



Vladivostok Sunrise Russia Mission



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

Issue Number One Hundred Eighty Seven January, 2026

Our Russian to Rome!

For the Holy Year the Catholic church in Russia was invited to send a delegation to Rome, and somebody (??) paid a lot of the expenses. From our parish of the Most Holy Mother of God in Vladivostok our parishioner and parish worker **Vladimir Alexeyev** was able to go, and also his mother from the Arsenyev parish of the Annunciation. Here is a photo of Vladimir's personal greeting with Pope Leo XIV. It was a great once-in-a-lifetime experience for the Russians from the Far East. Vladimir said that the representatives from our diocese were the most friendly and holy of all the Russian pilgrims. He was impressed by the beauty of Rome and the huge crowds of pilgrims from all over the world.



Vladimir greeting the Pope. He told the Holy Father that he was from the Russian parish where the Pope's seminary classmate in Chicago, Fr Daniel Maurer, C.J.D., was a priest.

Vladimir says: "I am deeply grateful to the Catholic Church, all the organizers and sponsors, for the opportunity to visit holy sites and experience the Gospel story. This pilgrimage became a source of profound spiritual experience for me. A personal meeting with Pope Leo XIV and his teachings strengthened the spirit of our delegation's pilgrimage. It was deeply moving to pray at the relics of the Holy Apostles Peter, Paul, Philip, and James, and St. Cyril, the enlightener of the Slavs. It is difficult to describe the feelings that overwhelmed me as I

climbed the Holy Stairs on my knees, following in the footsteps of the Savior as He walked to His death on the Cross. With trepidation, I prayed and contemplated the cross on which our Lord was crucified. Feeling completely immersed in history, I descended into the catacombs of St. Sebastian, where the first Christians prayed. These places are a living faith, which from the depths of time gives us confident hope for salvation."

A Pilgrimage in Vladivostok

Seventh Station: The Transit Camp

The seventh stopping place for pilgrims is associated with the Vladivostok Transit Camp. There were dozens of barracks on an area of several acres in the 2nd River area. For the period from 1939 to 1941, over 250 thousand people passed through this camp. They were political prisoners of different nationalities, religions, social strata brought by train from all over Russia. And from here they were delivered by steamship to Magadan, Kolyma, and throughout the Far East. Some prisoners were left in Vladivostok to work on construction sites, logging, fish production and processing. Every day the dead were taken out of the camp, filling mass graves along the railway along Ovchinnikova Street. Now on this site, on the initiative of the human rights society "Memorial," the "Faith and Hope Square" has been laid out. The Memorial



Candle symbolizes the memory of the living with grief for the innocent dead. Funeral rallies and the laying of wreaths and flowers are held here on the Day of Remembrance of the Repressed on October 30.

Most Holy Mother of God Pray for Us

The pilgrims, bowing their heads, re-lived in their minds the path of the repressed. We must not forget these tragic pages of our history. Father Daniel addressed the pilgrims with sincere words of prayer: *“Dear Lord Jesus, we lift our hearts to You in this place of suffering and pain. We know that thousands of people passed through this transit camp. None of us can imagine their suffering, but You know all their suffering, and You suffered with them.”*



Today, on the site of the transit camp there is a memorial stone with the words: “...the camp through which hundreds of thousands of innocents passed into the hell of the Gulag” and an Orthodox church was built in honor of the New Martyrs and Confessors of the Russian Church.

Eighth Station: The Cathedral

The pilgrimage ended with words of prayer back in Vladivostok in the cathedral, to which was added sublime and bright liturgical singing in our church. The pilgrims, having lived and felt this day, returned home with a better understanding of historical events, with love for the Lord and their ancestors. Everyone actively shared their impressions as there were so many words to say that came from the heart.

We could not be helped reminded of the crowd that gathered so many years before, when the cathedral was dedicated. How wonderful that we have a photo of that day to share with you!

End of the Pilgrimage.



The crowd accompanying the Blessed Sacrament to the cathedral in 1921

Much Ado About Something: The “Filioque”

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

2025 was the 1400th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, so there are discussions about it, and about how to interpret its words. When we Roman Catholics recite the Nicene Creed at Mass we say that the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the Father and the Son”. But Orthodox churches and some eastern rite Catholic churches say, “proceeds from the Father” which is what Nicaea said. We have discussed this in our Vladivostok catechism classes, and here are the conclusions that I have come to:

The Trinity is an equality of persons, but not an identity of persons. The Orthodox argue that saying the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son undermines the Trinity by placing the Spirit in a secondary position. But if that is so, why doesn’t the Son’s coming from the Father also mess up the Trinity, putting the Son in second position?

If we say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, does that exclude that he also proceeds from the Son? If the Holy Spirit comes only from the Father, doesn’t that make the Holy Spirit a “second son”? So there would be two sons in the Trinity. But the Creed says that Jesus is the “only begotten son”, so there can’t be a second son, unless he is not begotten. If he is not begotten, then he is created, and not God. So the only options left are that the Holy Spirit comes from the “Father and the Son”, or only from the Son! Can the Son also “beget”? It would seem contrary to scripture that the Holy Spirit have a subsidiary position to the Son, since the Holy Spirit descended upon the incarnate Son! So the only option remaining is that the Holy Spirit descends from the Father and the Son. The proposed explanation is that the Holy Spirit is the relationship between the Father and the Son, which, being eternal, is also God.

Since the Trinity is eternal, there could never be a time when all three persons of the Trinity did not exist simultaneously, so how could the Holy Spirit “predate” the Son whom the Father loved eternally? Thus the Holy Spirit is eternally the relationship of the Father and the Son.

If the Bible says that the Father will send the Holy Spirit, does that mean that Jesus is not necessarily involved in the sending? Without Him, the Father would not send.

“John 15:26: “But when the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me.” This doesn’t exclude the “proceeding from the Son”, because the Spirit does “proceed from the Father”. But “I shall send” implies that He has the authority to send in union with the Father. “Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I go not away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, **I will send him to you** (John 16:7, (emphasis added).

Do the Father and the Son have the same spirit? If not, do they each have a different spirit? That would mean that there are four persons in the “Trinity”, unless the Spirit of the Son is created, but how can the eternal Son have a created spirit which would not be eternal?

The phrase “to send in my name” is used to say that something is done with the authority of the specified person. Thus Jesus has authority over the Holy Spirit. If the Son proceeds from the Father, then the Spirit proceeds from the Father via the Son, i.e. from the Father and the Son.

As celebrations of the Council of Nicaea continue, it will be interesting to see what Pope Leo XIV will say about it.

My Interest in Russia

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

Did you ever wonder how I got interested in Russia? Here is the story. I was born in 1941 before America got into World War II. My dad, Henry Effing, worked for a company named Servel, Inc. Servel made gas refrigerators. In those days, not all homes were connected to the electric grid, but people still needed cold refrigerators to protect their foods. Those Servel refrigerators worked on bottled gas, not electricity, so they were in demand.

One day the US Department of War (Defense?) asked Servel if they could make, instead of refrigerators, airplane wings, for the war. Airplane wings and gas refrigerators are somewhat alike: They are made from sheet metal, are full of pipes and valves, and run on liquid

fuel. These wings would be for Russian airplanes made in Siberia for the war.

So Servel agreed, and we began hearing a lot about Russia, the Lend Lease Program, and the War. The wings were made in my hometown of Evansville, Indiana, shipped down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers on Lend Lease ships to the Gulf of Mexico, through the Panama Canal, across the Pacific to Vladivostok where they were transferred to the Trans-Siberian Railroad, and shipped to Siberia where they were united with the locally made fuselages. (When I first arrived in Vladivostok in 1991 there was still a Lend Lease ship in Vladivostok harbor— You could recognize it by its square wooden window frames rather than portholes.)

So I was always interested in Russia. When our family was given a world globe, my first question was “Where is Russia?” During my educational years I always subscribed to USSR magazine. When I needed to take a modern foreign language to receive my bachelor’s degree, I couldn’t bear trying to study French or Spanish. Luckily Yuri Gagarin orbited the Earth, and people in America rushed to learn Russian. I attended the first Russian classes offered at my school, Evansville College.

After my ordination as a priest, I taught Mathematics and Science in several schools and seminaries, and at the University of Guam. When Fr Dan Maurer and I were looking for a place to begin our proposed new religious order, it was the time when the Soviet Union was dissolving, and we knew there would be a need for priests in Russia. So I made my first trip to Russia in 1991--of course to Asia, where we figured the need would be greatest. Vladivostok was a closed military city so I couldn’t come here immediately. I had to return to America and get a special visa for Vladivostok, and I celebrated the first public mass here on November 11, 1991. The Soviet Union ended on December 31, 1991.

Of course our work here wouldn’t have been possible without our great benefactors! Thank you so much, and God bless you!

News Notes

● About the **old broken door**! Several years ago the hinges on one of the inside swinging church doors of our church in Vladivostok broke. We don’t know how old the door is, but the hinges were made in China, and the company name was given. That company still exists, but they don’t make hinges anymore! What to do? We haven’t been able to use that door for years.

One day at last I got an inspiration that maybe such hinges are made in America, and sure enough I found them on the internet. How to get them here, since the war

sanctions restrict travel and shipping, and they are quite heavy? God supplies! A friend and benefactor from Michigan was coming to Russia and wanted to visit us! Thanks be God and to the benefactor, the doors are now swinging again!

- Our “Guardian Angel Program” at the Women’s Support Centers has now reached 102 supported mothers and babies. The funds come from donors who “adopt” a needy child for a monthly donation. The very first “adopted babies” have already reached their teen years, but new babies are still in need.

- Our thanks to **Fr Peter Cao Minh Hoang, C.J.D.**, for coming to Vladivostok for several weeks from Vietnam to work with our Vietnamese parishioners! The parishioners were sad that he had to return to his duties in Vietnam, and we are hoping for another Vietnamese priest to come to us again, as soon as possible!



Fr Cao in the middle, with our Vietnamese parishioners

- How would you like to help St. Nicolas? His feastday was December 6 but he is more associated with Christmas. But I mean **St Nicolas Parish** in Kazakhstan! Kazakhstan is Russian speaking and part of our mission area where three of our priests are working. I guess St Nicolas needs some coal. (He must have overdone it, putting it in the socks of kids who had been bad??) The parish is asking for help to buy coal for the winter. Coal is comparatively inexpensive in Kazakhstan. The name of the city of Karaganda, which is the diocesan seat of the parishes where our priests are working, actually means “coalville”. But the small parish still can’t afford it. They will be awfully cold during the rest of this winter without some help. The need is for about 3 months of heat at about \$30 per day including labor. I’ve been there and have seen the Siberian winds driving the deep winter snows! Here is a picture of the church, and some young parishioners.

- Recently Fr Myron had a **great experience**! It began with a phone call from someone from a faraway village in our state of Primorye. The caller said that his whole family is Catholic, but they are so far from a parish that in the last 20 years they haven’t been able to come to church.



St. Nicolas Church

But now the family will make the trip to Vladivostok for the baptism of their 5-year old son, if we were willing! Were we willing?—Of course we were willing! and ecstatic! The boy “Dima” turned out to be quite the character, and we enjoyed meeting him and his family!

Dima’s godmother is his grandmother.



Now that we know the family, I’m sure Fr Vicky Samuel CJD will be glad to visit them occasionally—His parish in Ussurysk, Nativity, is the closest parish to them. Here are some photos for you of the happy day.:



All ready to go with his baptismal garment and lighted candle!

- December 7 was a happy day for our CJD community in Vladivostok. Three men joined our community as **novices**. With the vocation crisis in America and Europe—including Russia!) we need vocations to provide for the Catholics of the huge territory which is the Russian Federation today. Novitiate lasts one year, during which time they live and work with us as they consider their vocation in our religious community. After the year they can take their first vows, and then go on to attend a seminary to prepare for priesthood. Naturally, before priesthood they will be ordained deacons. At the time of the preparation of this issue of the Sunrise we are



Novices Francis Chabu (from Zambia), Jose Vipin (from India), and Meinrad Andrew Tindwa (from Tanzania). They all have their bachelor's degrees in Philosophy, and Brother Francis has completed the seminary already. He is helping us by teaching adults in our parish who speak English.

expecting the ordination of our three current deacons to the priesthood. The new novices already have some years of seminary behind them, so we wish them well during their novitiate program and then to finish the seminary.

- When we first came to Russia the life expectancy of men was 55 years, a tribute to alcoholism and poor medical care during socialism. Now it is 77 years, a tribute to much better medical care, a sense of hope in society, and even **Alcoholics Anonymous**. We are glad that several AA groups meet in our parish premises, as well as several other self-help groups. I am reminded of our early years in Russia when alcoholism was so rampant. No matter where you went you would find people laying in the street drunk. When we would pass a kiosk which sold beer, there was always a long line waiting for 9:00 AM when the kiosk would open. When we returned from school, the whole area around the kiosk was covered with drunken people. I was glad to try to make a dent in the problem by giving talks in schools about the scientific theory of alcoholism—over 80 talks in schools and colleges all over the state and beyond. I remember one young man at a police academy who said, “I can’t even have fun without a drink”, and I said, “Young man, don’t you realize that even babies can have fun without alcohol. Why can’t you?” I still remember and pray for him.

- Veteran's 95th Anniversary: Tatyana Andreyevna Novitskaya.**

Tatyana Andreyevna's birthday was November 22, 2025. She turned 95 years old and is still the most active member of our Parish of the Visitation in Lesozavodsk. Tatyana (née Tatyana Andreyevna Russkova) was born in 1930, in the village of Gryaznukha in the Stalingrad region of Russia. Due to the outbreak of World War II in 1941, the family was forced to leave their home and moved to Samarkand. Tatyana Andreyevna experienced



Tatyana, with parishioners, in the chair below the balloons.

the hardships of World War II from childhood and is directly involved in the current "Children of War" program. After graduating from high school, she entered a technical school in the food industry, graduating with a degree in Food Processing Engineering. In 1953 she married her husband, Mikhail Mikhailovich Novitsky. In 1953, the family moved to Lesozavodsk, Primorsky Krai.

Since 1950, Tatyana Andreyevna worked as a chemical engineer, a timber inspector, and accountant. She retired in 1985 and holds the title of "Veteran of Labor."

Since the beginning of Roman Catholic Church services in Lesozavodsk conducted by Father Myron Clarence Effing in 1997, Tatyana Andreyevna and her husband, Mikhail Mikhailovich Novitsky, were parishioners of the Catholic Church. Her spouse: Mikhail Mikhailovich Novitsky died on January 13, 2014. Their children and grandchildren continue to live in Lesozavodsk.

Congratulations, Tatyana! Thank you for being such a faithful Catholic who NEVER misses mass and parish prayers!

- News bulletin: Bishop Kirill Klimovich, D.D., called to say that he would be in Vladivostok for the **ordination of our three deacons to the priesthood** on December 21. That is too late for the deadline for Vladivostok Sunrise of January, so we should have the story and photos in the March issue. Thank you for praying for our vocations!

- Thanks be to God for the **safety of our brothers**. Deacons Edwin Intan and Lloyd Cabatana, C.J.D., were visiting their relatives in the Philippines during the recent typhoon and surging flood. Bro Edwin was swept away by waters to the neck, and thought it might be the end of his life, but suddenly his hand hit on the top of a fence which he grabbed onto and held on for hours to save his life. Bro Lloyd was in his parent's home which was very sturdy, but his brother's home nearby was not so lucky. Even though it was a two story building, his brother's family was saved by hanging onto the rafters under the roof and above the second floor.

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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

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

PO Box 576216

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.

Baby Talk

From the Women's Support Centers

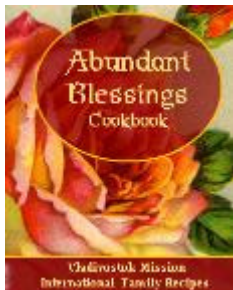


"Hooray for our Team!"
Aksenia May 22, 2025

Opportunities

♥ Catholic Conferences Help us plan our 2026 Conference schedule! One of the best ways to spread the news about our work is to attend good, authentic Catholic Conferences throughout the US. We can only attend with your help at our booths! Last year we missed several great conferences due to lack of volunteers to help. Please see some of the conferences we are already registered for or would like to register for below. Can you help us? The mission arranges and covers travel and overnight accommodations and meals. We will ship materials to you for the conference shortly before the event date. If you also know of any Catholic Conferences, small or large, in your area, please let us know. Contact Vicky in our mission office at 209-408-0728 or vicky@vladmission.org. Thank you!

- February 19-22, 2026 Archdiocese of Los Angeles Religious Educators' Congress – Anaheim, CA
- March 26, 2026 Lenten Marriage Conference "Fully Surrender"- Oakdale CA
- April 10-12, 2026, National Institute of Religious Life - University of St Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, IL
- May 15-17, 2026, Marian Conference – Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, FL
- July 24-25, 2026, Catholic Women's Conference – San Antonio TX
- July 31-Aug 2, 2026, Midwest Catholic Family Conference - Wichita, KS
- September 2026 Catholic Answers Conference – San Diego, CA
- September 2026 Eucharistic Congress - Charlotte, NC
- September 11-12, 2026, Archdiocese of Las Vegas Conference - Las Vegas NV
- September 26-27, 2026, Christ Our Life - Des Moines IA



♥ Abundant Blessings Cookbook Sale Continues! Our Abundant Blessings Cookbook has 484 international recipes to prepare for all occasions. It also is filled with pictures of our mission, many pages of cooking substitutions and guides, and many helpful hints for the home. A truly wonderful gift for anyone who

loves cooking or is just starting out.

Abundant Blessings Cookbook is on sale for \$25 plus shipping and handling in the continental USA. Proceeds go to support our Women's Support Centers and our

Seminarian program. Get your copies for friends and family. Order through our online store store.vladmission.org, by check/cash or call our mission office to order by phone, 209-408-0728.

♥ You may request Masses or special intentions for your loved ones that will be celebrated by our Canons Regular In Jesus the Lord priest. You or your designated recipient will receive a Mass card. The suggested Mass stipend is \$15.

My Name _____

Please offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the following people or intentions, include the address you would like your card sent to:

1 _____

 2 _____

 3 _____

Dev Desk *(Continued from page 8)*

when it comes to missionary work and CJD in Russia started by Fr. Myron and Fr. Dan should continue. They are my inspiration. During the days that I spent living in community with them, I heard from people how they worked tirelessly for the people. This inspired me even more and I decided wholeheartedly that I should work in Russia under CJD.

I'm very grateful to everyone who helped me in this journey. God bless you and your family abundantly. Once again thank you so much to each one of you.

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 If you would like to help sponsor any of our seminarians, please contact me at mission office.

Jessica Trevillyan USA Mission office  
[usoffice@vladmission.org](mailto:usoffice@vladmission.org), 209-408-0728

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Mary Mother of God Mission Society  
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## From the development desk...

Dear Friends: Happy New Year!

As the territory our CJD priests cover increases in the Far East of Russia, so does our need for more priests. Our priests celebrate mass for parishioners equivalent to the square miles as the state of Wisconsin! Luckily for us the cost per year to support a seminarian about \$10,000 because our seminarians are able to study in their home countries. This is a fraction of what it would cost in the United States.

This year I would like to introduce you to some of our seminarians from Canons Regular in Jesus the Lord, Russia. In each issue of the Sunrise, newsletter we will introduce a seminarian and tell you a little bit about them. Keep an eye out in our Opportunities section going forward.

### Meet Brother Sandeep Golla!

I'm the first born in my family, I have two younger brothers. My father died in 2018, due to heart attack and my mother works as a sweeper in the hospital.

I come from a small parish called Sarada Nagar which comes under Diocese of Vijayawada in India. I completed my Philosophy. At present I pursue my first year Theology in Sacred Heart Seminary Chennai India.



I have had a great desire to become a priest ever since my childhood. I attended Mass regularly and served as an Altar boy. Every time I watched a priest celebrating Mass I would admire them. I used to imitate them. I grew to understand the difference between

Diocesan priests and those in religious life and decided to become a religious. In this journey my mother and father helped me by sharing their faith experiences and how the missionaries brought the good news to our area. As a family, we used to pray together. All this nourished and helped my desire to become a seminarian/priest.

I used to hear about Russia during my high school and college days. I contacted Fr. Myron first in 2019, as I was searching for a place to join. Interestingly, and by God's grace, I was inspired to join in CJD but couldn't go that year. Finally, I went to Russia in 2022 during Ukraine and Russia war and I was there till 2024 in which I did my formation and Novitiate. I feel *(Continued on Page 7.)*