

Our Lady of Magadan, Pray For Us

The icon of our Lady of Magadan was commissioned to honor the martyrs, bishops and priests of the Catholic and Orthodox traditions who died in the gulags in Russia; who give their lives to the faith, rather than submit to atheistic communism.

In the late 90's the original icon was given to Bishop Rostoslav, the Orthodox Bishop of Magadan, by the small Catholic Community of Magadan as a sign of prayer and unity. As seen in the icon, she holds her son in her arms. Just as she holds the Church in her heart, both holy and broken. The body of Christ was broken by the cruel crucifixion and so too the church is broken by the sins of her members. Our Lady of Magadan is the one who can hold the church and sooth its wounds and wait in patient suffering for its healing as she suffered the death of Her son and later shared in His glorious resurrection.

She is Our Lady of Magadan and She knows the desire of Jesus her son ; "that all maybe one"
(John 17;21)

In 1991 the icon of Our Lady of Magadan was placed in the Martyr's Chapel along with other icons recalling the suffering and martyrdom in the communist repression. There is also a wall of crosses where camp survivors place a small cross remembering the thousands who died in the prison camps. Articles, numbers from prisoner clothing, and barbed wire from the fences of the camp also serve as a reminder to the atrocities committed by the Communist regime here in Russia.

The greatest treasure is a bread rosary made by one of the camp survivors from Lithuania, Bronislava Klimavishute. She would roll small pieces of the rationed Russian bread with ash from the heating stove in their barracks to make small rosary beads. Then, she would sew the beads together with thread from her mattress to create a rosary to catechize and evangelize other prisoners who had lost faith and hope.

The scripture in Matthew 4:4 comes alive when you see this relic from the prison camps of Stalin.

"Man does not live on bread alone by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

It is on this rosary that we will pray for priests throughout world in union with Our Lady of Magadan, and all the martyrs here in Russia. We will pray for unity in Christ's church and strength for His priests and bishops, both Orthodox and Catholic.

The icon has been given to Catholic bishops and priests who visit Magadan with a single request; To pray to Our Lady of Magadan for unity in Christ's church. Our Lady of Magadan is prayed to in Magadan for hope of the union of the Catholic and Orthodox traditions. We also pray for those who have died for their faith during the repression, both past and present, throughout the world.