



The Eagle

AUGUST, 1999

No 12

FRIENDS OF ST. INNOCENT'S ACADEMY

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Heading into Another Year

Dear Friends of Saint Innocent's Academy,

Thank you, we couldn't have done it without you. This completes our pilot year, and over the last twelve months we have been able to build a solid foundation and reputation. Please realize that everything you read in this *Eagle* newsletter is due to your prayers, support and the grace of God.

However, we are not out of the woods yet. As we enter upon our second year your prayers and support are what will keep us going. We now face the challenge of finding and building a more permanent location for the Academy. Our lease for our present building is over and purchase at the present time is not possible. We will be moving into a temporary facility unless we find a suitable and affordable purchase soon.

We see and are consoled that in the life of St. Innocent there were many hardships and difficulties. He suffered deprivation as he battled the harsh elements of nature with the sole purpose of making heaven as accessible to as many souls as possible. In the same spirit



our intention is to make a true education and formation of soul accessible to as many young men as possible.

The Academy in this last year has had a chance to be born and to grow. During this past year, 25 young men have been living with us with whom we have worked, and whom we have been able to help by the grace of God. Our goals, which we feel were met, have been to give them as fully as possible not only the Orthodox worldview *teachings* but also a *model* and pattern of that life, being lived out by the other young men and our families altogether. In other words, it is a family and a community living in a deep and lively way, dedicated on a daily basis to serving Christ. So many of the students have had obvious life-changing experiences. In others who were only with us for a short time there were seeds planted which we pray will affect them and their decisions for the future of their life.

Searching out a New Location

During the summer we were presented with a few curves in the road but we remain steady, inspired and on course. We are looking toward a new building facility and location for the Academy. Since the limits of our current space are being stretched we are attempting to find a piece of land that will have both agricultural and animal husbandry potentials—a piece of land where we can build our future Academy.

We have visited several new and inspiring sites. If you look carefully at a map of Kodiak Island you will see that it is the second largest island in the United States. (Hawaii is the largest.) It is 177 miles long, 80 miles wide and most of it is inaccessible by car, thank God. We have visited some sites (by car) for the Academy that are breathtaking, a combination of snow-capped mountains and spruce trees coming into bold relief by the bright blue waters of Alaskan seas. Some of them have the buildings we need and others have the space to build them. We will keep you informed with the next edition of the *Eagle* as to the outcome of our search.

We have also established a very valuable relationship with the town of Kodiak. This is something precious to us and we do our very best both to maintain and foster that connection. At a recent meeting

Kodiak Island: 3,588 sq. miles
 Archipelago: 5,000 sq. miles



Semidi Islands

attended by several of the town's people we applied for a donation of a 5-bedroom portable building. The response from them to our first year has been very positive. Our young men were noted for their service to many people, especially the elderly, and their good disposition in diligent labors all around the town. One man noted that "St. Innocent's Academy offers the only program outside of our high school for young men who need help in growing up." We will hear soon about their decision on the building.

Preparing for the Upcoming School Year

As we begin our new year we welcome 11 students, new and old, and we are preparing the curriculum of studies, vocational training and adventures. When our 5 student-missionaries return from Russia they will find, along with our new students, that our location is changed but our programs have expanded. We will continue to offer the way of understanding life through the Orthodox worldview.

In addition to our academic correspondence and home-schooling programs, our curriculum is made up of enrichment classes in many areas. Continuing to build upon our first year's formation we

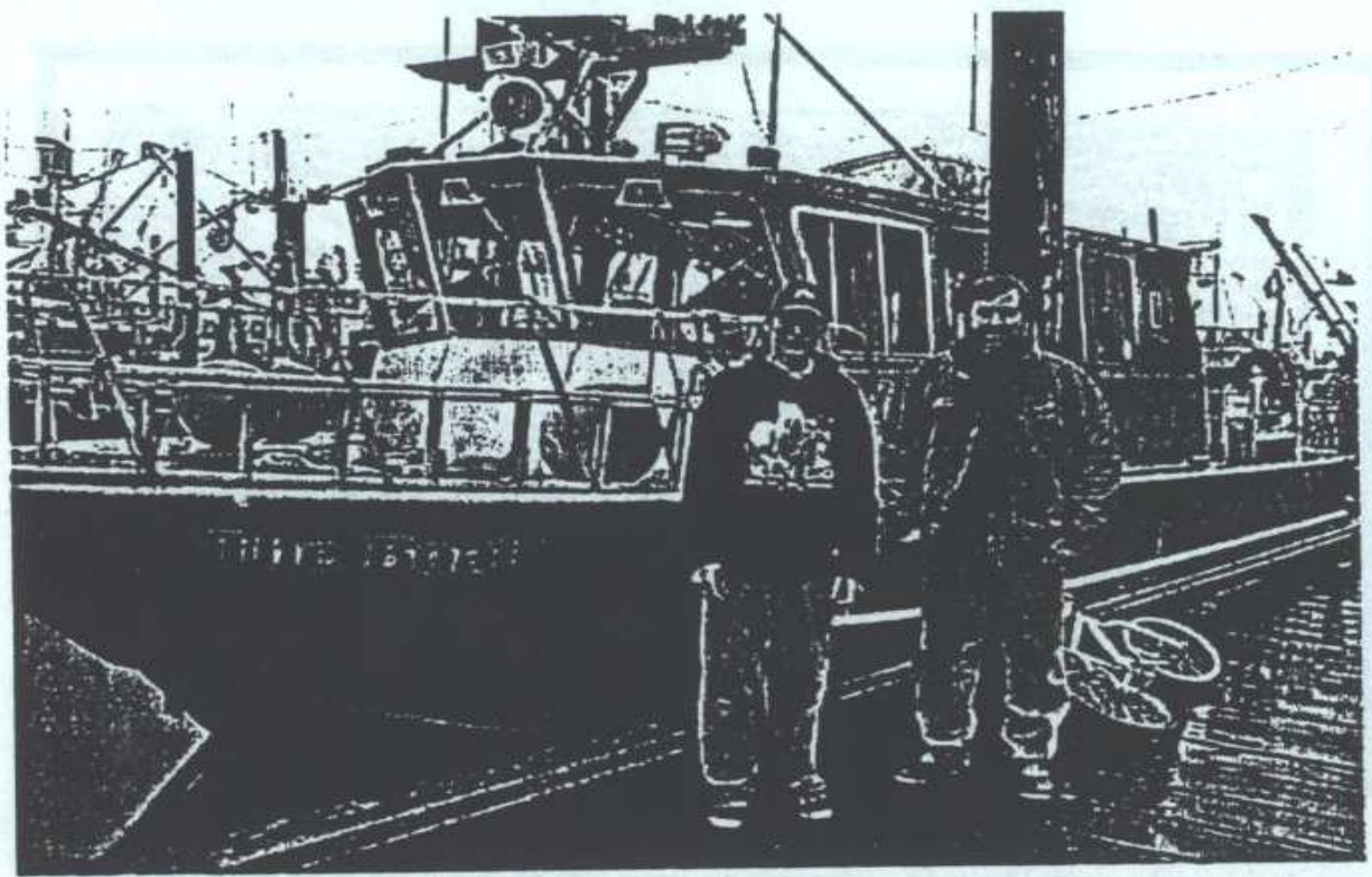


In the spirit of brotherhood: Augustyne Bille, Shawn Sumistine, Anthony May, Aaron Woldegiorges.

are offering more intensive classes in "Creation vs. Evolution," Fr. Seraphim's "Survival Course," and many others. Also we will be reviewing and giving classes in the basic formation of true manhood. In addition, we are offering primary liturgical/biblical/theological classes especially to those who are new to Orthodoxy. We have found that there are never enough times to bring up and review these topics without learning something new. We will also continue the "History of Reality" classes begun by Fr. Damascene, who will be back at a certain point in the year to live with us and give his treasury of good gifts both to the town and to the young men. We are also expecting a visit and classes from Fr. George Calciu and our beloved Abbot Herman.

Boat Craftsmanship

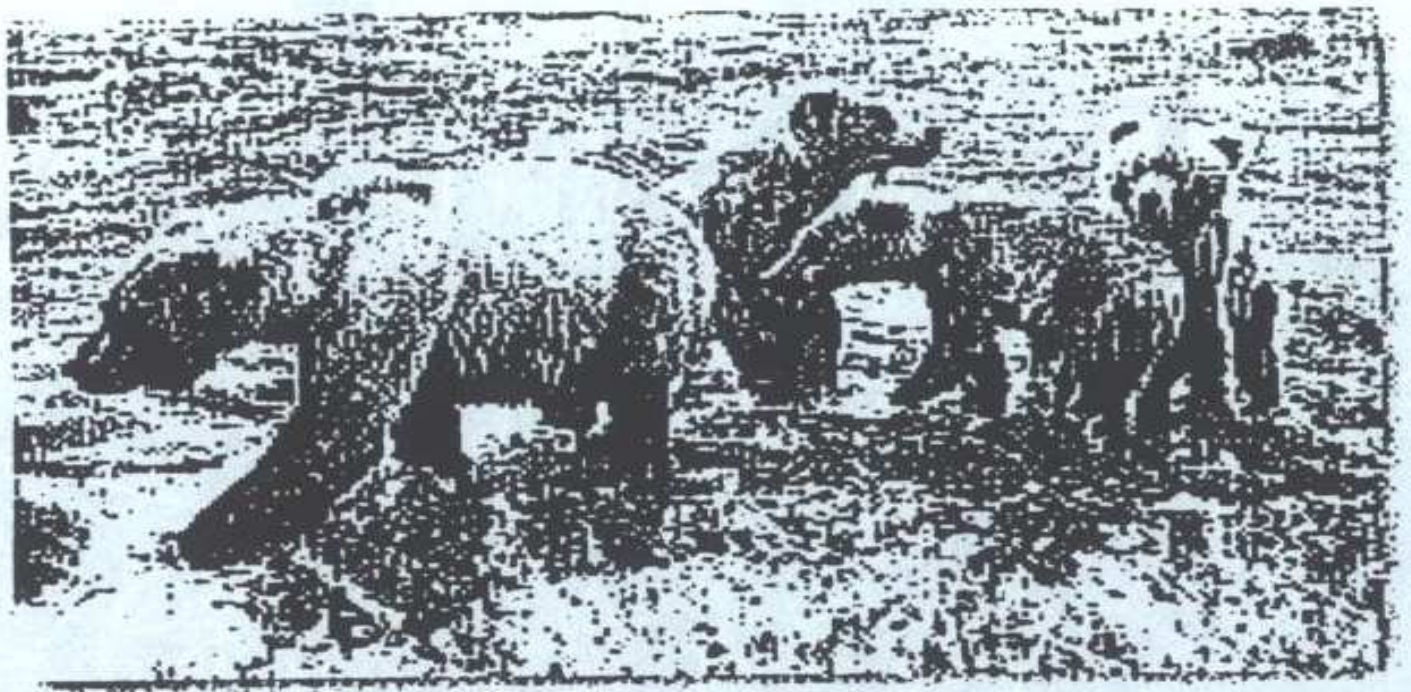
This past year we worked on a number of boat repair projects from interior carpentry restoration to the ancient art of corking wooden hulls. Our boat building program is getting off the ground



At the harbor, Caleb Wood stands with Captain Bill Spencer in front of "The Boat."

and coming into the next phase this year with the building of 4 exotic-wood kayaks. As we become proficient in this trade we intend to have some for sale; others will be for the young men to create a flotilla of kayaks to follow in the wake of our patron—St. Innocent would take missionary journeys by *baidarka* (the Russian name for kayak)—and enjoy the Alaskan waters together. The materials have already been purchased and the instructors have volunteered their time. This initial phase will teach the basics of boat building. We have a Coast Guard boat builder volunteering as our instructor.

Our next step after the kayaks will be the restoration of a Bristol Bay double-ender, this is a historic sailing/fishing vessel which we have on site, with the restoration materials already donated. This step will hail the beginning of the Three Hierarchs project. The experience will produce a pilot sailing-training program on which to begin a foundation to build and raise funds for the Three Hierarchs project. Our instructor, Tom Emerson, will continue to teach our modern boat building program with the aluminum boats and develop ap-



In the setting of Alaska's wilderness—represented here with these Kodiak bears, splashing through the tide—the young men rise to the challenge of manhood.

prenticeship welding programs for interested students. Navigation studies will be taught by another Coast Guard volunteer, Eric Casler. Captain Bill Spencer, with his legendary "The Boat," has been helping our men all year to learn the ropes and the art and discipline of being a "first mate" on many exciting and adventurous sea journeys all around the island of Kodiak and across the tempestuous Shelikoff Strait. Captain Bill is also a very accomplished sailor and will be teaching the men how to tactfully navigate a vessel under sail power.

Katmai Wilderness Lodge

As the students have described in previous issues of the *Eagle*, they have had the blessing to partake of the Alaskan experience in its fullness while helping out at the Katmai Wilderness Lodge under the supervision of our English instructor, Mike Rostad. They have taken what they have learned at the Academy—both physical skills and spiritual principles—and put them to use at the lodge. Physically, they built a cabin and put in a septic and water system. Spiritually, they maintained the Academy rule: of prayer, spiritual readings, keeping a journal and putting into practice the principles of Christian manhood. In exchange for their labors they have flown in float

planes and helicopters as a means of transportation to the lodge, explored untouched Alaskan wilderness areas on foot, boat and kayak and viewed Kodiak brown bears—the largest bears in the world—on a daily basis close-up and in their natural routines. They were also able to catch their dinner and bring home to the Academy fresh halibut and salmon. All in all, the Katmai has been a valuable extension of our campus and we look forward to offering this experience to interested students next summer.

Please do continue to keep us in your prayers.



Kontakion to St. Innocent

*Mighty leader of the flocks entrusted
to thee by the Lord! Apostle to the northern lands
whose love for God warmed the arctic night! As thou
standest before the Throne of the Lord of Glory, intercede
for the spiritual rebirth of our land and its people that
united in love for our sweetest Lord Jesus Christ we may
sing to thee: Rejoice, O Holy Hierarch Innocent,
Enlightener of Alaska and Siberia!*