

MISSION RUSSIA

SISTERS IN *JESUS* THE LORD

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Fall, 2010



JULY 31, 2010 PERPETUAL VOWS, FIRST VOWS PUBLIC ASSOCIATION

Back row, L-R: Fr. Daniel Maurer, C.J.D.; Deacon Mike Elsey; Bishop Robert W. Finn; Deacon NaoKao Yang; Deacon Martin Goedken; John Ward, server. Front row, L-R: Alex Kriedler; Sr. Maria Damiana Lee, C.J.D.; Sr. Julia Mary Kubista, M.M.; Sr. Maria Stella Whittier, C.J.D.; Sr. Catherine Marie Morse, C.J.D.; Sharon King, associate. Photo by Joseph Bonello.

On Saturday, July 31, 2010, Bishop Robert W. Finn, D.D., of the Diocese of Kansas City - St. Joseph, Missouri, received the perpetual vows of Sister Maria Stella of the Merciful Heart of Jesus, C.J.D., and the first vows of Sister Maria Damiana Lee, C.J.D., at a 10 AM Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Raytown, Missouri. On the same day, Bishop Finn granted Sisters in Jesus the Lord status as a Public Association of the Faithful. Our community began as a Private Association in 2003, and was elevated to a Private Association of the Faithful by Bishop Finn on June 19, 2009. The next step, after more time and further progress, is Diocesan Institute, God willing!

Sister Maria Stella Whittier, C.J.D., made her first private vows in 2005, and has been with our community

since 2003. Sister Maria Damiana Lee, C.J.D., became a novice in 2008, and has been with us since 2007. In preparation for these vows, Sister Maria Stella made a month-long retreat, and Sister Maria Damiana made a retreat of seven days.

We are grateful that so many of you were able to be with us on our memorable day. Father Daniel Maurer, C.J.D., of our brother community in Vladivostok, the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord, extended his promotion time in the United States in order to be with us. Father Myron Effing, C.J.D., sent his blessings.

The families of the two sisters making vows were well-represented. Seminarians from the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri, served at the altar along with servers from our parish.

The parishioners, joined by some friends, put on a beautiful reception for us in the school gym. Thank you to all who helped make this day so special through your loving generosity!+



L-R Don and Maryann McCuiston, Cindy Sweetland, Dr. Sue Anderson: some of the wonderful volunteers who put on such a delicious dinner and lovely reception for us!

Photo by Richard Gross.

REFLECTIONS FROM A MOTHER

By Donnita R. Whittier, mother of Sr. Maria Stella

Seeing our daughter so radiantly happy on her day of profession of perpetual vows was truly one of the happiest days of my life. Like most mothers, when she was little I imagined her getting married one day to the man of her dreams and raising a family, rarely thinking about a religious vocation for her. At age 19, however, she surprised me by expressing a desire to enter religious life after working during spring break as a student

I hope that parents of children considering vocations will realize the wonderful blessing it is to have God choose a child from your family.

volunteer in a homeless shelter. For the next 8 years my husband and I observed the thoughtful choices she made as far as schooling and work and watched our daughter's vocation develop into a solid commitment to co-found a new order of missionaries to Russia. It was still very difficult to say good-bye when she left for Minnesota from Virginia on this new adventure, but we knew that her decision had been prayerfully made and were

confident that God would show her if this was indeed His will for her.

When my husband and I saw our daughter's face as she spoke clearly the words of commitment to a life of obedience, chastity, and poverty, we knew that she could not have chosen a better life for herself. We also knew that God had chosen a gem, a grace-filled soul with many talents to offer as a religious sister. Her concert the following day which she called "In Jubilatio" in thanksgiving for the gift of religious life, expressed to the fullest her total joy at having been espoused to Jesus forever. She was a most beautiful bride of Christ playing first the organ, then the harp, as well as chanting and singing. My husband and I just held hands and listened, feeling humbled and honored to be her parents. It has been an awesome experience to be Sr. Maria Stella's mother and I hope that parents of children considering vocations will realize the wonderful blessing it is to have God choose a child from your family.+



The happy brides, with Bishop Finn, the shepherd of the diocese. L: Sr. Maria Damiana; R: Sr. Maria Stella.

Photo by Alison Ryan-Landon.



Sr. Maria Stella on the harp, and Sr. Catherine Marie on the flute, "In Jubilatio" concert. Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Kansas City, Missouri. *Photo by Donnita Whittier.*



Fr. Daniel Maurer, C.J.D., announcer for our sacred music concert, "In Jubilatio," on August 1, 2010. Photo by Donnita Whittier.

ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX: PROTECTRESS OF CATHOLICS IN RUSSIA



St. Thérèse of Lisieux was named protectress of Catholics in Russia by Pope Pius XI in 1932. From February 27 to June 30, 1999, her relics went all across the Russian Federation. Her relics were venerated for four days in Vladivostok by many Catholics and Orthodox. Hymns in her honor were translated into Russian, and *The Story of A Soul* was published in Russian. See our website, www.cjd.cc/links to read more about St. Thérèse's connection with Russia. Her feast day is October 1. St. Thérèse, pray for us!+

We need your continued financial support and prayers in order to send well-trained, faith-filled missionary sisters to Russia.

Volunteers to help here or abroad are most needed and always welcome. To volunteer, please call us at (816) 353-2177 or email us: info@cjd.cc.

*God bless you for your
Generosity.*

TO CONTACT SISTERS OR CANONS:

Sisters in Jesus the Lord (C.J.D.)

Canonissae in Jesu Domino

**7049 Blue Ridge Blvd, Raytown, MO 64133-5679
(816) 353-2177 www.cjd.cc info@cjd.cc**

Sisters in Jesus the Lord is a Public Association of the Faithful – missionary canonesses working toward the revival of the Roman Catholic Church in the Russian Far East.

Jesus—Through Him, With Him, and In Him.

Mary Mother of God Mission Society

**1736 Milestone Circle, Modesto, CA 95357
(209) 408-0728 www.vladmission.org**

A lay mission organization supporting the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord, our brother community in Vladivostok, Russia.

GARDENING IN RAYTOWN, MISSOURI



We have planted quite a garden behind our convent at Our Lady of Lourdes: potatoes, tomatoes, Swiss chard, kale, lettuce, string beans, flowers, and more! This picture shows the first tree we have planted—a cherry tree, which we have dubbed our "Monsignor Schuler Memorial Tree" after our beloved mentor.



Soup with Sisters

*Join us for some fascinating conversations about the lives and work of missionaries. Women are welcome to come to our convent on first Fridays for Vespers and supper. 6 PM-8:30 PM.
Please call (816) 353-2177.*

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~ HOW CAN I HELP? ~

▪ **BE A PRAYER PARTNER**
WITH THE SISTERS IN JESUS THE LORD!

We send a list of prayer intentions by email or regular mail (if no email) each month to our prayer partners.

To become a prayer partner with us, please email us at cjdprayerpartner@gmail.com, or send us your mailing address.

Could God Be Calling YOU to Be a Sister or Priest for Russia?

We are serving in an area larger than the United States, with fewer than 100 priests or sisters. Could you, or someone you know, be called to give your life to God to help Catholics in the Russian Far East? Please pray with us and ask God how you can help most.

▪ **“ADOPT A SISTER!”**

No gift is too small! All donations are tax-deductible.

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WISH LIST:

Frequent Flier miles: Capital One, any amount. Other types, preferably at least 25,000 miles at a time.