



The Eagle

APRIL-MAY, 2001

No 32-33

FRIENDS OF ST. INNOCENT'S ACADEMY
P.O. BOX 1928, KODIAK, AK 99615

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

Christ is Risen!

During the Lenten time of preparation the Academy actively participated in the many prostrations, labours and prayers with a sense of lightness, joy, and, Glory to God, the quick passage of time. Even the winter in Kodiak was light, dotted now and again with unusual warm, sunny days. And now, Pascha is come. With joy we cry from the depths of our hearts, "Christ is Risen!"

Renovations and construction on the new dormitories continues at a steady pace. The chapel work is reaching new heights of beauty with bright stars shining in the altar and beautiful large new hand-painted icons emerging from the hand of novice iconographer Innocent Damiano. Outside, large raised garden beds made of hand-notched logs are being filled with beach peat and horse manure and the new chicken "palace" is ready to be filled with both resident and novice chicks.

Plans are being formed for another summer tour by our young men, this time with myself (Fr. Paisius) coming along. We hope to start at the Boston Youth Conference in the middle of June and then travel on land and by God's Providence from Boston to Akron, Ohio to the diocesan convention at the end of June. There will be many stops on the way for singing performances, dancing, lectures, slide shows of Alaska, "Socratic Circle" discussions and just plain service and work where our small army can be of help.

We hope to visit some of our new “sister” Bulgarian parishes and get acquainted. Let us know if your parish or bookstore would like to host our students.

May God richly bless you now that we have completed the Lenten journey and joyfully come to the glory and consolation of Pascha. Together may we all cry out:

Christ is Risen!

A Visit to Ouzinkie

by Sr. Mary Butler

It was one of those bright sunny, blue-sky days in Kodiak. The fish were jumping, the boats were gliding past, and the mountains' white peaks were shining in the background. I silently lamented that I would probably be cooped up inside on such a day. Just as I was stepping out the door, the phone rang. Anthony and I had been invited to visit the neighboring village of Ouzinkie with our friends from the Baptist Mission. It is the only village on Spruce Island, which was home to St. Herman and Fr. Gerasim Schmaltz, and where our friends, the monks and the nuns of the St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, currently live. I said a silent



The Church at Ouzinkie

prayer to be able to bring some icons and books to the people there.

After a prayer for a safe journey, we were on our way. What a miracle this all seemed to be turning into. With the wind in our eyes and the waves gliding beside us, we had a sense of joy and triumph in our spirits. Anthony and I were especially inspired about praying in the Orthodox church

that had been there for many years.

As we landed amidst the boats and gear, many of the village men were heading out to catch fish. One of the first buildings we arrived at was the church. Anthony and I hoped and prayed the doors were open. They were, and we walked into history as the ancient icons and simply decorated walls were illumined from the sunshine streaming through the windows. One can understand why the church is a representation of Heaven after seeing such a majestically beautiful scene as this humble church. Our hearts were especially warmed to see a specially made shrine to St. Herman. As a small gift, we left a bag of icons, books, and 'Eagles' for the villagers to distribute in return for the gift we had received in visiting and praying in the church.



Anthony May at the small shrine to St. Herman

A crunchy walk down the snowy path and we were on to our next destination. We were to join our friends from the Baptist Mission at one of their missionary stations in the village. As we came upon a three-story house blanketed in the snow, we knew this must be the house of Joyce Smith. Over 40 years ago, she moved with her husband and children to Ouzinkie to minister to the village. They operated a wooden boat called the Evangel, which traveled to all the villages on Kodiak island ministering to the people. For 42 years, Joyce had a kindergarten class in her home for the village children. Hearing stories like this, I had come to have a deep admiration for her and the work she has done.

The wooden floors were old and antiquely beautiful. Two boxes at the door held mittens and hats for children on their way



Left to right: Trevor Jones, Anthony May, Joyce Smith and Sr. Mary

out who needed them. The kitchen was lit with laughter and we saw a woman in a red and white polka-dotted shirt who seemed to radiate with joy. We all sat down and had Russian tea as she began to tell stories of how she and her husband worked together in the school. She would send the children to him for correction, and though she never knew what he did, they would always return happy and ready to cooperate. Realizing she would not be with us much longer, I tried to understand the vision and inspiration that filled Joyce's soul. Although her husband has passed away, her school is no longer running, and her mission is no longer operating, her love and faith in Jesus Christ keeps her heart hopeful and steadfast in life's adversities.

I was thrilled when she asked if we would like to see her classroom. Just as if the children had been there that morning, everything was still in its place. Desks, books, puzzles, even an American flag stood ready to receive its allegiance. She told us many heart-warming stories of how the children would do Christmas programs and presentations at Thanksgiving. She had created a whole world of learning and beauty that touched their souls.

Going to Ouzinkie and meeting Joyce Smith made us realize that though the world may never know our labors for Christ, He counts them as priceless gems.

The Sound of the Sematron

By Innocent Damiano

During the Lenten season, the Academy undergoes a change that brings our souls to the needed state of repentance. We enter into our chapel in reverence and piety, and fall to our faces in prostrations instead of bows. As we make our way around the chapel to venerate the icons, the bright gold and green covers on the analogions (icon stands) have been exchanged for black. No longer do we hear the ring of a bell as our call to prayer. Instead we hear the smacking of two pieces of wood clacked together in fast rhythmic order. This is the sound of the sematron.

These are all reminders to us that this world and the things of the world must be put aside. The soft voice of Jesus Christ calls out to each one of us, as a shepherd to his lost sheep. Our struggle as Christians is to come out of the thickets and thorny bushes of sin. The season of Lent asked that we double our efforts of prayer and fasting, making our way back to Christ our Shepherd with fervor and love.

Reaching the last week of Lent, Holy Week, meant pushing harder, fasting more vigorously and spending most of our time standing in prayer, diligently seeking to find our Shepherd; waiting for Him to put us on His shoulders and say in the coming Feast: "Rejoice! I have risen, and with joy grant you My great mercy!"



Wish List

Two-to-four-man backpacking tents, good quality to stand up to rugged wear (Eureka brand or better)

Sleeping bags—synthetic, mummy-type, rated to 0 degrees.

Snowboards with metal edges and good bindings.



Chef Spyridon Oliver prepares fresh caught Tanner crab, a Lenten delicacy

Alaskan Lenten Consolations

by Donna Jones

God gives us wonderful consolations in a surprising way. For example in the week of the Cross, right in the middle of Lent, we received a blessing, giving us inspiration to wrestle with our sins and resistances. This happened on the night of March 19.

A class on boating safety had just ended and a late dishwashing was in progress when the Joneses rushed in to the Academy. "The Northern Lights are out!" they reported. Several men had never seen this display, so we all piled into the school bus and various cars to go to Mill Bay.

There a glowing curtain of green, stretching across the sky and turning the dark water to silver, illumined the darkness. For the next half hour, we exclaimed in wonder as the Northern Lights pulsated and changed, sending out long streaks and bright banners into a starry heavens. Full of wonder, all of us were taken out of our dailyness and were mindful of the scripture: "The heavens proclaim the glory of God."

We Need Wheels!

The salt from the roads and the sea air plus all the winter pot-holes and unpaved roads are hard on vehicles in Kodiak. Due also to terminally ill engines and transmissions, our supply of workable vehicles is much less than is needed to transport eighteen adults and four children to a variety of jobs and errands. It would be very helpful for us to have a Suburban and an 11 or 14 passenger van. Used is fine, and four wheel drive would be a bonus. If anyone could help us obtain such vehicles, please let us know. If we are able to obtain them and they were in the lower 48, we would be looking for an intrepid soul to drive them up to Alaska on the AlCan highway for the adventure of a lifetime!

A God-Given Victory

by Christopher Jones

God encouraged us with a foretaste of Paschal victory as we grappled with the rocks in our souls this lent. He allowed us to accomplish a longstanding goal, the climbing of Monk's Rock. This is a rock jutting out of the sea off the southeast tip of Spruce Island. It was named for St. Herman during his lifetime. Our Monk's Rock Coffeehouse and Bookstore in Kodiak is named after it as an image of stability and security in the midst of life's storms. For years we have wanted to climb it. On a recent trip to pray at the grave of St. Herman at Monk's Lagoon, we got our wish.

Just landing there was always the main problem. The rock slopes off into deadly-cold water, and hopping from a skiff pitching in the ocean onto a slippery rock just is not easy. Every attempt ended in frustration. But youthful zeal was bolstered also by a real zeal to touch and climb this piece of St. Herman's Legacy.

This time, we were traveling to Monk's Lagoon on a pilgrimage with the Kodiak Baptist Mission. Five of us were in a skiff: our captain Evan Jones from the Baptist Mission, Spyridon Oliver, Wayne Stallard, Nathaniel Coppola and myself. We decided we would give it another try. Our Saviour tells us, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find." So we did. We

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swung off to port towards Monk's Rock toward the sheltered lee side. There we suddenly found a low shelf with a clear approach that was exposed only at low tide. It could just as well have been a dock. It was a miracle, amazingly easy. Wayne, Nate and I leaped out — and before we knew it we were there.

While I was adjusting to the thought of actually being on Monk's Rock, Wayne called out, "Race you to the top!" and we took off. Wayne climbed straight up the face while I chose a roundabout route and passed by Nate and made it to the top first. Monk's Rock peaks in a rectangular flat tabletop from where I could see all of the islands and mountains, Miller Point and St. Michael's Skete. As the other two began to come up behind me there, I thanked God for what he had, in His own good time, given us. I reflected that the long wait to climb up the Rock was much like our Lent: a long wait for something that seems impossible. In Lent we try and try to conquer the rock in our lives - our own sinfulness - and we can't even begin to scale it, it seems insurmountable. Then suddenly God opens the door. It is our Lord Jesus Christ that gives us victory — *Christ is Risen!*

