



# The Eagle

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FRIENDS OF ST. INNOCENT'S ACADEMY

c/o ST. PAISIUS ABBEY, P.O. BOX 130  
FORESTVILLE, CALIFORNIA 95436

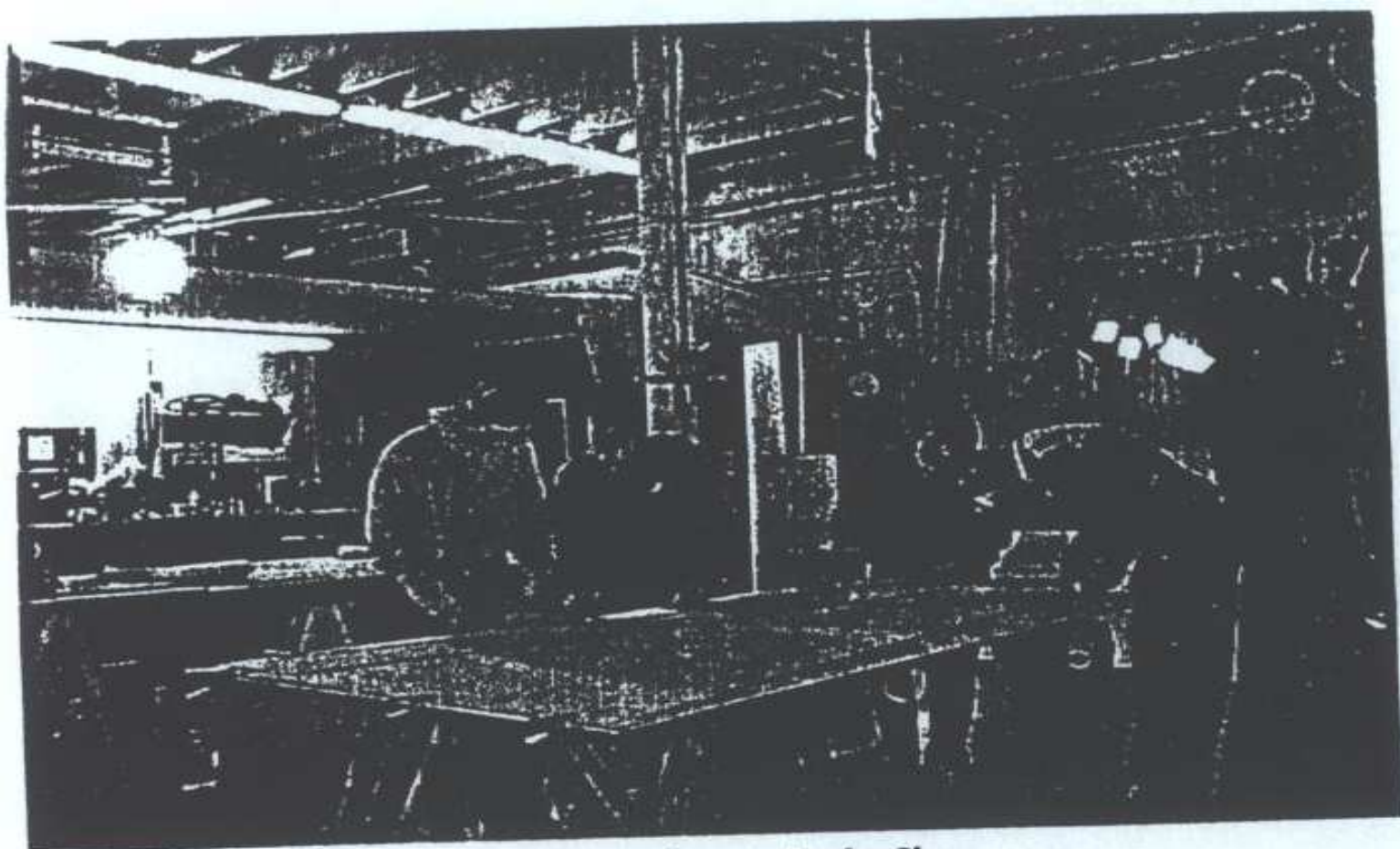
## *The First Snow*

WE GREET YOU from Kodiak as the first snow falls gently upon our village, blanketing all in white. In Alaska the hibernal season is typically known for its seemingly unending length and darkness. We can do little to adjust our "58 degree latitude" but lots to bring about a 180 degree bright attitude! God has graced us with a crew of remarkable young men who, in a genuine way, are living and appreciating the community life of the Academy—its work, study, crafts, music, patterns and disciplines—and we are sharing this liveliness of Christian brotherhood with our surrounding village.

### *Rounding out the Curriculum*

This year's classes are highlighted with the arrival and teaching of Monk Nikodim, who will give several series of courses. The first one begins with talks based on the work of St. Theophan the Recluse *The Spiritual Life and How to Attune Oneself to It*, thus providing the necessary foundation for the next two short series on True Humanity and the Orthodox Worldview. Following this, there will be a long series on History, showing the development of man's philosophy and art in relation to the Orthodox worldview, with a particular emphasis on the Medieval and Romantic periods.





**Creative endeavors in the Shop.**

Several students are currently working toward their high school diplomas. A large part of their day is involved with our academic home-schooling classes. These are watched over and tutored by Richard De Groot. He is living at the Academy and serving an internship here for one year. His watchfulness and care for their studies, as well as his being an older brother for these young men, has been of great help. He is one more of the Academy's "volunteer angels" that God has brought to us, and we are very grateful for his untiring and diligent efforts.

Navigation classes have begun with Ensign Casler, a young Coast Guard officer. We often recall that St. Innocent, among his many other talents, was a good navigator on the Alaskan seas. Navigation, in both the spiritual and physical sense, is an essential science, and in both ways we desire to follow in his footsteps. We will be applying this navigational skill out on the open seas with Captain Spencer on "The Boat" and on our kayak journeys.

We have all seen pictures of Columbus on the high seas looking through an odd semi-circular telescope. This contrivance is called the sextant. Using the sun, stars and points on land one can get one's



The Academy under a canopy of spruce trees.

“bearings” and exact location without modern electronics. Our men are learning this art with a large dose of applied geometry and mathematics.

On the sport fields, we will be re-commencing athletic practices with our 6’9” Russian athletics director. These will include basketball, soccer and nautilus fitness. Besides this, there will be the “ropes courses.” In the spring, we look forward to our first “8-man-rowing teams” which will go out onto the bay with the double-ender boats.

### *Missionary Outreach*

At Monk’s Rock we launched our first *Baidarka*—a little publication which is already traveling by U.S. Mail to all villages in Alaska. Its purpose is to bring the Gospel message of Christ and will include inspirational writings from the Saints and Fathers of the Church. In addition, it will present items which are for sale at Monk’s Rock. Inside the newsletter we offer our willingness to travel to distant villages upon request. Our young men will be offering lectures on inspiring spiritual topics, slide shows of pilgrimages to distant lands, live gospel music, concerts of Russian folk music and exhibition folk

dancing. This newsletter displays a lively presentation to warm, cheer and inspire the hearts of many during the long Alaskan winter.

Here, within our own village of Kodiak, we have other missionary activities during the weekends, including doing "street mission." Kodiak is not very large nor is it a bustling "lower 48" metropolis with groups of wayward, needy people dotting the streets at every turn. But opportunities still abound: there is a MacDonald's in Kodiak as well as nursing homes, hospitals, youth centers and a variety of other places that need the presence of right-believing Christians. We are just beginning. Our men are eager to learn how to cut a line for Christ, and for Truth, through the midst of the darkness with the hope thereby of bringing consolation to many.



### *"An Unexpected Insight"*

A STUDENT ESSAY FROM WRITING CLASS

I know that many of you are "tough guys" and you think that the soul is just a fable made by people who are too weak to face life's realities. If you had been there on Sunday when my friends and I watched the opera "La Traviata" you would have seen the masks drop off and their souls shining through.

When the film started you could still hear objections from the "tougher" guys on the couch. Gradually silence settled over the room; we were transported to another time, almost as if to another world. It took us through joy and sadness, peace and turmoil, sin and repentance. We wept tears of compassion when Violetta courageously sacrificed all her hopes and dreams, knowing that she would die friendless. And yet, it wasn't a tragedy; she repents of her past life in sin and dies looking to the kingdom of heaven.

It was several minutes after the film had ended and still no one had broken the silence. They were trying to keep their tears from showing. Finally, the toughest spoke up: "Why didn't you tell me—it was the story of my soul."  
—Joshua Mead

Please pardon the mistake in last month's issue of *The Eagle*.

It was actually a double issue for September–October, Numbers 13–14 (not 12–13).