

In *Harsh Vineyard: A History of Catholic Life in the Russian Far East*, Miroslava Efimova, a member of Mary Mother of God Roman Catholic parish in Vladivostok, Far East Russia, documents the hardships experienced by the Roman Catholic population of the Russian Far East first under the czars and then under the Communists. Most of these Catholics had been forcibly resettled throughout Siberia and all the way to the Pacific during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Relying on archival materials collected in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Warsaw, Krakow, Vitebsk and Minsk, Efimova tells the stories of the priests who served that population.



First Communion – May 2007

The Polish population of the Far East was also expanded by Poles who came to work on the TransSiberian Railroad, particularly the spur that ran south through Manchuria. Efimova includes a chapter on the Catholic community in Harbin and along the rail line. The evacuation of Polish orphans in the eastward advance of the Bolsheviks, the last days of the elderly bishop of Vladivostok, the arrest and sentencing to the Gulag of the last priest of the cathedral parish, the execution of parishioners in 1938 – all these make for fascinating reading.

The final chapter tells the story of present-day efforts to revive the Roman Catholic parish, work that has been led by two American priests.

Efimova's work rescues from oblivion the names, the courage, and the perseverance of many ordinary people who lived far from ordinary lives in unimaginable circumstances.



Miroslava Efimova

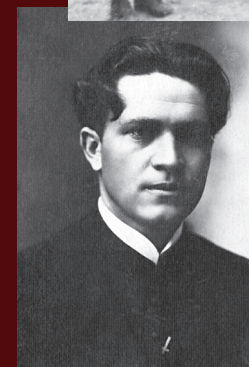
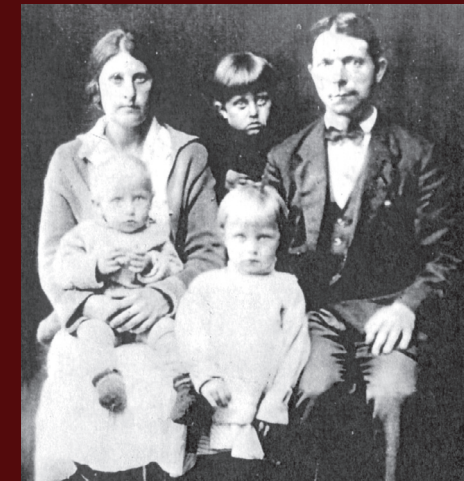
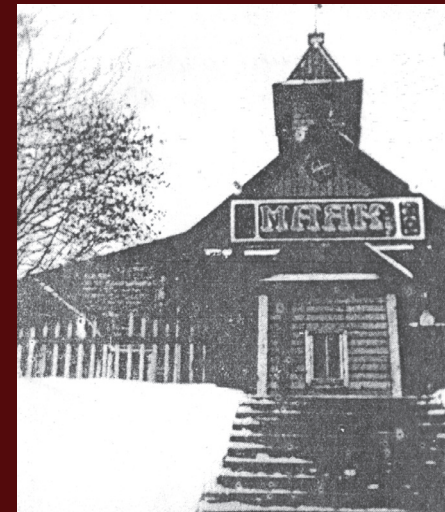
A History of Catholic Life in the Russian Far East

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