

# Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



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

Issue Number One Hundred Eighty One January, 2025

## A Pilgrimage in Vladivostok

On June 1, 2024, the parish of the Most Holy Mother of God hosted a **pilgrimage** to places associated with the history of the parish and its political and religious repression when priests and laity died for their faith. The pilgrimage program was selected in such a way that each stopping place was connected with historical events, with our parishioners and our priests. The pastor of the parish, Fr. Daniel Maurer, C.J.D. led the pilgrimage, beginning from the Cathedral of the Most Holy Mother of God in Vladivostok.



*The street leading to the cathedral. On the left, in the foreground, is the house of 11 Volodarsky St., where Fr. Yurkevich rented a room and was arrested. One of the window frames is kept in the museum of our parish.*

### First Station: Houses near the cathedral

Pilgrims learned about the last years of the parish's ministry, the confiscation of the cathedral which had always given Catholics strong faith and unshakable hope, and remembered the priests and parishioners who selflessly served God and the people. The pilgrims saw the parish houses where the priests had lived and the streets along which the priests had walked. After the confiscation of the parish buildings from 1926 to 1929. Bishop Slivovsky was under house arrest and occupied one small



*Artist's rendition of the cathedral being nearly completed but soon repression began.*

room in the house at 9 3rd Portovaya St., and Fr. Yurkevich was forced to rent a room not far from the church at 11 Volodarsky St. They received the status of enemies of the Soviet regime and the category of "unemployed", which led to an increase in land taxes and high payments for housing and electricity. The position of Bishop Slivovsky became more and more threatening; he was very isolated and could communicate only with Fr. Yurkevich, the last pastor. In the city newspapers he was accused of being an enemy of the Soviet system.

Information from the Consul of Poland in Harbin, Kazimir Simonolevich, testifies to how the bishop lived. While in Vladivostok on September 15, 1929 on business, he asked his companion, student Voldemar Peltz, who was going to study in Harbin, to visit the bishop. The student's

Most Holy Mother of God Pray for Us



*The bishop's house and chancery where the Bishop was left with one room.*

report says: "Although the bishop lives in his own house, he was left with only one almost empty room where there were no signs or objects of religious worship. The appearance of the bishop was horrifying, because this respected spiritual person looked like a completely decrepit old man, dressed in civilian clothes. The bishop was frightened by this visit; he began to wave his hands and ask in a whisper that the visitor leave immediately. When the guest quietly said who he was and who sent him to find out how he could provide help, tears rolled from the bishop's eyes: "I ask you to thank the consul for his good intentions, I will pray for him and for everyone who remembers me. For my part, I will also ask only for prayer for me, because any requests for help will only worsen my already bad situation." The bishop did not say any more



*Fr Yerkevich, the "last pastor"*

escorted the guest out of the room." In July 1930, Slivovsky was literally thrown out of the city. He was taken on a simple cart to Sedanka station, which is 7 miles from the city where he was given only a simple small room. (To be continued.)

*The pilgrims prayed for the priests and parishioners, receiving the blessing of Fr. Daniel: "God Almighty, we ask You to be with us on this pilgrimage. Help us to see Your hand and Your presence now and throughout our lives. Today, lead us along the path according to Your will. Through Christ our Lord."*



*Every Sunday my apostolate was to share the love of God with Maria Susana and Antonio Ronin. They spend the rest of their time with nobody to talk to except the TV screen in front of them.*

## **Gratitude in Every Note 🎵 : A Four-Year Journey in Theology**

*Br. Peter Nsamba CJD*

As I sit down to reflect on the incredible journey of the past four years, immersed in the profound study of theology and engaged in various apostolates, the lyrics of the timeless song "Sometimes" by the Carpenters echo in my heart, encapsulating the depth of emotions and gratitude I feel.

My theological education has been a transformative odyssey, a journey of profound self-discovery and spiritual growth. These four years have been a testament to the beauty of theological exploration, and I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to delve into the mysteries of faith, guided by dedicated professors and mentors who illuminated the path of knowledge.



Beyond the classrooms, our involvement in various apostolates has been a source of immense joy and purpose. Working side by side with fellow students, we've touched lives, shared compassion, and experienced the tangible impact of putting our theological learnings into practice. Whether in community outreach, pastoral care, or social justice initiatives, every endeavor has been a testament to the transformative power of faith in action.

As I express my heartfelt gratitude, I am acutely aware that this journey would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our benefactors. Your generosity has been the melody that accompanied us through the highs and lows, sustaining our academic pursuits and allowing us to actively participate in the apostolates that have shaped our hearts. To our benefactors: Your support has enabled us to delve into the depths of theological inquiry, broadening our understanding of God's plan for humanity.

In conclusion, as I finish my studies and return to join my community in Russia, the melodies of gratitude and love will forever resonate in my heart. The echoes of "Sometimes" by the Carpenters beautifully encapsulate the essence of this moment, a moment where I reflect, appreciate, and express my deepest gratitude. May I aspire to live out the teachings with love, compassion and commitment to make a world a better place.



This chalice was sent to our new CJD community in Vietnam, several of whose seminarians will soon be ordained priests who studied with us in Russia.

- Our Vladivostok community member Fr Agustinus Brusen, CJD, writes: "This is a photo with me and two young high school students,

taken after celebrating mass at **St. Joseph's Basilica, Karaganda**, Kazakhstan, on the Memorial of St. Lorenzo, a Deacon and Martyr, and the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary Queen, Patroness of the Church of Kazakhstan. These two young people are just learning about the Catholic religion. They have received the Sacrament of Baptism, but not yet First Communion. They are still studying in primary school. They attend daily mass almost every day, besides Sundays. They are happy to serve as altar servers at every Eucharistic celebration. They also take part in the Liturgy

## News Notes



- Our office in Modesto often receives **donations of old vestments and church items**, sometimes from closing parishes or convents. This beautiful chalice was donated by the Sisters of the Presentation in San Francisco. and was soon claimed by our Brother Edwin Intan, CJD, to use for his personal chalice as we are planning for his ordination to the priesthood in 2025.



*The Basilica of St Joseph was the first Catholic Church officially allowed to be built in the Soviet Union.*

of the Hours, especially Evening Prayer with us in the CJD Community. They themselves are interested in coming to the Church. I would appreciate your prayerful support, so that the Catholic Church in Russian-speaking Kazakhstan will grow and develop well.



*The Church of St James in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk*

- We are happy to have vocations and young priests. So they often are called upon to serve in various parishes when the pastors are ill or need to go on vacation or retreat. Recently our Fr Marcus David, CJD, lived a month at **St James Parish on Sakhalin Island** (between Russia and Japan). The parishioners are very grateful to him for this service.



*Parishioners at Sunday Mass*

- Thank you to the Diocese of Allentown, Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Norwich, Connecticut for hosting me in October for “Mission Sunday”. People were very generous in supporting our mission. I especially enjoyed telling them my “mission stories”, about how things were 32 years ago when I was first able to serve in Russia, and how I “ended up” in Russia in general (but I haven’t “ended up” yet!)—Fr Myron



*Sisters of Mother Theresa and Fr Marcus on the Island*

- The Sisters in Jesus the Lord have completed the renovation of their building near the Far Eastern Federal University on Russian Island, but they needed some bookcases for their book collection. Our seminarians Ruben and Esa came to their rescue by building those **bookcases** from scratch. It is great that seminarians have talents and skills besides theology!



*Seminarians Ruben Turreda and Esa Kujur, and their completed bookcase*

- On November 10 our Vietnamese parishioners had a special mass and party to celebrate the **Vietnamese Martyrs**. The Vatican estimates the number of Vietnamese martyrs at between 130,000 and 300,000, beginning in 1838. 117 of them were canonized by [Pope John Paul II](#). On June 19, 1988, thousands of [overseas](#)



Vietnamese worldwide gathered at St. Peter's Square for the celebration of their canonization. Their [memorial](#) in the current [General Roman Calendar](#) is on [November 24](#) as **Saint Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions**



*The party atmosphere is always great when the Vietnamese parishioners gather.*



*The chaplain for the Vietnamese, Fr Vincent Pham, C.J.D. and partygoers*

- The Feast of the Immaculate Conception is the time when we Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord usually accept new novices and when novices take their first vows. This year was no exception. At evening prayer on December 7 four men were admitted to our **novitiate** after being with us a month already. Here is a picture, but we usually don't mention names until later. This year's novices are from the Philippines, Uganda, Canada, and Vietnam. They are all interested in becoming priests for Russia, and



*Four new novices begin a year of study with us.*

will be studying the Russian language while they are with us.

The three men who have finished their year of novitiate and who took the three religious vows of **poverty, chastity, and obedience** will soon be leaving for seminaries in their home countries. They are Brothers Nguyen Duy De, C.J.D., Joseph Le Duc Hien, C.J.D. and Arslan Aslam Piyara, C.J.D. Brothers Nguyen and Joseph are from Vietnam and Brother Arslan is from Pakistan. It was a joy to watch their gradual improvement in the Russian language as the novitiate year went on.



*Brothers De, Arslan, and Hein.*

- The Our Brother Jackson Malik, C.J.D., recently received the **ministry of acolyte** as he continues his journey toward priesthood. In November 2024, the significant occasion was held at Christ the King Seminary in Karachi. What a wonderful gift from God that one of the students, a member of the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord (C.J.D.) congregation in Russia, was part of this special event. Brother Jackson Malik received the ministry of acolyte from His Excellency Bishop Dr.

Indrias Rehmat, the main celebrant of the Holy Mass. Earlier, in February 2024, Brother Jackson had been conferred the Ministry of Lector. Brother Jackson joined us on February 23, 2019, in Vladivostok and made his first religious vows on May 2, 2020, He began his Philosophy



*Receiving the certificate of Acolyte from Fr. Basharat Exupere (Superior General of OMI),*

studies for the priesthood at Loyola School of Theology in the Philippines on June 25, 2020, and graduated on May 25, 2022. On June 25, 2023, he professed his perpetual vows in Vladivostok.

Since August 2022, Brother Jackson has been pursuing theological studies at the National Catholic Institute of Theology while residing at Christ the King Seminary in Karachi, looking forward to his priestly ordination.

Our heartfelt prayers and best wishes are with Brother Jackson and all our seminarians as they continue their faith-filled journeys.

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**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](http://www.vladmission.org)

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

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

## Baby Talk

From the Women's Support Centers



“What will happen to me if this war doesn't get over soon?”

Slava December 6, 2023

## A Short Story:

I needed to fly from Nerengri to Khabarovsk. But when we arrived at the airport, the flight was full and there were no tickets. Ghennady said, “Let me talk to the pilots to see what I can do.” It turned out that we flew to Khabarovsk in the luggage compartment of the plane, sitting on the suitcases—No seats and no seatbelts! But we made it on time! --Fr Myron

**Remember  
Mary Mother of God Mission  
Society  
in your will!**



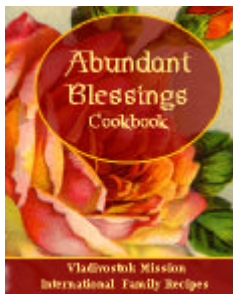
# Opportunities

♥ **2024 Giving Day** Thank you to all who have donated towards our goal of purchasing the space in Artyom for our **Womens's Support Center**. We have raised \$18,645 of the needed \$35,000 to buy the apartment wing. Although we did not reach our goal in 2024, we will continue raising funds during 2025 until our goal is met. If you would like to donate please note "Giving Day-WSC" on your check or online donation. Thank you!



♥ We have some great news to share! Thanks to your generosity we were able to reach our **2024 Christmas Appeal** goal of \$23,000 for a used car. The car is needed for the Most Holy Mother of God and our surrounding parishes. Since our November newsletter went out, we have raised enough for our third car! Keep an eye out in our upcoming newsletters for the new rides we will be purchasing this year! What a great help this will be not just for our priests but also the parishioners our priest will be able to now reach!

♥ Start the new year off with a classic Russian dish! You can find a delicious recipe for Beef Stroganoff in the Russian Main Dish section of our **Abundant**



**Blessings Cookbook**. This easy to make meal will keep you warm during these cold months. And with Valentine's Day just around the corner, it's the perfect time to bake some Lemon Love Notes for that special someone. Lemon not their thing, no problem. Try out our Chocolate Peanut Butter

Kisses instead. Both these sweet treats, as well as many more, can be found in the USA and Canada section under Desserts and Candy. For your copy of Abundant Blessings, you can order through our website [www.vladmission.org](http://www.vladmission.org), or send in a check to our mission office in CA. \$35.99 per cookbook covers cookbook and shipping in the continental USA. Proceeds from our cookbook go to our **seminarians' education** fund and our **Women's Support Centers**.

♥ The new year is also a great time to learn about the history of the Roman Catholic Church of the Russian Far East. Grab a copy of the book **Harsh Vineyard** written by our church historian, the late Miroslava Efimova. from our online store, [www.store.vladmission.org](http://www.store.vladmission.org). Delve into the history of our mission parish spanning over 100 years up to and including the time of Fr. Myron's arrival. Cost is \$17.00, plus \$3.99 S/H.



♥ Give the eternal gift of a **Mass Intention**. Masses 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](http://www.vladmission.org). A new tab has been added there for Masses specifically. Head to the right hand side, under the Donate tab, and you will find **Request a Mass**. This link will take you directly to our Mass intention page where you can request a Mass and enter your information for your intention. Suggested stipend is \$15 per Mass.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Please mail acknowledgement card(s) to:

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

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## From the development desk...

Dear Friends:

Looking for a new hobby to pick up this year? How about volunteering for the mission! You can be a mission speaker at parishes or a booth representative at Catholic Conferences. Here are some upcoming events in which we would like to attend and need volunteers at our table. You will pass out mission literature and sell religious goods too:

- February 21-23, RECongress, Los Angeles CA
- April 25/26, Marian Conference, Nashville TN
- April 28/29, Ignited by Truth, Raleigh NC
- May 16-18, Marian Conference, St Louis MO

Do you know of a conference in your area the mission might be able to attend? Contact Vicky at our office in CA at 209-408-0728

Would you like your parish to hear about the mission? Maybe your parish has a group interested in having a parish plaza sale to provide religious materials just in time for Lent and help fundraise for the mission at the same time. The beginning of the

year is the best time to request a visit. Ask your pastor if he would be interested in inviting a speaker to visit and share of our mission or if they would like to coordinate a plaza sale.

Thank you for all your prayers and support for the Vladivostok Mission! God bless you.

Jessica Trevilayan,  
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*Abby, a representative for the mission, at a local World Ablaze Conference in CA*