



The Eagle

JUNE, 2000

No 22

FRIENDS OF ST. INNOCENT'S ACADEMY

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ST. INNOCENT'S ACADEMY, P.O. Box 1517, Kodiak, AK 99615

œ Pentecost œ

As we approach the inspiration of Pentecost, the Academy has been welcoming the first of many summer pilgrims and visitors and relatives. In May, Don Volmering of Santa Rosa, CA., Fr. Athanasius Shaw of Port Townsend, WA, David Kubek of Maine and Academy student parent Kathleen Zahnizer of Alameda, CA., have already joined us. Mrs. Zahnizer's account of her visit may be found on page 6 and 7.

Parents are especially welcomed visitors. We have found in our work that great healing can take place in young adults as they enter into a Christian relationship of love and forgiveness with their parents. It is hard to overestimate the blessing and growth which we see in our young men, and the young women of Saint Sophia's house, resulting from honest, open communication and the opening of their hearts and lives to their mothers and fathers. Academy staff strive to embody and model Christian qualities of fatherhood and motherhood to assist students to mature as human beings and as dedicated children of their parents.

As Pentecost draws near we are continuing to pursue opportunities for missionary outreach. Like the fishermen of Kodiak, we

too hope to go forth to draw the world into God's net, as did the Holy Apostles, the fishermen made wise by the Holy Spirit.

“Blessed art Thou O Christ our God,
Who has made the fishermen most wise
By sending down upon them Thy Holy Spirit.”

— Fr. Paisius



St. Innocents Academy Singers under decorative nets at the yearly Fisherman's Wives Dinner, an example of our outreach to the community through inspiring music. Behind them plays Kodiak's Russian Balalaika Orchestra.

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A Gentle Lesson

My name is Robert Stapleton. I am not a student with St. Innocent's Academy even though I'm learning from them and with them. My wife and I, along with our three boys (ages 4, 2, and 1), are catechumens. We arrived on Kodiak in May of 1999 not

knowing exactly what path the Lord had in store for us, figuring that if we had to struggle, we might as well do it in a place that holds so much beauty. The Lord truly works in mysterious ways. One day, while trying to satisfy my curiosity and appear knowledgeable in front of my wife, I walked into Monk's Rock Cafe and met a very dear brother, named Brendan, who blessed me with a book and some very encouraging conversation. That was our basic introduction to Orthodoxy. Now we are in the Lenten season which has been a time of inner reflection and a time of many challenges which brought me to greater prayer and praise to our Lord. I would like to share one entry from my journal with you.

April 4, 2000

The wonders of God never seem to cease. Today I went out walking to collect bark in the woods across the street. I gather the bark in order to paint gifts with which to bless others. While walking and singing the Trisagion hymn, I looked up from picking up a piece of wood and saw a Sitka deer standing there. We startled each other at first, but I just continued singing, "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal have mercy on us." The deer, a buck, did not seem to be afraid, so I started talking to him. I told him not to be afraid, and that God loves him and created him to give glory to Him.

We walked for an hour in the woods together not more than two feet apart. He followed me as a puppy dog would follow his master. I was led to many other bark pieces and to some wood that inspired me to make a cross for me to carry whenever I go hiking. There was such peace in the way we interacted that I can imagine a little what it was like for the Holy Fathers and their animal friends, or for Adam and Eve in the Garden.

I wanted to stay longer but knew I needed to get home to my family. I made the sign of the Cross over my new friend and blessed him to be at peace and to bring praise to the Lord. When I turned to go, the deer stared into my eyes with a longing for me not to depart. I thank the Lord for this opportunity to commune, even for a brief time, with one of His creatures.

Paschal Blessings



Right: Newly baptized student Mamas (Jacob) Pousson, with sponsors Mary De Lucia and Justin Wood. Background, Michael Jones stands vigil at the Epitaphion in the new chapel that was constructed just in time for Pascha.

Lower right: Mrs. Emily Bigioli, a native of Old Harbor, Alaska, spent 4 days making crepe paper roses for the church, a traditional native custom with roots in Russia. Donna Jones of the Academy staff is on right.

Below: CHRIST IS RISEN! The new chapel dressed in white for Pascha. Altar and analogion covers (including black Lenten ones, photo, above right) made by our friends Mrs. Olgiati and Mrs. Fomin with support from Mrs. Angelina Dickson of California, who responded to our need in the 'Eagle' Wish List. Colorful paper roses made by Mrs. Bigioli adorn the icons.







A Parent's Perspective
by Kathleen Zahniser

I'm not Orthodox, but I have found myself deeply moved by the Holy Spirit while visiting here at St. Innocent's Academy in Kodiak. It is difficult to put into words what I have felt. It is truly an inspiring experience to be surrounded by the exuberance of all those connected with the Academy. The work that is being done here renews ones faith in what people working together can accomplish in a short amount of time. I must write that the word 'time' has taken on a whole new meaning for me - and in fact, I have quit wearing my watch and making plans and instead have willingly let myself be open to new adventures. To name just a few adventures, we had an exciting one-day skiff ride, on a beautiful sunny day, to Monk's Lagoon [see photo], and also to St. Nilus Island where we had the great pleasure to meet both the nuns and monks. We also paddled a double kayak around Near Island enjoying the ever-present majestic eagles, and observing the rich marine life. I have started using a phrase while here, everything is Giant in Kodiak, i.e. Giant Kelp, Giant Sea Lions, Giant Crab, Giant Starfish, and Giant Hearts.

As a parent of a son attending the Academy it is wonderful to see my son flourish in such a positive way. I fully support his participation here at the Academy and also encourage him in the work that he is doing as a part of in the Kodiak community. I will soon be returning to California where I presently live. I will be returning home with many wonderful books due to the generosity of my new friends, and also with beautiful memories of the people who are living in this pristine environment which they call home.

Wish List

Office copier

Note cards and envelopes, with or without message, for birthdays, saints' days, and "thank you's."

Clip art: Orthodox and iconographic, nature, and Celtic and other border designs for posters

Heavy duty extension cords

Stand-up double string bass and a baritone horn

We would like to thank all those who have so generously donated items from the Wish List in past issues.

For the Academy's Visitor's guide, subscriptions to the Eagle and information on our video, contact Alan and Donna Jones at St. Innocent's Academy, (907) 486-2529, e-mail alandonnaj@ak.com.

Contacting the Academy: Fr. Paisius De Lucia, (907) 486-4376, FAX 486-1758, St. Innocent's Academy, P.O. Box 1517, Kodiak, AK, 99615, e-mail: innocent@optialaska.net.

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Many thanks to Seraphim Rose Press for donating the labor and materials to print 'The Eagle.'



Pilgrim Sites of Kodiak

Pillar Mountain: On this mountain right above the town of Kodiak, the first Russian monks met to divide up the mission field of Alaska. Here St. Herman was edified by the zeal and love for God of his brethren, including Sts. Ioasaph and Juvenaly, who politely argued to take on greater shares of the work of bringing Holy Orthodoxy to the new land of Alaska. From the top one can see Spruce Island, Monk's Rock, St. Nilus Island and the beautiful mountains and waters of Kodiak. Below is spread the town and the two harbors, St. Paul's and St. Herman's.

Holy Resurrection Church: One of the first of the Russian Orthodox churches built in Alaska, this church has been destroyed and rebuilt 4 times. It is now the resting place for the relics of St. Herman, including his remains, his monastic hat, iron cross and chain, and his blessing cross.

Baranov Museum: Named for the first head of the Russian American Company in Kodiak, the museum is housed in the oldest Russian building in Alaska. A model of the original settlement, including the church and monk's dwelling, Russian and Aleut items, and photo albums of subjects such as the canonization of St. Herman and Russian churches of the region are here. Numerous icons and church furnishings were gifts of Fr. Gerasim Schmaltz.

Monk's Rock Coffehouse and Bookstore: An interesting display of memorabilia about Fr. Gerasim Schmaltz, much of it donated by his spiritual children, plus a fine map and photo exhibit about the holy sites of Spruce Island are highlights here.

St. Herman's Theological Seminary: The beautiful log church is a replica of the first Holy Resurrection Church on Kodiak. A museum and bookstore are also of interest.