

# MISSION RUSSIA

Sisters in *Jesus* the Lord

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[www.cjd.cc](http://www.cjd.cc)

Spring, 2008

## VISIT TO RUSSIA January 28-February 12, 2008!



First Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after the consecration of the church on February 3, 2008

Sister Julia and Sister Maria Stella visited Vladivostok, Russia for the consecration of Most Holy Mother of God Catholic Church on February 3, 2008! It was a tremendous blessing to receive enough frequent flier miles from friends to be able to be there for this historic event with our brother community, the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord, and the wonderful parishioners. Bishop Kirill, priests, sisters and other Catholics from the vast diocese of Irkutsk came from distant parishes in the Russian Far-East to Vladivostok for the great occasion. We met and talked with Bishop Kirill, and also a priest serving on the peninsula of Kamchatka (where volcanoes erupt each day), as well as priests from Magadan, Arsenev, Nakhodka, and Romanovka. We

Young Women 17 +  
***Discerning your vocation?***

*"How to" weekend:*

*June 20-22, 2008*

St. Agnes Convent in St. Paul, MN  
talks by priests, prayer with sisters, time for questions

To register: (651) 291-7777



Sr. Maria Stella and Sr. Julia pray at the consecrated altar.

***2<sup>nd</sup> Showing:***  
**Pictures from our trip to Russia**

**7:00pm Saturday, May 17, 2008**

**at St. Agnes Convent:**  
525 Thomas Ave, St. Paul MN 55103

also met a priest from St. Petersburg who is the head of Caritas Russia (similar to Catholic Charities).

After the consecration of the church, we visited Catholic parishes in Ussurysk and Nakhodka, Baby Hospital #3 (continued on page 2 →)

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and a hospice for impoverished elderly in Vladivostok.

This visit was so fruitful for our community, and we gained many insights into our future work there. Your prayers were tangible every moment of our journey. We look forward to sending three sisters soon—hopefully by August, 2009!+

## NEWS UPDATES:

❖ An idea from one of our faithful volunteers is to make and sell saints bracelets to raise money for the orphan Milk and Fruit Program. Each bracelet has four medals, one of which is a miraculous medal. These have become popular at the Schlundt family's Catholic parish! They have raised over \$1300 for food for the orphans. All proceeds go directly to support the orphans in Vladivostok. Call us to start making them, too!



The Schlundt family gathers to make saints bracelets

❖ A “Little Flowers” group of young Catholic girls from Forest Lake, Minnesota, recently came to visit us for an afternoon at the convent and donated the proceeds from their own fundraising for the Russian orphans.

❖ A homeschooling group from Dumfries, Virginia had a great idea this fall—they organized a “walk-a-thon” to support us and our projects for the orphans in Russia. As part of the event, they prayed the prayers found on our website. Thank you, Mondoro family and friends!

❖ This year 60 of us traveled together to the Institute on Religious Life near Chicago—our largest group yet! There were 48 people ages 13-30, plus parents and chaperones! All of us enjoyed meeting so many sisters, brothers, and priests on the weekend.

❖ Thank you for several copies of the *Liber Usualis*, as well as some excellent older Catholic

hymnals. Please keep sending them! Our community has a special love for sacred music, and the Catholic Church in Vladivostok continues to expand the hymnal they first published several years ago, one of the few Catholic hymnals in Eastern Russia. +



A Russian village we passed on the bus ride to Nakhodka.



Sr. Maria Stella with twin parishioners, Love and Hope, in Vladivostok on the day of consecration, Feb. 3, 2008  
Sister had permission to wear her habit to the consecration Mass.

## TO CONTACT SISTERS OR CANONS:

### **Sisters in Jesus the Lord**

525 Thomas Ave, St. Paul, MN 55103  
(651) 291-7777 [www.cjd.cc](http://www.cjd.cc) [info@cjd.cc](mailto:info@cjd.cc)

### **Mary Mother of God Mission Society**

1813 Oakdale Rd, Modesto, CA 95355  
(651) 227-0208 [www.vladmission.org](http://www.vladmission.org)

*A lay mission organization supporting our brother community in Vladivostok, Russia.*

Sisters in Jesus the Lord is a private association seeking to “bring people to Jesus and Jesus to people” (John Paul II), starting with reviving the Roman Catholic Church in the Russian Far-East. For now, the members may use their religious names and wear the habit in the convent only. Two Roman Catholic American priests, who are Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord, are working in Vladivostok, Russia, and we will be their sister community.

## WHY RUSSIAN ORPHANS NEED “GRANDMAS”. . . by Sister Julia, MM

During our recent trip to Vladivostok, we were able to see firsthand the great blessings the Grandma Program provides. However, many more grandmas are urgently needed, especially for the infants. The Grandma Program, run by the Fathers, gives regular volunteers a monthly stipend to come three days a week to feed, rock, and play with the babies. They supplement the efforts of the minimal orphanage staff. At first, it may not seem like a program that would be considered urgent. Why is it so important? Without the program, some of the babies may actually become unadoptable.

One family from New York adopted two boys from Russia, both about 7 years old. One boy had been sickly in the orphanage, and had been frequently in the clinic, where he was cared for by the nurses, which gave him extra contact with adults. This boy adapted easily to his new family. The second boy had very minimal contact with adults and so it took almost seven years and much attention from his adoptive parents for him to adjust properly to his new home.

When people ask me about my most poignant memory of my years in Africa, I have no hesitation giving my answer. One day, as I was touring one of the larger hospitals, our guide asked if we would like to visit the orphans. In my surprise, I asked, “Why are there orphans at a hospital?” Our guide said that sometimes women come to give birth to a child, sign in using a fake name, and then disappear in the middle of the night, leaving the baby behind. Even after we had been in the orphans’ room for several minutes and tried to get their attention, the blank stares of the babies never changed as they rocked their bodies slowly back and forth. I cannot imagine anyone being able to forget the sadness and unresponsiveness of those infants.

Now I have another memory. This February in Vladivostok, I played with Anya (see picture) and her other eight-month-old roommates at the orphanage. They were so excited to be out of their cribs and playing on the floor, especially Anya. When I had to leave, and went to put Anya back in her crib, she just begged me, using body language, not to put her down. As I walked away, she threw herself down on her mattress with sobs of disappointment. I prayed that she would not be disappointed for long, and promised myself that I would make every effort to find a “grandma” for her and her companions, the other 69 orphans three years of age and under at that orphanage.

It is common knowledge that infants anywhere benefit greatly - **for the rest of their lives** - from being held while being fed, and from a lot of loving contact with adults. That is what the Grandma Program is all about. Father Myron thinks that perhaps more grandmas will volunteer if the stipend can be increased. Most of the grandmas who could volunteer are retired, surviving on a very minimal monthly government check. Currently, a goodly percentage of the \$70.00 monthly stipend that the parish gives each grandma is used for bus fare to-and-from the orphanage. Any check sent to Sisters in Jesus the Lord with “Grandma” written in the memo goes entirely to the Grandma Program. See our website for more pictures, or to donate online.+



Sister Julia and little Anya from Baby Hospital #3

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

*God bless you for your generosity.*

***Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Mark 16:15***

Spring 2008 Newsletter  
Sisters in Jesus the Lord  
525 Thomas Ave  
St Paul MN 55103-1691

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**Vladivostok: Our First  
Mission Destination**

**~ HOW CAN I HELP? ~**

**PRAYER PARTNER WITH SISTERS  
IN JESUS THE LORD!**

We believe that God wants us to get to Russia as soon as possible to help the growing Catholic Church in the Russian Far-East with Father Myron Effing and the Canons Regular of Jesus the Lord. We are eagerly preparing for the day when we can join them. **We hope to send three sisters in August of 2009.**

**Please pray** that young women who have a vocation to missionary life will come, and that our community will develop according to God's plan. We send a list of prayer intentions via email each month to all our prayer partners.

**To become a prayer partner with us, please email us** at [cjdprayerpartner@gmail.com](mailto:cjdprayerpartner@gmail.com) (new email address for prayer partners), or send us your postal address. Your prayers are our life-line!

**ADOPT A SISTER!**

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

**Make donations on-line at [www.cjd.cc](http://www.cjd.cc) or**



**Make checks payable to:**

***Sisters in Jesus the Lord***  
Send to: 525 Thomas Ave  
St Paul MN 55103-1691  
(651) 291-7777

Fr. Myron and Sisters in Jesus the Lord

**WISH LIST:**

1. Set of handbells.
2. Volunteer secretarial help.
3. Harp case for airplane (call for info).
4. Volunteers to make saints bracelets.