

**Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you.  
As the Father has sent me, so I send you." John 20:21**

Dear Prayer Partner,

A Most Blessed Easter! He is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!! We had a beautiful Triduum here in Vladivostok at Most Holy Mother of God Catholic Parish. Many parishioners attended the liturgies. On Good Friday, we usually have Stations of the Cross outside at 2 pm, followed by the Liturgy at 3 pm. It snowed here Holy Thursday night, so the Stations were prayed inside the church. At the Easter Vigil Mass, we welcomed seven new Catholics! Four adults were baptized, and three candidates made their profession of faith. They will all be confirmed by our Bishop in October when he comes for his annual visit.

We had the privilege of coordinating the music for the liturgies. The large harp, which arrived several months ago, added much to the solemnities. Thanks to all of you who made this possible through your prayers.



Pussy Willow Sunday at Most Holy Mother of God Catholic Church, Vladivostok, Russia. Sr. Maria Stella at organ.



Sr. Maria Stella with three ladies from Yakutsk, Russia who attended the Chrism Mass

The Chrism Mass with our Bishop Kirill of Irkutsk was held in the city of Yakutsk this year, the coldest continually inhabited place on the planet. Sr. Maria Stella represented our community and while there got to touch a frozen wooly mammoth at a local museum! She also learned that 1/3 of the world's diamonds come from the Yakutsk region in Russia. The Roman Catholic Parish of the Son of Justice in Yakutsk celebrated its 20 year anniversary, and the Salesian priests who run the parish celebrated the 200th anniversary of the birth of St. Don Bosco, the founder of the Salesians. Bishop Kirill confirmed parishioners. Eleven priests and six sisters attended from far distant regions in our diocese: Magadan, Sakhalin Island, Khabarovsk, Ussurisk, Blagoveshchensk, Vladivostok, Nakhodka, and Aldan.

As you notice in the pictures, they use pussy willow branches instead of palms because there were no palm trees in Russia until last year; therefore, it is called 'Pussy Willow Sunday' here instead of 'Palm Sunday.'

Sr. Faustina continues to use her Montessori skills with little abandoned children ages 3-7 at a local social work facility. The only evangelist that mentioned the use of "palms" was John. The others just say "branches."

Sr. Maria Stella and Sr. Catherine Marie look forward to being with you at Our Lady of Lourdes in mid-May. We are so grateful for your prayers.

In the joy of the Risen Christ!

Sr. Maria Stella, Sr. Catherine Marie, and Sr. Faustina



Father Myron Effing, and altar servers at the blessing of the Pussy Willows