



*Holy Mother Mary  
of Magadan  
Pray for us.*



*Archdiocese of  
Anchorage, Alaska*

# MISSION TO MAGADAN

*“Preaching the Gospel in Far East Russia”*

Vol. 16 No. 2

March/April 2011

## THANK YOU FOR SHOWING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

You help “light the way” at the Church of The Nativity of Jesus

By Sister Jean Marie Williams, DC

**A**re candles important as you pray and practice your faith? As a child, I remember lighting candles in church and kneeling to watch them flicker, imagining my prayer rising with the flame to God.

Here in Magadan, lighted candles are everywhere. Candles are lit in memory of the deceased. When the Repressed gather each month, candles are lit to remember those who have died in the camps. The faithful also place lighted candles with prayers for mercy for themselves and others.

Beneath the icon *Mother of God of the Inexhaustible Cup*, candles are offered for those struggling with addictions, especially to alcohol. Beneath *Mother of God of the Look of Humility*, people pray for humility, for a deeper faith, for the spiritual and physical health of loved ones, especially children.

Next to the altar is the statue of Our Lady of Fatima. Russians have a great devotion to Mary, knowing of the Blessed Mother’s particular care for her children in Russia. When she appeared to the three children at Fatima, she promised that the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart would lead to Russia’s conversion and an era of peace.

Yes, candles are very important at the Parish of the Nativity. They carry in their flames our prayers of intercession, thanksgiving, sacrifice, hope and love. They remind us of Christ, our Light, and our call to be light for the world. In their quiet and swift consummation, these candles remind us that our home is not here, but in Heaven with Christ, His Mother Mary, the angels, saints and our loved ones who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith.

Christ, our Light! Thanks be to God!



Sister Malgorzata helps one of the camp survivors place a candle as a prayer offering for the deceased. Lighting candles and remembering those who perished in the labor camps is an important part of the ministries that you provide to the survivors of repression.

# UPDATE FROM FR. MICHAEL SHIELDS



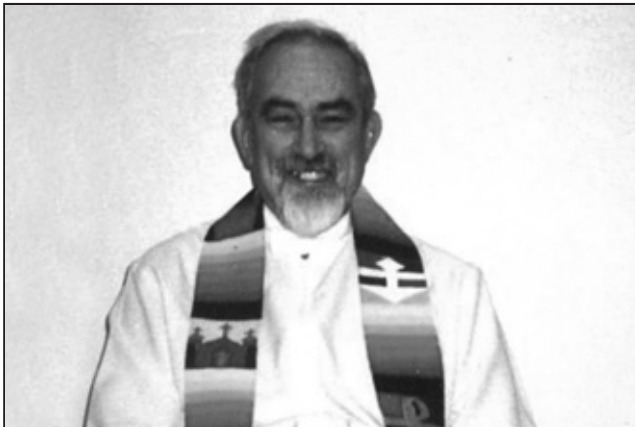
Father Michael Shields met with two Orthodox priests at the Life Walk. Father Mike is on a one-year sabbatical of prayer, and takes opportunities to advocate for pro-life ministries.

I am at a Trappist monastery, praying for you and for me, dear friends. Before I arrived, I participated in the Walk for Life, the annual prayer walk in Washington, D.C. that commemorates the 1973 decision that legalized abortion. The Walk is for the unborn who have no voice and no civil rights. Each year, a large group gathers and pray we end this injustice and rescind the terrible decision to take a human life.

My quiet cell is far from the politics of D.C. In prayer and in silence, I can speak to the Lord of Life about compassion and mercy and beg for a time when life is revered. We all can pray and walk each day for life. It is really what the Lord desires.

Your priest,

Fr Michael in the Heart of Jesus.



## First Pastor of the Magadan Parish is Remembered

Fr. Austin Mohrbacher became the first pastor of the Parish of the Church of the Nativity of Jesus in 1991. He arrived in the Far East Siberia with two suitcases, knowledge of the Russian language, and a great desire to serve your Church and the people of Russia.

In 1996 when Fr. Mohrbacher returned to the United States and ministered until his death in May, 2010.

## 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](http://www.archdioceseofanchorage.org/stewardship/magadan.htm) or e-mail [nfredrick@caa-ak.org](mailto: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.*

## Your Legacy For Magadan

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 your estate planning professional.

# YOUR GIFT TO SURVIVORS OF REPRESSION IS HOPE

The *Crosses of the Camp* give comfort and encouragement after suffering in the prison camps.

By Peter Schafer, Coordinator *Crosses of the Camps* Campaign

The *Crosses of the Camps* effort was inspired by the testimony of slave labor survivors after being torn from their families and homelands and taken to be imprisoned in the Russian Far East. The harsh life in the camps is known to the world simply as the gulag. The Repressed endured constant harsh physical and psychological conditions in the camps, including torture, cruelty, ridicule, starvation, and forced labor. Many poor souls died under these conditions, but some miraculously survived. The survivors are called martyrs because of all they lost - their youth was torn from them and replaced with cruel memories that no human being should ever have to endure.

The goal of the *Crosses of the Camps* campaign was to present each of the survivors of repression with a crucifix for their homes to remind them of Our Lord's cross, with whom they can certainly identify. There is much symbolism in the *Crosses of the Camps* Campaign that is important to understand.

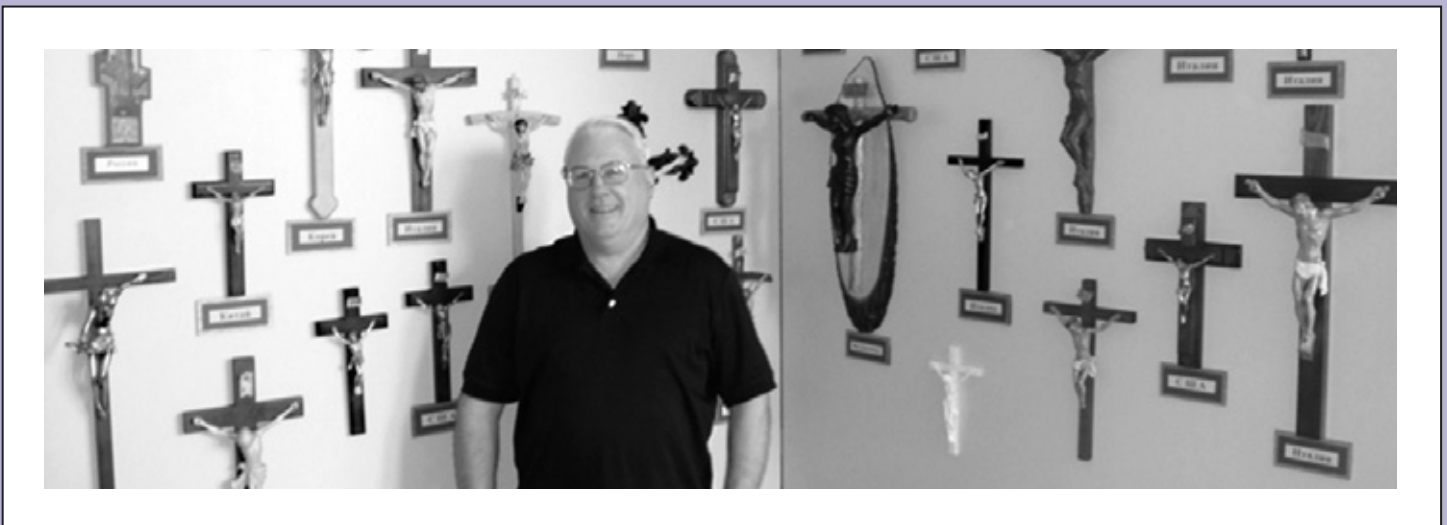
The suffering of each survivor of repression was unique, so each crucifix is unique. Just as people from different countries were arrested and enslaved in the

camps, the crucifixes were from different countries. Each crucifix is meant to be displayed in the home, something that Our Lord and the repressed never had during their time of greatest suffering. The consolation obtained from the cross is nothing more, or less, than identifying with the suffering of Jesus Christ and uniting one's own suffering to that of Christ, if the survivor chooses to do so. Christ suffered willingly to save mankind. The Repressed can also choose to unite their sufferings to Christ in order to give their suffering redemptive value.

You donated 100 crucifixes, symbolic of 100 in St. Matthew (Chapter 19:29)

*And every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.*

While no human being would voluntarily enter into slave labor, my prayer is this - that God reward 100 times over those who have endured their heavy crosses in the camps and grant them Eternal Peace and Glory.



Peter Schafer of California coordinated the Crosses campaign and stands before the crosses collected for survivors of repression in Magadan. Your generosity made sure that each survivor received a cross during the parish's 20th anniversary celebrations.

# THANK YOU

Contribute online to the "Magadan Russian Mission" at [www.archdioceseofanchorage.org/donate](http://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 Father Michael Shields.

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.

RUSSIA  
685000 Magadan  
Glavpochtant, Box 171  
Father Michael Shields

Mission to Magadan  
Archdiocese of Anchorage  
225 Cordova Street  
Anchorage, AK 99501

Mission to Magadan is a bimonthly newsletter from the Archdiocese of Anchorage. The Archbishop of Anchorage, in service to the Russian Bishop in Irkutsk, oversees and financially supports the Catholic missionary work of the Church of the Nativity in Magadan, Russia.

Newsletter Publisher:

Archdiocese of Anchorage Office of Stewardship and Development  
Phone (907) 297-7700, Fax (907) 297-3885, Email [magadan@caa-ak.org](mailto:magadan@caa-ak.org)  
Web site [www.magadancatholic.org](http://www.magadancatholic.org)

Photos courtesy of Father Michael Shields or Sr. Jean Marie Williams unless otherwise noted.



Girls from the parish light candles before the statue of Our Lady of Fatima. Your support of the Mission to Magadan provides these youngsters with catechetical programs that encourages their growth as faithful Catholics.

**facebook**

**Follow us on**

Archdiocese of Anchorage  
Mission to Magadan  
225 Cordova Street  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Nonprofit Org.  
U. S. Postage  
**P A I D**  
Permit No. 287  
Anchorage, AK