

I worked at a store in very difficult conditions, low paying, dishonest coworkers, and mistreatment by the employer. I am paid an average salary of \$200 a month but at the end of the month the employer says my hat was not straight: \$10 fine, or I was 10 minutes late for work: \$20 fine, and soon my salary is half what I expect.

Thank God, Fr. Michael and the Catholic Church helps me or we would truly be living on the street. The Catholic community helped when I first gave birth so I could live with my son in a small apartment. My joy is my son and even though we struggle, we are happy to have each other. I never knew I could be a good mother but thanks to God I kept Alosa. My sister once asked me if I was sorry I didn't abort him. I answered NO!! I don't know how I could live now without him.

The Catholic parish in Ola recently gave food to my brother who was stealing to stay alive while my mother was in the hospital. My brother is handicapped and doesn't understand why he had to go hungry. We can't get help from family or the government so my only help is from the Catholic Church.

I am very grateful to you for your help, and all you are doing for me. Thank you so much! We struggle but we have hope.

Sincerely yours, Ekaterina

When did it all begin? At first, alcohol was entertainment - it made me fearless and daring. Then the bad effects began. But what could I do? How could I stop? I sought treatment, but the hospital didn't help me. Once, after a bout of hard drinking, I turned to Jesus. "Help me, Jesus! No one but you can help me. I've lost everything. I'm still alive, but I don't want to live like this. Help me!!!"

And Jesus helped me! I remember that I stood at the window and looked up to heaven, begging for help. From that very moment, my life changed. I didn't seek salvation in alcohol anymore. I found new friends, my life transformed itself. One friend led me to the Nativity of Jesus Catholic parish and what a joy to find my home here.

People suffering from alcoholism, my heart is breaking for you. You might have lost yourself, your family, and your community, but you haven't lost God! Call to the Lord and He will answer you.

Now I am the happiest person alive! Now I know that even when I suffer, Jesus will always be close. The Holy Spirit is always with me to teach, to support or to comfort. Believe me, the Lord has no blind spots; he really loves all of us, no matter how often we have sinned. He restores our life and leads us to everlasting life.

With peace and love, Natalia

I am an orphan, live in a dormitory room that is 12 square meters (130 sq. ft.) I am raising two kids by myself, Seregsha is 10 and Oleg is only 11 months. My oldest son Seregsha studies well, this little one is very smart. I am a medical worker by my education. When I was pregnant with my second baby, I was fired.

Now I am unemployed and receive a very small amount of money. The parish helps me out. In the end of December, I am expecting my third baby boy.

I really hope that there are people of good will and would not abandon me in such a hard situation. Thank you!

Sincerely yours, Natasha.



Sr Antonia hugs Bronislava Bronislavna, a true wisdom figure for the parishioners of the Parish of the Nativity. Your support, prayer and ministries for survivors of repression like Broni have brought peace and comfort to these brave people. Thank you for your continuing support of the Mission to Magadan.

THANK YOU

Contribute online to the "Magadan Russian Mission" at www.archdioceseofanchorage.org/donate with a Visa or Mastercard or call the Anchorage Archdiocese (907) 297-7700. Send letters and packages directly to Magadan allowing at least eight weeks delivery for packages and two weeks for letters.

Please address mail to Fr. Shields must be present for pick-up. Declare each box's value as less than \$90 on U.S. Customs forms. Please send monetary contributions to the Mission to Magadan in Anchorage.

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*Holy Mother Mary
of Magadan
Pray for us.*



*Archdiocese of
Anchorage, Alaska*

MISSION TO MAGADAN

“Preaching the Gospel in Far East Russia”

Vol. 15 No. 5

November/December 2010

A CELEBRATION OF FAITH, LIFE & LOVE

What does it mean to you to have the 20th anniversary of a parish in the former prison camps of Far East Siberia? It means your faith has returned to the people here. It means souls are being saved, thanks to your prayers. It means babies are being born and marriages are blessed, thanks to your support and efforts. It means sacraments of your Church are being celebrated and hearts are healed. Thanks be to God!

Russia now allows faith traditions a role in society to help raise the moral standards of the culture. The government now allows people to practice and share their faith. All this has happened only within the last twenty years. We celebrated hope, life and a strong parish, and were honored by the presence of an archbishop, our bishop, eight priests, seven religious women, six guests from the U.S. and one from France. Our many guests from Anchorage and other places blessed our celebration. Their simple presence testified that others know and care about our parish, even though we are far away. Many lives were touched by their simple witness of presence.

You were with us during our celebrations! Your prayers and support have made the parish and ministries strong. Thank you!! I hope you enjoy these reflections and photos of our parish anniversary.

In the hearts of Mary & Jesus,

Fr Michael Shields

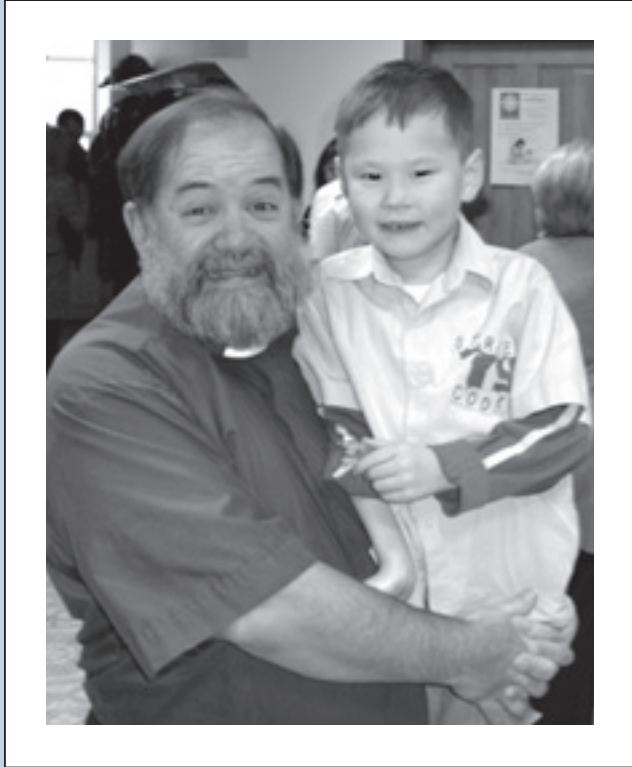


Bishop Kyrill Klimowicz of the Diocese of St. Joseph, Irkutsk, Russia, and Archbishop Roger Schwietz, OMI, of the Archdiocese of Anchorage in Alaska concelebrate the anniversary mass at the Church of the Nativity of Jesus.



Guests came to Magadan from all over the world to celebrate with the parishioners of the Church of the Nativity of Jesus. Thanks to many years of your faithful support of ministries in Far East Siberia, the parish celebrated twenty years of ministries and looks forward to these vital ministries continuing long into the future.

PARISH 20TH ANNIVERSARY



Father David Means travelled to Magadan from Missouri to celebrate the parish's anniversary. Little Misha was especially delighted to see his friend again. Father David moved back to the U.S. last summer after thirteen years in Magadan.

Our observances of our anniversary lasted three days. We dedicated the first day to our pro-life conference, followed by an evening of talks and presentations promoting the sanctity of life here in Russia. Lyuba shared her twenty year history of working in this ministry. We met with moms and their babies saved from abortion. Our guests held babies that are alive because of your support of our pro-life work.

The Orthodox bishop warmly welcomed Archbishop Schwietz of Anchorage and Bishop Kyrill of Irkutsk and hosted a meal for us. Our visitors met with the mayor of Magadan, who then sent a representative to our 20th Anniversary Mass as a witness to the friendship between the city administration and the parish.

On Saturday, the Bishops and guests sat with the survivors of repression and listened to a beautiful concert by the local Magadan choir. We celebrated their lives and heard of their suffering. Peter Schafer came from California to give each person repressed a cross to represent their suffering. Tears of joy were shed when each received person received their cross. The bishop of the Russian Diocese of St. Joseph was given a cross because his family was exiled and suffered for their faith. He chose a cross from Jerusalem that will hang in his office.



Clergy, sisters, parishioners and guests gather for the anniversary mass at the Church of the Nativity of Jesus. Your continuing support of the Mission to Magadan helps ensure a vibrant parish and important ministries long into the future.

CELEBRATION

Saturday night was called remembrance and thanksgiving. Many people spoke about their life in the parish. Tamara spoke of her faith and said the parish is her life. Lydmila spoke as a widow and told how the parish surrounded her with love after the death of her husband. Misha, Olga and their children spoke of the work of the Holy Spirit in their life - God had led them to the Church and formed their family as true and deep Catholics. Archbishop Schwietz of Anchorage witnessed to the work of Archbishop Emeritus Frank Hurley and his love for Russia and especially our Magadan Mission.

On Sunday, we were honored with speakers from other churches who thanked the Catholic community for their faithfulness and brotherhood. We had word from the first bishop of this region, Bishop Joseph Werth. Priests spoke of and reflected on their love for this Magadan church. The Holy Mass was attended by over 150 parishioners and friends.

Our celebration continued with a slide show of our history. There with so many laughs and ohhs - twenty years changes many people! A shared meal, more photos and slide shows made the celebration last late into the afternoon. The final event with our guests and local leaders was a lovely dinner at a local restaurant sponsored by a parishioner in Magadan.



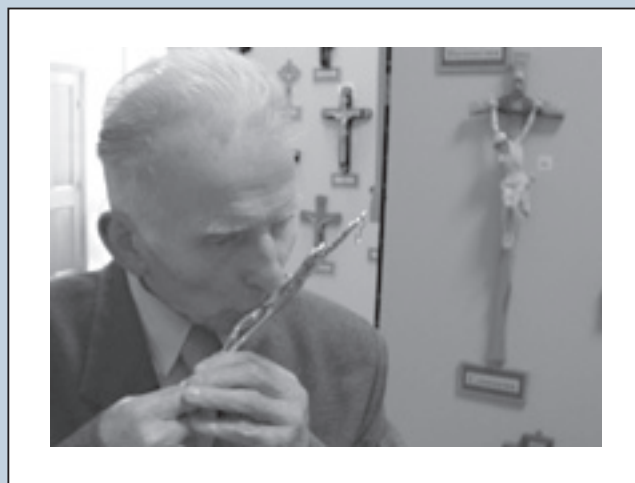
Father Michael Shields and Archbishop Schwietz enjoy a moment with baby Bagdan. Bagdan's mother became involved in the parish's pro-life ministries before his birth and receives help to raise her lovely son.



Father Mike sits with parishioners, repressed, guests and friends during the anniversary celebration. Several meals were shared as part of the three days of events.



Fr. Michael Shields and Archbishop Roger Schwietz, OMI, of Anchorage stand in front of crosses to be presented to the few remaining survivors of Soviet repression. Archbishop Schwietz and other dignitaries came to Magadan to celebrate the parish's 20th anniversary.



Andre, a survivor of Soviet repression, kisses the cross that was given to him on the occasion of the parish's 20th anniversary. Andre is one of the few remaining survivors of the Siberian work camps. Thank you to the friends of Magadan who donated these beautiful crosses.

All my childhood I waited for a miracle, which actually happened. In 2000, I saw a cross on a building. What was it? I walked into the Parish of Nativity of Christ and felt that I had come home. My journey was over. I saw love, which I thirsted for all my life, and understanding, which I needed because I was so mixed up. The parishioners treated me like a lost daughter come home. After so many years of trials I wondered, is this now my life? I cried so hard but they were tears of great joy. It was all from God: my healing, my conversion, my faith, my love that was growing in my heart.

I was baptized and had my first confession. It was like I had wings. I felt love all around me and it was filling me up like I was an empty well. I try to do everything by His will. I felt the call from God to become a sister and have I began to seriously explore my vocation. I asked God to be all for me and only for me to do only His will. He answered to me, and I heard in prayer ... leave all you have and follow Me, go to the poor, become poor, take your cross and follow Me, I am Your Lord, listen to Me.

In this year, I feel such a calling to go deeper in Christ. Praise to Jesus Christ! Now and forever. He has even given me a desire to study though I don't have a very high level of understanding. But I know God will give me what I need to live.

Your servant, Tamara



Fr. Mike Preaches at Winchester Cathedral in London

Father Mike preaches at Winchester Cathedral in London about the ministries of the Magadan mission. Father Mike was invited by the Aid to the Church In Need to speak in the U.K. about the development of pro-life ministries in Far East Siberia. ACN recently featured Father Mike in the book *Heroic Priests: Witnesses of the Faith in the 21st Century*.

Mission to Magadan e-Newsletter

GO GREEN! The Mission to Magadan monthly e-mail newsletter allows you to receive updates delivered straight to your computer. You can subscribe by visiting www.archdioceseofanchorage.org/stewardship/magadan.htm or e-mail nfredrick@caa-ak.org. Let us know if you want to receive only the e-mail newsletter.

The Archdiocese of Anchorage provides communication and stewardship support for the Mission to Magadan. All financial gifts are processed through the Archdiocese of Anchorage to provide a safe and secure way to help support the Church's work in Far East Russia. Thank you for your support.

Support Magadan In the Future

We celebrate your faithful prayers and support of the Church in Russia, but Magadan's many challenges will require on-going ministries. Will you consider helping the work of the Church of the Nativity of Jesus long into the future?

Remembering the Mission to Magadan in your will is one of many ways you can provide long-term ministries for the people of Siberia. If you have already planned a gift for Magadan, or are considering making a gift, please let us know. For additional information, contact Jim Caldarola at (907) 297-7700, or your estate planning professional.