy moved its headquarters south from Nicolaevsk to Vladivostok on the Golden Horn Bay, a mostly ice-free port. The Army moved from Nicolaevsk south to Khabarovsk and Ussurysk. So Fr Kazimierz petitioned to begin a parish in Vladivostok, and to move his residence here, since there were practically no parishioners left in Nicolaevsk. He petitioned to build a church in Vladivostok to serve the 2000 Catholic soldiers

stationed in Vladivostok, though he continued his trips to the Catholics of the whole Far East. His petition was answered negatively by the government, saying that Catholics could not build a church in Vladivostok until the Orthodox had built theirs. So Fr Kazimierz had no place to live and no church, either in Nicolaevsk or in Vladivostok! He had to beg for travel expenses and horses to visit his scattered flock which became more and more numerous and more and more widely scattered.

In 1891 the Trans Siberian Railroad was opened, which made travel easier. Even the son of the Tsar came to Vladivostok for the event, the future Tsar Nicolas II. And Fr Kazimierz was at last able to build a small wooden church in honor of Mary, the Mother of God, the first Catholic church in the Russian Far East! But soon Fr Kazimierz’s work was done. On July 6, 1893, while on his usual trip to Blagoveschensk, Fr Kazimierz died at the age of 55. On July 7 his body was buried with Orthodox rites in the city cemetery in Blagoveschensk, the grave marked by a cross and pillars with chains. Unfortunately, we don’t know where the grave is today because the Communists always destroyed cemeteries so as “not to remember the past, but struggle toward the future.” But God would never forget him, and we don’t want to, either. Fr Kazimierz, pray for us!

*Information and more details are available from the book by Miroslava Efimova, **Harsh Vineyard: The History of Catholic Life in the Russian Far East**, Translated by Geraldine H. Kelley, Ph.D., available from **Mary Mother of God Mission Society**.

News Notes

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

● Halleluia! Our **Father Mark Dao, C.J.D.** arrived from Vietnam to serve our 50 Vietnamese parishioners!

He was ordained a year ago in Vietnam, but couldn’t travel because of covid. On January 9 he had his first Sunday Mass here in Vietnamese. We are planning that he will travel to Khabarovsk and Nakhodka, too, to gather the Catholic Vietnamese in those cities. Vietnamese mass in Vladivostok is at 8:30 pm on Sundays because so many of the Vietnamese work in the markets which are very busy on Sundays. The mass is also being uploaded onto the internet, as is our Russian language mass.

● In late January our seminarian Bro **Jackson Malik, C.J.D.** was held up at gunpoint in Karachi, Pakistan. The robber took his billfold and cell phone, and those of his companion. It was traumatic, of course, but thankfully no one was injured.

Remember Mary Mother of God Mission Society in Your Will!



Fr Mark. One of his first duties was the funeral of one of our Vietnamese parishioners.



Women's Support Centers' Kids for 2021

Thank you, benefactors, for providing life, healing, medicines, food, and clothing for so many children in this difficult year! Thank you, Center volunteers, that you try to take good care of needy babies and their moms!



● Here is a picture of our **new group of novices**—seven—who received their habits on February 2. Three

are from Pakistan and four from Vietnam. Three of us priests are in the picture, and four of our professed brothers who are waiting for flights to the seminary in the Philippines (They are already studying on-line from here.) and two of our daily mass parishioners.

● February 2 was the **99th anniversary** of the erection of the Diocese of Vladivostok. It will be 100 years next year! Candidate for sainthood, Bishop Karol Slivovsky was the only bishop, but the diocese included the Russian Far East and huge tracts of land, including the country of Kazakhstan. In 2002 the diocese was closed when the Diocese of St Joseph in Irkutsk was created. Perhaps we will be a diocese again some day, but meanwhile, parishioners in Vladivostok have been circulating a petition to our Bishop Cyril Klimovich, D.D. to name our church a “co-cathedral” of the Diocese of St Joseph in Irkutsk. It would only be right and just! 😊

● Fr Myron's **81st birthday** was on February 7. Here is a photo together with seminarian Bro Kiran Chinthapalli, C.J.D. from India.



● Meanwhile, Fr Daniel Maurer's birthday is March 5. He will be 71!



How to Communicate with us

To make a donation or order a Mass using your money card, go here:

<http://vladmission.org/get-involved/donate/>

To watch our Russian Sunday mass, (8:00 pm Central Time Saturdays) go here: [facebook.com/parishvvo](https://www.facebook.com/parishvvo)

Internet

English language: www.vladmission.org
Russian language: www.catholic.vladivostok.ru
www.catholicvl.ru
Sisters in Jesus the Lord in English: www.cjd.cc

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The color theme of this issue is from the map of Russia on Page 1 from Wikipedia.

Baby Talk

From the Women's Support Centers



Two bits, four bits, six bits a dollar. All for our team, stand up and holler!

[Emilia, August 7, 2021]



Brother Elia Gill and Brother Rajnal Rehmat, both from Pakistan

My First Personal Religious Experience

By Bro. Elia Gill, C.J.D.

My personal religious experience started in 2004, one year after my mother passed away. I was then brought and raised in my grandfather's house. Everyone in my family used to say that I was the naughtiest and most stubborn child in my whole family, and I always accepted that happily. From my kindergarten to my high school I had a lot of Muslim friends, spending 4-5 hours a day with them which increased to 9-10 hours a day by high school. I did not go to Sunday Mass but rather used the time to play video games with my friends.

My father was a Seventh-day Adventist, but my grandfather from my mother's side was a very strong Catholic. My grandfather always used to pray in front of the little statue of Our lady of Fatima which was kept in his room. And each time he used to pass by the statue he always used to say, "You can do the impossible and can save us from evil."

I did not experience it until one evening in September, 2006, when I was going with my three Muslim friends to the seaside and we met with a horrible accident where two of my friends died on the spot and one was paralyzed due to serious injuries in his lower back and until now he can't walk by his own. Miraculously I was absolutely fine after the accident and just had some little scratches of my left foot.

Whoever heard about it said God saved me but my grandfather was so convinced that he used to say, "My

Mother Mary saved him and will take from Elia some bigger works for Her Son's glory."

After the accident, I also prayed in front of the statue but not with such devotion and love. Slowly I started understanding that Mary is my mother and she was the one who saved me from that accident.

Then I joined the altar servers' group, started working with the Missionaries of Charity sisters, working with Legion of Mary, and started praying a rosary daily. But when in 2019 I joined a religious congregation, the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord, in Russia, a country considered under the special

protection and care of Mother Mary and in the church named The Most Holy Mother of God, I came to believe that Mary's connection with me is for a special purpose and my grandfather was right--Mother Mary saved me and wanted me to work in her Son's vineyard as a religious missionary.

(Continued from Page 8)

Collegeville, Minnesota.

During and after his years of priestly seminary education Fr Myron also studied at the following state universities in various fields of science:

- Graduate School of Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. Astronomy
- Graduate School of Western Washington State University Mathematics
- Purdue University Mathematics
- Franklin Institute of Philadelphia, Astronomy

Fr Myron was awarded the degree of Master of Science for Teachers in the field of Astronomy from Cornell University, New York in 1970. His research project under the direction of Dr. Frank Drake was titled "Phase Tapering of Circular Reflectors".

Fr Myron was ordained to the diaconate in 1971 and to the priesthood in the Crosier Order on May 27, 1972 in the chapel of the Crosier House of Studies in Fort Wayne by Most Rev. Leo Pursley, D.D., bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

In 1986, with permission from his provincial superior, he took a leave-of-absence from his community and accepted a position as Chairman of the Science Department and physics teacher at the academically excellent Father Dueñas Memorial School, the only Catholic high school for boys on the island of Guam. There, at the suggestion and encouragement of the

Archbishop of Guam, he began to think about the possibility of starting a new community of canons regular of Saint Augustine, to live the ancient charism in fidelity to the full teaching of the Catholic Church according to the call for the renewal of religious life by Vatican II.

Fr Myron taught at Fr Dueñas and was Rector of the seminary for two years when the archbishop appointed him to be the new acting principal for the academic year 1987-88. While he was principal, with the permission of the Archbishop of Guam, Fr Myron wrote the Constitutions and General Statutes for the new community, which he named the **Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord**. The purpose of the community is to live faithfully the ancient communal, liturgical and priestly charism of the canons regular of Saint Augustine in a way which is compatible with the reform of the liturgy called for by Vatican II; is faithful to the fullness of the teachings of the Magisterium; and puts into practice Vatican Council's mandate for the renewal of religious life.

Congratulations Fr Myron! Your abiding devotion and faithful service to the Lord has touched countless hearts and inspired so many! Thank you.

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

P.S. You may read about Fr Myron's journey to the priesthood and more about this amazing priest (as written by Fr Daniel Maurer, CJD in Fr Myron's 2021 80th Birthday booklet. Contact the mission office for your free copy. While supplies last.

Opportunities

♥ Each year we contact each diocese throughout the USA requesting to **share our mission** in their parishes and seek help to continue our work. We are very grateful to those dioceses who extend their invitation for us to visit and speak during weekend Masses. We are in need of speakers who wish to tell of our mission a time or two during the year. Priests, religious and Spanish speaking volunteers especially needed! Please contact the mission office for information.

♥ Would your parish or apostolate like to help prepare our **bi-monthly Vladivostok Sunrise newsletter** for mailing? Please contact our mission office for details.

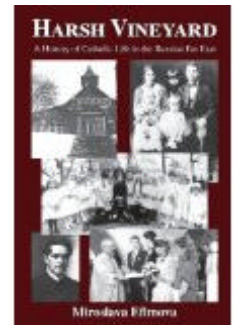
♥ The Vladivostok parish maintains an **emergency fund** for parishioners and others who are known to us who are dealing with unexpected and dire situations. In early 2021, we helped a large family in Nakhodka that needed medical care for their handicapped child. And in Lesozavodsk, a mother of 4 boys was killed in an automobile accident. We were able to assist the grandmother, who is now raising the boys. Donations of

any size to this fund are always welcome. Please note, "Emergency Fund" on your check or online donation.

♥ **Harsh Vineyard** a book about the history of the Roman Catholic Church of the Russian Far East, up to and including the time of Fr. Myron's arrival, is available from our office or online store, www.store.vladmission.org

Harsh Vineyard was written by our church historian, the late Miroslava Efimova. For many years Mrs. Efimova worked to collect any information from the archives in St Petersburg, Moscow, Minsk, Warsaw, Lublin, Krakov, Khabarovsk, Blagoveschensk and Vladivostok connected with the activities of the Vladivostok

Diocese. She used the historical documents and photos that she found to write **Harsh Vineyard**. Translated from Russian to English by Geraldine Kelley. Free gift wrap upon request. Cost is \$16.50, plus \$3.99 S/H



♥ The second printing of our popular and beautiful **Abundant Blessings Cookbook** is selling fast! A unique and excellent **gift idea** for new cooks to seasoned chefs! All will savor any of the whopping 494 local and



international recipes from our priests, seminarians and mission families! Proceeds from our cookbook go to our **seminarians' education** fund and our **Women's Support Centers** to help pregnant women and families. \$33.99 per cookbook covers cookbook and shipping in the continental USA.

Order through our website www.vladmission.org, or our online store, www.store.vladmission.org

♥ Want to schedule a fun activity and fundraiser for our mission this year? Ask your pastor if you may host a Russian Icon sale after Masses at your parish. The mission office provides all the merchandise needed. Sell **Russian and Greek icons and gifts**, statues, rosaries and other religious goods for all the sacraments and help the mission! Please contact Vicky or Jessica 209-408-0728 or usoffice@vladmission.org for details.

♥ Our priests are getting older. Fr. Myron will celebrate his 81st birthday on Feb 7th and Fr. Dan will celebrate 71 years on March 5th. Can you help them prepare for the future in the **Priests' Medical and Retirement Fund**? If you'd like to help care for Fr. Myron and Fr. Dan in their retirement years, please note, "Priests' Retirement Fund" on your check or donate online at www.vladmission.org. Thank you for taking care of our elder priests!

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From the development desk...

Dear Friends,

50 years a priest!

On May 27, 2022, Very Reverend Myron Effing, CJD will celebrate his **Golden Jubilee**. In the 1950's it was required by universities that each student study a modern foreign language for two school years. Because Fr Myron began his university studies two years after the Soviet Union launched the first satellite to orbit the Earth (Sputnik), the science department faculty of the University of Evansville were encouraging young science students to study the Russian language, so Fr Myron fulfilled his modern foreign language requirement by studying Russian for two years. God knew about the future!

Fr Myron attained the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics and Physics and received his diploma from The University of Evansville in June 1963. During his four years as an undergraduate student Fr Myron became convinced that God was calling him to the vocation of consecrated religious life as a way to help the Church through the time of crisis precipitated by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council (1962-65). He gathered information about

several religious orders, especially looking for one which was not too large, provided the possibility of being a seminary teacher, and which loved the sacred liturgy. He decided to apply to the Canons Regular of the Order of the Holy Cross (Ordo Sanctae Crucis – O.S.C., commonly called the Crosiers), which operated two seminaries in Indiana and one in Minnesota. The Crosiers were founded in 1210 by Blessed Theodore de Celles in Belgium and follow the Rule of Saint Augustine as a clerical religious community of canons regular. The main points of their charism of canons regular are: Community, Liturgy and Apostolate.

Fr Myron entered the Crosier Order as a clerical novice in 1963 at the Crosier Monastery in Hastings, Nebraska. He professed his first temporary vows in 1964 and pronounced his solemn perpetual vows in 1968. He was a member of the Crosier Order, American Province until 1992 (29 years).

During his early years as a Crosier, from 1964 to 1972, "Frater Effing" as he was then called, completed Major Seminary philosophical and theological studies at the Crosier House of Studies, Fort Wayne, Indiana and at St John's University, *(Continued on Page 6.)*