



Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



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

Issue Number One Hundred Seventy Nine September, 2024



Holy Trinity Church in Yakutsk with all the participants.

The 26th Far Eastern Catholic Youth Conference

By Vladimir Alekseev

This year, the 26th Far Eastern Catholic Youth Conference was held in an unusual place, namely in the capital of the Saha Republic (Yakutia) - the city of Yakutsk, Russia. Yakutia is the largest administrative entity in the whole world, larger in area than Argentina. It is on its territory that the “pole” of cold of the Northern Hemisphere is located. However, these interesting factors did not determine the choice of location for the Catholic Youth Conference. Over the past two years, despite the considerable distances, Salesian boys and fathers from Yakutia took part in our conferences. In the process of our

communication, an idea emerged to not only invite participants from a distant region to Primorye, but also to organize a meeting in Yakutia, which is distant and unusual even for residents of the Far East. And so our plans came true in 2024, from July 7 to 14, we were able to organize our meeting together with the Salesians from Yakutsk. This time we had to be not only organizers, but also guests. There were many concerns about logistics, accommodation, and the number of participants, but through joint efforts all problems were resolved, and our 26th conference took place in Yakutsk, bringing together participants from the cities of Vladivostok, Ussurysk, Khabarovsk, Yakutsk, Aldan, and Ulan-Ude.

In 2024, the Salesians celebrate the 30th anniversary of their presence in Yakutia, the 15th anniversary of the consecration of the church in Yakutsk and the 200th anniversary of the prophetic dream of their founder, St. John Bosco, a dream that largely determined his vocation and service to the mission among the disadvantaged youth

Most Holy Mother of God Pray for Us

of Turin, Italy. Therefore, the theme of the 26th conference was the words: “Sleep that gives the ability to dream,” and our reflections focused around the topic of vocation, the variety of vocations in the Church, ways of recognizing and choosing them. The topic seemed very relevant to us from our pastoral perspective, since young people often choose their path in life following only the criteria accepted in their social environment. Therefore, the decisions of young people are often accompanied by a fear of failure and subsequent condemnation, and a desire to follow a more pragmatic path, the implementation of which is associated with fewer risks. We hope that what we heard during the Conference will help our youth to consider their life path not only in terms of choosing a profession, but also in terms of vocation, not to be afraid to recognize it, not to be afraid if someone hears a call to the priesthood or monasticism, more responsibly and consciously approach marriage. Therefore, we invited as speakers not only priests and monastics, but also members of the Yakutsk parish who are married and actively support their parish and the Salesian mission in Yakutia.

By the way, the Catholic presence in the region really has bright features of a mission, since among the parishioners there are many representatives of the Sakha people (Yakuts), and the Salesians and employees try to be faithful to the charism of their founder, serving among young people, and also trying, as far as possible, to carry out social service. Indeed, despite its natural wealth, Yakutia still remains one of the poorest regions of Russia. It was interesting and valuable for young people to see this region, so different from other regions of the Far East, but included in our huge diocese of St. Joseph.



In the archeological museum where gold nuggets are displayed.

An important element of our meeting was the integration of the participants and the program, which allowed them to get acquainted with the history and nature

of Yakutia, this remote and harsh region, but the home of gold and diamonds and forests and extinct mammoths frozen in the permafrost. The majority of the population still professes paganism, and therefore still expects the good news of Christ. We hope that the 26th Catholic Youth Conference will bring good results in the lives of young people, parishioners, and spiritual people who took part in it.

We thank Father Myron Effing and the Mary Mother of God Mission Society for the support they provide to the Youth Conference, the Salesian Fathers serving in Yakutia, our Bishop Kirill Klimovich and, of course, everyone thanks to whose support our projects aimed at evangelization are possible. We remembered our benefactors in prayer and continue our service in the Russian Far East. See you soon at the 27th Catholic Youth Conference!



Vladivostok parishioner Masha with the excavated remains of a mammoth from the permafrost of Yakutia.

Annual Gathering of Children in Lesozavodsk

Br. Arslan Aslam Piyara, C.J.D.

I must say that Fr. Myron Effing CJD, did lots of work in Russia. He always takes good care of the people of God, wherever he is sent by Him. Especially in “Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth Parish,” Lesozavodsk, in the far eastern region of Primorsky Krai. Whenever he talks about this parish he would say “My Parish”. Still, he is the pastor of this parish but because of his age and sickness he can’t go there. Therefore, Fr. Vicky Samuel CJD from Sialkot, Pakistan, is helping there as an assistant parish priest. Fr. Vicky is fulfilling this responsibility wholeheartedly for four years and trying his best to provide the children spiritual and fortifying cup of joy to drink.



The children in church, though most are not Catholic.

This year as usual he conducted a children's summer camp as well from July 15th to 9th July, 2024 to visualize the words of Mother Teresa "the child is the beauty of God present in the world, that greatest gift to a family." Besides, this year Bro, Peter Nsamba, C.J.D. and I, accompanied Fr Vicky. It was an absolute unforgettable experience to spend five days with the little angels of God.

On the very first day of the camp Fr. Vicky explained the whole charted plan to the kids. He made them understood, though we would be enjoying, playing, eating and singing together but still for all we can never overlook our main theme indeed. He mentioned that we are here to meet God by meeting our fellows; by praying, chanting, playing, eating, singing, and laughing with each other.

This year we had 27 kids approximately from 7 to 17 years old. Every day we used to start our day by teaching them some hymns, followed by Fr. Vicky's talk and PowerPoint presentation. Then, the children got some candies and chocolates. Additionally, Father prepared numerous games for them for every distinct day. Finally, we used to have lunch all together followed by one of the most favorite games of these kids every day.

Nonetheless, most of these kids are raised by single mothers, so they haven't learned proper courtesy. Their mothers work for the whole day to manage their daily bread and needs. Many of the children often fight and use abusive words while playing in the streets. By this summer camp activity they learned how to play together without creating a mess and hurting each other. Moreover, I saw a 13 years old girl wiping the tears of a kid around eight.

As I mentioned these kids were not polite; sometimes they misbehaved with us too. So, by their behavior Br. Peter and I were not always pleased but still, in spite of it all, Fr. Vicky was always really polite and jolly with them. Truly speaking I could not understand how he managed to be so calm.

We also visited the Orthodox Church and spent same time with the Orthodox Priest as well. Moreover, while coming back from the :Orthodox Church to the Catholic Church, an old lady questioned me and Bro. Peter: "Why are you working with these poor children?" Br. Peter smiled and responded: "We are working with them



Fr Vicky giving a catechism lesson.



Fr Vicky playing a game with the children.

because they are poor.” We came back to the church and went out to a restaurant just to have an outside unusual lunch with the children. Though, by considering our budget we could only manage a cheap meal but the kids and we three were actually happy that at least we had a lunch in the restaurant.

On the final day of the camp Fr. Vicky presented presents to every individual child. The most interesting point for me was how this man came to know about the interests of each child? I was standing just beside to click pictures, consequently I could see the joy and thankfulness in their hearts. The way they were amused and receiving their gifts was unbelievable. I have no words to picture that picture of gratitude. Thus, I would say the way Fr. Vicky had been with those kids – was really humble, kind, moral, spiritual and down to the earth. One can absolutely feel in spirit that Mother Teresa is 100% accurate when she uttered these golden words, "the child is the beauty of God present in the world, that greatest gift to a family."

News Notes

- This summer many families in the central part of our state of Primorye suffered from heavy rains, floods, closed bridges and roads. But most important, the **floods** came at a very bad time for the gardens—Too late to plant again and get a good harvest. Most families there depend on their gardens for the year’s supply of potatoes, tomatoes, cabbage, beets, cucumbers, and pumpkins. If possible, we need to provide assistance to families with children who are already registered with us as needy families at the Women’s Support Center in Lesozavodsk. We won’t mention names here, but included are:

Family with 5 children. Family with 3 children.
Family with 6 children Family with 5 children

Family with 3 children
Single mother with 1 child
Family with 6 children
Family with 2 children

If you would like to donate, just mark it “Flood Relief”.

- One of the events of July and August has been the **eye operations** for an 85 year old parishioner from Lesozavodsk parish. He was going blind, beginning to develop cataracts, but he lives alone, even raising his own garden, so we needed to help him through our **“Project Hope.”** He made the 9 hour trip to Vladivostok, had the operation on one eye (The doctors wanted to do the other one a month later.) so he can now see again to manage his affairs. One of our Vladivostok friends stayed at his house while he was gone to ward off burglars and to pick the strawberries. In August we’ve gone through the process again. He has been our parishioner since “day one.” He was happy that he could pay for the operation, but we helped him with the arrangements and other expenses.

Project Hope is named after a program at Incarnation Parish in Dayton, Ohio, by that name. In gratitude for their help back when, we started our own Project Hope. It is funds for unusual situations, like house fires, or like the eye operation above. Sometimes it is emergency medical treatment, loss of income because of sickness, etc. Thanks, Benefactors, and many thanks Incarnation Parish!

- From Russian Speaking Kazakhstan from our Vladivostok community member, Fr Filipus Lasa, C.J.D.:

“I received a new assignment from the Bishop, namely to handle one of the parishes whose parish priest had returned to Italy because he had entered retirement and his contract with the Karaganda diocese had expired. So, currently I am helping in **three parishes at once.** Practically serving Mass in two different parishes every Sunday and serving in the Basilica on weekdays. This task is a bit difficult for me because I have to serve in three far away places in one day.

“We lost two priests in this diocese. One returned to Poland last year to join one of the religious communities there. The other returned to Italy this month due to retirement age and the completion of his contract with the Diocese. There are more and more jobs, while there are fewer and fewer priests. We have difficulty managing time for our own needs in the community, such as cooking, washing, cleaning the house, etc. And you know that Father Augustine was gone for June to arrange a

permanent visa for Kazakhstan. While he is gone it gave me more jobs to do.“

[Maybe we will be able to send more Russian-speaking priests from our seminarians studying in Russia? Pray for vocations, and thanks for supporting our seminarians.— ed.]

● Let me mention another program of ours that has been going a long time already, but I don't think we have mentioned it anywhere. In a corner downstairs there is a place where people can leave **used clothing** that is still good. We get all kinds of things there, including shoes, men and women's clothing, children's clothing, toys and even baby buggies (I guess they call them strollers these days), and blankets. Once a month when our priest goes to Lesozavodsk or when the sisters go to Romanovka, all these things go along. The items are in demand in these depressed cities. And our volunteer helpers there say "Keep them coming." Here is a photo of a recent pile of stuff.



Brother Arslan showing the pile of clothing from one week.

● “Fr. Doug Grandon [from FOCUS] and I [Vladivostok pastor Fr Daniel Maurer, C.J.D.] were in the capital city of Indianapolis, Indiana for two days of talks and conferences about FOCUS and for 3 days of the 6-day **National Eucharistic Congress**. The Congress was by far the best three days of my life in the past 45 years! (NO Exaggeration!!!) All of the liturgies, adoration, benedictions and talks were **AMAZINGLY CATHOLIC**: The liturgical music was superb (in English, Latin and Spanish). All the liturgical furnishings, vestments and backdrops were spectacularly beautiful and traditional; the main speeches and homilies were wonderful, holy, uplifting, informative and substantive. Thousands of

people were in tears of joy at the outpouring of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

“There were at least 65,000 people in the main stadium for morning Masses and evening adoration and benediction each day; and at the main Saturday Eucharistic procession through the streets of downtown there were around 80,000 people walking together. 2,000 consecrated religious (men and women) all in their habits; 1000 seminarians (all in black cassocks and white surplices), 600 permanent deacons (all in albs, stoles, and some in dalmatics); 2,000 priests (in albs and stoles), 200 bishops and 5 cardinals. - and many more thousands of people all along the sidewalks to watch the people and the Blessed Sacrament go by.

“I have great hope for the Eucharistic Revival that has been going on in the USA for two years and has one more year to go--of workshops, conferences, and retreats, adoration, and prayer. Our friend Fr. Doug Grandon (who visited us twice in Vladivostok) has been on the team of Eucharistic Revival preachers traveling around to many parishes to preach about the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist after an opinion poll in 2018 commissioned by the US Catholic Conference of Bishops showed that, at that time, some of the Catholics in the United States did not believe that Christ is really present Body and Blood in the Eucharist.”

● Finally, let me mention that a wonderful benefactor has offered to match donations for the **new cars** that we need, as the old ones are getting to the end of their useful lives, and, of course, Russia is big and we use the cars a lot! If you want to donate for this purpose, just mark the check “For Cars”

A Vietnamese Marriage

By Brother Arslan Piyara, C.J.D.

Currently the whole world is rushing towards an unspecified destination. Still the silence between our heartbeats echoes louder than the screams around, which indicates the power of conscious--the presence of the voice of God in ourselves. Often, in Russia, people do not bother much about living together as a couple in or outside of wedlock. Therefore, whenever any Christian couple decides to get married, they are always highly welcomed and appreciated by the church. The mother church expresses her joy and love for them maximally. Not only that, the religious priests, sisters and brothers take part in their marriage celebrations and ceremonies to multiply their delights and to bless them.

In our parish "Mary Mother of God" we have a large Vietnamese community. They come to the church every

single Sunday at 8:30 pm for mass in Vietnamese because they have to work during the day even on Sundays. A young guy from this community decided to marry with his friend, also from our community. For some people it can be a very minuscule part of their life's dealings but this couple discarded the usual and shared this big decision of their lives with Fr. Vincent Pham, C.J.D.. He is our priest from Vietnam and serves the Vietnamese community in our parish. Additionally, now our bishop, His Excellency Kirill Klimowicz, has appointed him the chaplain of all the Vietnamese faithful in the entire diocese of St. Joseph of Irkutsk.

So, with the permission of the Church, Mr. Doan Van Hung and Miss Thuy Ninh prudently entered the sacrament of marriage on June 12, 2024 by Fr. Vincent Pham. The whole Catholic Vietnamese community participated in the mass and celebration. After the celebration the young married couple came to our superior Fr. Myron Effing, C.J.D. to receive the special blessing and give an invitation for the marriage banquet in the following week. On the invitation card it was mentioned that all the members of the canonical community were humbly invited.

On the date of the banquet, we all received a cordial reception, we were requested to have a group picture with the newlywed couple. Next, we were invited to sit for the dinnertime. Though, we had other things to do, we could not do injustice with this great and delicious dinner by grabbing a bite and running. In short, it was truly an incredible gala festival for us all.

The Vietnamese are very compassionate, hospitable, and gentle people. I never heard that a couple celebrated their marriage three times. I mean, Mr. and Mrs. D.V Hung got married first according to the civil law at the

state marriage bureau, secondly in the church to receive the sacrament, and finally in the restaurant with their families, relatives, colleagues and friends: 350 guests--most not Catholics--attended! God bless the married couple!

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/>

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

Office in Russia: Phone +7-423-226-9614
 Fr Myron: myron.effing@gmail.com
 Fr Daniel: vladcanonsregular@gmail.com
Office in California: Phone: +1-209-408-0728
 Mary Mother of God Mission Society
 1736 Milestone Cir
 Modesto CA 95357
usoffice@vladmission.org

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



Brother Joseph Hien Le, C.J.D., Mr and Mrs Hung, and Fr Vincent Pham, C.J.D.

Baby Talk
 From the Women's Support Centers



“King David didn’t have it so well, either!”
 (David June 10 2024)

Opportunities

♥ **Giving Day!** We are almost half way to our goal of raising \$35,000 to establish a new **Women’s Support Center and premises for St Joseph’s Parish in the city of Artyom.** Thank you to everyone who has donated since March. We will continue with our fundraising for this project until our goal is met. To donate for the new center please note “Giving Day” on your check or online donation.



♥ Thank you all who have come out to hear our **Mission Speakers** throughout the US speak about the Church in Russia! We have a few more parishes to speak at for the 2024 year. We hope to see you at a parish near you. A special collection will take place after each mass for our missionaries in Russia to help with their various programs.

- 9/1 St. Mary - Independence **MO**, Fr. Doug Grandon
- 9/8 Saint Bernadette (Linville) + Saint Lucien (Spruce Pine) **NC**, Jo Elyn Hannah
- 9/15 Saint Denis - Hanover **NH**, Bob Moran
- 9/15 Epiphany/Holy Trinity - Newark **NJ**, Bruce Gnatowski
- 9/29 St. Anne + St. Charles Borromeo – Monroe **MI**, Vicky Trevillyan
- 9/29 St. Benedict – Evansville **IN**, Marilyn Wassmer
- 10/6 St. Genevieve/St. Maurice – Livonia **MI** Vicky Trevillyan
- 10/19 St. Bernard – Rockville **CT**, Fr. Myron Effing
- 10/26 St. Matthew – Tolland **CT**, Fr. Myron Effing
- 12/15 St. Mary/ Sacred Heart – West Brookfield **MA**, Fr. Doug Grandon

♥ As Catholics, we love our pious statues! **Statues** are solum reminders of Jesus and the saints, adorning our homes, churches and cathedrals, and leading our solemn processions. The Lord became incarnate, so we bring His image into every place in our lives, and likewise, His saints who show us how to live like Him. Whether you want to set up a little devotional space, beautify your home, or give a great gift to someone who has a special

saint in their lives, statues are a wonderful way to do it. One way to help support Mary Mother of God Mission in our work to save souls in Russia is through purchasing from our online store! We have statues of our Lord, Mary, and many saints! Check out our selection at:



store.vladmission.org/statues For the month of **October** get **FREE SHIPPING** on all orders from our online store! Save big on your early Christmas shopping by taking advantage of this huge promotion.

♥ This year we celebrate **All Saints Day** on Friday, November 1st. A Great way to honor our loved ones who have passed is to give the eternal gift of a Mass. Masses celebrated in Russia may be requested for loved ones, living or dead. **Mass stipends** support Fr. Myron, Fr. Dan and our priests in Russia. Please send your special intentions or Mass requests to the mission office. Mass cards will be sent to you or designated persons. You can also request masses online on our website, www.vladmission.org, through the drop down section, Mass Intention. Suggested stipend is \$15 per Mass.

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

1 _____

2 _____

Please mail acknowledgement card(s) to:

1 _____

2 _____

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

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

Return Service Requested

179 ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

26 th Youth Conference	Page 1
Lesozavodsk Children	Page 2
News Notes	Page 4
Vietnamese Marriage	Page 5
Baby Talk	Page 6
Opportunities	Page 7
Development Desk	Page 8

From the development desk...

Dear Friends,

For many years we have collected old and retired vestments from priests from all over the US. We pass along the items with some life still left in them to the new priests of the CJD order serving in the US, Indonesia, and of



course, Russia. But what about the vestments that are too ragged or may be too stained or have holes? Well, we upcycle them and create beautiful book and bible covers, rosary cases, tote bags, and bookmarks.

All our priest vestment items are handmade and uniquely different from each other. They are one of a kind, specialty gifts for all occasions and sacraments.

Our tote bags especially generate tons of compliments, making the perfect conversation starter and act as a great way to spread our faith when asked about them.

If you would like to see what we have in stock, visit our gift shop online at www.store.vladmission.org From now until Christmas we will be offering a complimentary priest vestment bookmark with all orders of our mission cookbook, *Abundant Blessings!* Check out the *Opportunities* Section of this issue for more information on free shipping. (Page 7)



God bless you! Jessica Trevillyan, USA Mission office

usoffice@vladmission.org, 209-408-0728