



# Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



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

Issue Number One Hundred Sixty Six July, 2022

## St. Karol Slivovsky of Vladivostok

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

In the autumn of 2002, Fr Marian Radwan, a professor at Lublin Catholic University, kindly gave to the archives of the Vladivostok Roman Catholic parish of the Most Holy Mother of God a copy of a letter handwritten in 1988 by another professor of Lublin Catholic University, Waldemar Pelc. In this historical document are described the touching moments of the meeting of the student-Orientalist Waldemar with the unfortunate Bishop of Vladivostok. Recalling the details of his visit to the elderly bishop, Professor Waldemar Pelc writes in part:

“If I am someday in heaven, then undoubtedly I will be given a “plus” for that visit to Bishop Karol Slivovsky. I recall that in the course of five minutes I had to quickly and insistently annihilate those mountains of lies which the bishop had been receiving from the Soviet press – after all, this was the only source of news available to him. All this I tried to convey to the bishop. Now I know that I gave him to drink a fortifying cup of joy. God knows, perhaps this was the last joy in the holy life of this pastor and martyr. The bishop gave me a rosary and blessed me. And when I stand before God at the Final Judgment, I will ask to testify on my behalf the one who will already be St. Karol, Bishop of Vladivostok.”

Having just reviewed again the life of this, our one and only bishop, with our novices, I’m convinced and happy that our bishop is a true saint, worthy of the honor. He was born in 1845 and attended engineering school in St Petersburg, and then attended the seminary there. He was pastor in Kazan on the Volga where he installed the first electric lights in the church. When I visited Kazan, the church was still standing—currently in use as an aerodynamics laboratory—but the house in which Fr Karol lived had just been torn down.

Fr Karol was chosen by the Archdiocese of Mogilev to become pastor in Vladivostok in 1912. Vladivostok and the Russian Far East were relatively new additions to the already huge country of Russia. It was a frontier town, like San Francisco, at the end of the transcontinental railroad, struggling to become a city. There were many Chinese residents and a “Chinatown”. Most of the Catholics in those days were members of the Russian Navy and Army. But the civilian population was also growing as the Port of Vladivostok connected the huge Pacific markets with the countries of Europe via the railroad. The War with Japan greatly enlarged the military fortifications in Vladivostok, and then World War I and the Russian and Communist Revolutions added chaos and uncertainty to the city’s history with many prisoners of war and interventionist



Most Holy Mother of God Pray for Us



### *The Bishop's Grave*

forces from many countries, including Germany, Japan, Chechia, and America. Even the American Knights of Columbus were here serving the troops, and 300 Americans were killed near Shkotova, and hundreds of orphans sought refuge from war and famine in the city.

And what was there of a church building, but a small wooden temporary church that would not hold 100 people. A big church had been planned and a cornerstone laid in 1908, but construction was halted by lack of funds, infighting on the building committee, and the Communist revolution. The church was not completed, but at least made usable by German prisoners of war in 1919. All these troubles weighed on Pastor Slivovsky, and let alone the lack of priests to serve the 15,000 Catholics of the diocese when he was ordained bishop in Harbin, Manchuria in 1923. But his troubles were just beginning!

The coming of the Communists to power depleted the number of Catholics as people fled Russia through China and through the Port of Vladivostok. The youth were converted to Communist atheism and abandoned the church. The priests were arrested and shot or exiled to labor camps in Siberia, which was the fate of the last pastor of the Vladivostok parish, Fr Yuri Yerkevich. Bishop Slivovsky was the last priest in the

Russian Far East, as far as we know. He was given "roommates" in his own bedroom in a house near the closed church. In 1931 he was hurried to a waiting sleigh and taken to live on the porch of a house in Sedanka, several miles from Vladivostok, and forbidden to have anything to do with parishioners or to perform any public meetings or prayers. It was there that Waldemar met him. He died there on January 5, 1933. There was no priest to bury him or pray for him. He was buried near the little cemetery chapel in Sedanka by parishioners, but his grave was violated at night when thieves stole his crozier and bishop's ring from his body. Reburied, his grave was marked, but we don't know where his grave is located today. There is no trace of it, and there is no map of the cemetery where his body was buried. The family who buried him were declared "enemies of the people" and had to flee to Siberia. Perhaps he could have fled like the others, but he was faithful to his flock to the end. The devil's hatred of this holy man is almost proof enough of his sanctity.



*"Here rests the holy remains of Bishop Karol Slivovsky, born 184\_, Died 5 January 1933."*

### **Prayer for the Canonization of Bishop Slivovsky**

Lord God, your servant and our father and pastor Bishop Karl Slivovsky was faithful to you and to his flock in spite of danger, turmoil, and destruction until exile and death took him from us. Reward your servant with acknowledged sainthood for the joy of all his people, and remember me also in my need as I pray to him for his intercession, through Christ our Lord. Amen.



# News Notes

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

● I was so surprised by a recent phone call. Margarita Ivnitskaya in Tomsk called to remind us that she still had in her possession one last item that was **owned by Vladivostok Bishop Slivovsky**, our sainthood candidate



*“Rita” on the left, Regina on the right, and Rita’s son Andre between them. Regina was a hero of the Soviet Union for her physician services to wounded soldiers during WWII.*

who died in 1933 in exile. I had forgotten about it! It is the trunk which was in the bishop’s room where he died in which he kept his personal items. Many of those personal items had already been given to us by Margarita’s mother, Regina Stanko whose father had buried the bishop, there being no priests available in Russia in those terrible days of persecution. The trunk with contents had been taken to Tomsk with the Stanko family as they escaped persecution themselves! Now the trunk has arrived, and it will be part of the relics of the bishop. Maybe Bishop Slivovsky will be known as the patron saint of those persecuted for their faith. That includes almost everybody these days! We hope to buy the little apartment where he lived for three years in exile and died.



*The house where the Bishop died.*

No news about where his grave might be located, although we have two photos of the grave marker taken by Regina when she was a girl. It is no longer in place, and we can’t tell from the photo where that place is. She was not able to find it either when she came to visit us years ago. The landscape had been changed a lot by roads and water pipes over the years. And the Soviets always removed grave markers because they usually had a Cross or were in the shape of a Cross. They didn’t want people to think of the past, but only about the “glorious socialist future of heaven on Earth.” See a picture of the grave on pg. 2. The name is legible when enlarged (See pg. 2). Regina is now deceased.



*The bishop’s trunk now at our parish in Vladivostok*

● At Home in Karaganda! Our two deacons, Brothers Philipus Lasa, C.J.D., and Agustinus Brussen, C.J.D., have now been “given” a house to live in near the St Joseph’s Basilica in Karaganda in Russian speaking Kazakhstan. They will be ordained priests by Bishop Adelio in the near future. Many of our Catholics in Russia were born there when their parents were exiled from Russia by the Communists. The St Joseph’s Basilica was the first Catholic church built in the Soviet Union as restrictions on religion began to be lifted. Many of our Russian Catholic hymns were written in Kazakhstan by the exiles who were taken to Kazakhstan in train cattle cars and put out in the snow with nothing—not even tools! There were no trees as far as they could see, so how do you build a fire or a house? Our parishioners told us that their families would

not have survived had they not been helped by the local Moslems! They burrowed in the snow and in the ground.

*“Our”  
house, with  
the basilica  
in the  
background.*



● Thank God that the end of the Covid epidemic has come in Vladivostok. There are no more mandates or requirements to wear masks, and the attendance at Sunday Mass has increased. Russia took the right path in dealing with the threat, I believe, with an early vaccine and the building of many specialized hospitals with many beds. Russia did not try to isolate the population from the virus, as some countries did, knowing that the best immunity is the natural one. We still plan to put our Russian Sunday Mass on the internet, as many people can watch, no matter where they are. To watch our Russian Sunday mass, (8:00 pm Central Time Saturdays) go here:

<https://vk.com/public211190633>

● Congratulations to our parish archivist Tatyana Shaposhnikova on the publication of her book in Russian: “The Catholic Cathedral of Vladivostok”.



● It was a **big event** on May 29 when our bishop Kirill Klimovich was here to celebrate my 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priesthood! It was an honor to have parishioners present for the event from all the parishes that I founded: Vladivostok, Nakhodka, Ussurysk, Arsenyev, Artyom, Khabarovsk, and only Blagoveschensk was lacking (but they are farthest away.) I’m hoping to celebrate again in my home parish of St. Joseph in Vanderburgh County Indiana when I will be there in the Fall for my annual vacation.

At Mass, when they asked me to “say a few words” I told them that highlight of my 50 years as a priest was the mass I said on November 11, 1991, on the front steps of the archive (past and future Catholic church) here in Vladivostok—the first public mass in 60 years in this big Communist city! Later I had to tell the brothers that the funniest mass I ever said was in Cloquet, Minnesota, when a cat wearing a bell entered the open front doors of the church and began walking down the aisle. The men on the end of the pews jumped out to catch the cat, but the cat outdid them and arrived in the front. The whole aisle was full of men laying down who didn’t catch the cat!

While the bishop was here he also ordained two of our brothers to the diaconate. Deacon Marcus David, C.J.D. from Pakistan wants to work in an English speaking country, but we haven’t decided which yet. Deacon Vincent Pham, C.J.D., from Vietnam wants to work here in Russia, and we sure need Vietnamese speaking priests in Russia, as there are many Vietnamese here, especially in the bigger cities. I’ll include the deacons’ pictures, too.

### **From the Women’s Support Centers**

A wonderful woman came to our Center—“Masha”. She had four sons, the oldest 7 and the youngest a one year old. We couldn’t say that they were needy—They were simply the poorest of the poor. Their child support had been cancelled, they were having trouble registering their home, and there were other problems. In spite of it all, Masha was optimistic, a feeling she shared with the kids. But another child appeared in the family, a baby girl! Dad does work, but his pay isn’t enough for the family, so our Center helps as we can. Some volunteers collect a monthly gift package for them, but at first it was sad to see how the kids wolfed down the food because they were hungry. We are hoping for the best for them.



The bishop said that it was the first time he could ordain two men at one service!—vocation shortage. The bishop said that we have more vocations in Vladivostok than in all the rest of Russia!



*Representatives from Holy Trinity Parish in Romanovka, one of the local parishes that Fr Dan founded, not I*



*New deacons Brother Vincent Pham, C.J.D., and Brother Marcus David, C.J.D. Vincent is from Vietnam and Marcus from Pakistan. Brother Vincent wants to continue working in Russia, and Brother Marcus wants to attend a semester of Clinical Pastoral Education at a Catholic hospital in the Philippines. They will be eligible for ordination to the priesthood in six months. Stay tuned!*



*Parishioners bringing up the gifts at the Anniversary Mass*

## Baby Talk

From the Women's Support Centers



**“Hey, you did a good job!”**  
[Julia June 16 2021]

● **Covid** is winding down, but travel is still difficult. Our seminarians in Russia have been attending classes in person for some time now, as the need for on-line classes ended some time ago. Our major seminarians from a variety of countries will finish this school year on-line, but beginning with the new school year they will need to travel to the Philippines to attend seminary in person. Hopefully some new novices will arrive in Vladivostok in the Fall, but we are pretty crowded for space. We may have to expand our building. What a great problem to have when the space is needed by good seminarians!

● **Mass Intentions** Please consider us when you wish to honor the living or deceased with a special gift. By requesting **Masses** to be celebrated by our priests you are giving great support to our priests and mission. We will gratefully send Mass cards to the originator of the requests. Suggested stipend is \$15.00 per Mass. You may complete the form below or send in your requests on your own note.

My Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the following people or intentions:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address to mail acknowledgement card(s) to:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Remember Mary Mother of God Mission Society in your will.

*Vladivostok Sunrise* Edited and produced in Russia by V Rev Myron Effing, C.J.D. Printed in Modesto, California by Parks Printing. Assembled for mailing by St Joseph Parish, Modesto, California.

## 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: <https://vk.com/public211190633>.

### Internet

English language: [www.vladmission.org](http://www.vladmission.org)

Russian language: [www.catholicvl.ru](http://www.catholicvl.ru)

Sisters in Jesus the Lord in English: [www.cjd.cc](http://www.cjd.cc)

Office in Russia: Phone +7-423-226-9614

Fr Myron: [myron.effing@gmail.com](mailto:myron.effing@gmail.com)

Fr Daniel: [vladcanonsregular@gmail.com](mailto:vladcanonsregular@gmail.com)

Office in California: Phone and FAX: +1-209-408-0728 Mary

Mother of God Mission Society

1736 Milestone Cir

Modesto CA 95357

[usoffice@vladmission.org](mailto:usoffice@vladmission.org)

Mary Mother of God Mission Society is listed in the Official Catholic Directory under the Diocese of Stockton, CA.

## My One Story (or Two)

There were no roads to Yakutsk in those days—One had to fly. My helper Ghennady and I had gone to Mirni in Yakutia for the dedication of the new church there, and on the way back needed to fly to Nerengri to catch a flight to Khabarovsk and then on to Vladivostok. When we arrived at the airport, we learned that the flight was full. What to do? Ghennady said, “I’ll go talk to the pilots!” Yes, we rode sitting on the luggage in the baggage compartment with no seatbelts. It was typical of Ghennady’s creativity.

Another time, we were in Novosibirsk for a diocesan meeting, and needed to take the train to the Catholic parish in Kemerova. We arrived at the station, and found that the tickets were sold out. Ghennady said, “I’ll go talk to the chief conductor.” The result was “No dice! Even my own bed is already taken.” As we were pondering our situation, another train arrived, and Ghennady said, “I wonder where that train is going?” He found out that it was a train of empty cars going to Kemerova for repairs. We rode to Kemerova as the only passengers on the train with no bedding, no food, and chilled, but we arrived! Thanks, Ghennady!

Fr Myron Effing, C.J.D.



## Opportunities

♥ You can help us spread the news of our mission at Catholic conferences. Pass out our mission literature from our booth and even get to hear great Catholic speakers! If you are in driving distance of any of these conferences, we ask for your help! These are just a few of the conferences we hope to attend. Know of a conference in your area? Please let us know!

July 29/30 Catholic Women's Conf., San Antonio, TX  
 Aug 5/6 Eucharistic Congress, Charlotte, NC  
 Aug 19-21 Fullness of Truth/Fatima, San Antonio, TX  
 Sept 9-10 Diocese of Las Vegas Diocesan Conf., NV  
 Sept 16-18 NCSC Singles Conf., Northern VA  
 Sept 22-25 Catholic Answers Conf., San Diego, CA  
 Sept 27-30 CWR Women's Conf., Cincinnati, OH  
 Oct 2-5 Intl Stewardship Conf., Anaheim, CA  
 Oct 14-15 Fullness of Truth Conf., Victoria, TX  
 Oct 28 Marian Eucharistic Conf., Fresno, CA  
 Oct 30-Nov 1 The Way of Beauty Conf., Phoenix, AZ  
 Nov 2-5 Natnl Council of Cath. Women, Minn., MN  
 Nov 13 Fullness of Truth Gala, Houston, TX  
 Nov 15 Diocese of Lansing Women's Conf., MI  
 Nov 22 Catholic Women's Conf., Philadelphia, PA

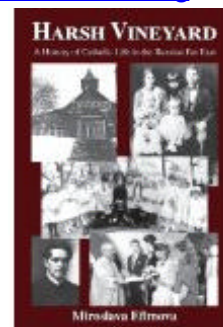


Volunteers and staff attended our tables at the World Ablaze.org Men's Conference. We distributed literature and provided great Catholic books and gifts. We were inspired by wonderfully faithful speakers including Jesse Romero.

♥ Enjoy traveling? We are in need of **speakers** this year who wish to tell of our mission in parishes. We send priests, religious, Spanish speaking and lay volunteers to designated parishes, sometimes to nearby states, to tell of our mission after Masses. Talks are provided by the mission. Each year we contact dioceses throughout the USA requesting **to share our mission** in their parishes. 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 to help. Please contact the mission office for information.

♥ **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](http://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



♥ **Easy! Easy! Easy!** Only four ingredients stand between you and a delicious no-bake dessert from our **Abundant Blessings** cookbook. Among its 494



recipes, you'll find Chocolate Chinese Noodle Candy, Grandma Della's Rocky Road, and No-Bake Strawberry Cookies. And delicious Butterscotch Wonders require only three ingredients! Recipes come from all over the planet, from mission supporters, priests, nuns, and seminarians. To get your copy, order online at [www.vladmission.org/cookbook](http://www.vladmission.org/cookbook) or at [www.store.vladmission.org](http://www.store.vladmission.org) under Miscellaneous > Kitchen, for \$33.99. The price includes shipping in the Continental USA and all sales go to benefit our Women's Support Centers and our CJD seminarians.

♥ Want to schedule an enjoyable activity and fundraiser for our mission this year? Ask your pastor if you may host a weekend Russian Icon sale after Masses at your parish. The mission office provides all the religious goods needed. Sell **Russian and Greek icons and gifts**, statues, rosaries and other religious goods for all the sacraments while bringing awareness of the Vladivostok Mission to your fellow parishioners. You and your team may also designate where your fundraising efforts go, i.e. Women's Centers, Adopt a Mother, Seminarian Education, Emergency Fund, General, etc. Please contact Vicky or Jessica 209-408-0728 or [usoffice@vladmission.org](mailto:usoffice@vladmission.org) for details.

Vladivostok Mission  
Mary Mother of God Mission Society  
1736 Milestone Cir  
Modesto CA 95357-0835

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Modesto CA  
Permit No. 19

Return Service Requested

166th ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

St Karol Slivovsky	Page 1
News Notes	Page 3
Baby Talk	Page 5
My One Story	Page 6
Opportunities	Page 7
Development Desk	Page 8

## From the development desk...

Dear Friends, Peace to you!

Each year our mission has set up information booths at as many as 40 **Catholic conferences or ministry events** to share the news of our work in Vladivostok. We are very grateful most of the annual Catholic venues are back up and running this year after a two year shut down. Conferences we attend headline authentic and holy Catholic speakers to help us grow in our faith.

From our booths, we share the mission with those who inquire and we distribute our newsletters, brochures and DVDs. Anyone wishing to receive our bi-monthly **Vladivostok Sunrise** newsletter can sign up at our conference booth.

In addition, for many years now, we have sold authentic Catholic religious goods, books, and Russian icons and gifts which have helped pay for all our conference costs. The religious good sales have become an important means for fundraising for us. All sales received beyond conference expenses go directly to the mission. In the 10 years prior to the pandemic shut downs our mission raised an average \$12,612 per year from conference and ministry event sales proceeds. This is net above the expenses paid out for conference registration, postage, travel, meals, and merchandise replacement. We

are very grateful for an additional \$777 received each year in donations collected at our booths. While selling religious goods is by far not our purpose for attending Catholic conferences, it has proven to provide the financial means to attend more venues where we may do the outreach throughout the Catholic communities.

Our attendance at conferences is dependent on volunteer help. Here's where you can greatly assist us. In our **Opportunities** column of this issue of the *Sunrise* you'll find a list of conferences we hope to attend with your help. Maybe there is a conference near you? We have been able to spread our news at 40 conferences each year only through the generosity of volunteer time. We provide your lunch and auto mileage. Air fare and additional meal allowance are provided for long distance travel.

Please contact me at the mission office, 209-408-0728, or [usoffice@vladmission.org](mailto:usoffice@vladmission.org) for more information. Thank you! Have a blessed summer.

God bless you.

Sincerely, Vicky Trevillyan, USA Mission Desk