The skyline of Tallinn, Estonia testifies to the varied religious past of the region. St. Mary’s Cathedral (on the left) is the oldest surviving church in Estonia. Known as Toomkirik in the Estonian language, it dates from 1233. Although originally constructed as a Roman Catholic Church, St Mary’s Cathedral changed hands following the turmoil of the Protestant Reformation and now houses a Lutheran congregation.

Toompea Castle (center of photo) is an ancient stronghold site in use since at least the 9th century.

The Alexander Nevsky Cathedral (right), built between 1894 and 1900, is one of the most lavish and grandiose reminders of Estonia’s Imperial Russian past.
Dear Faithful,

We, the priests and religious of the Society of Saint Pius X, are the spiritual sons of a true missionary in the wild: Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. And, although the SSPX is not first and foremost a missionary order in the traditional sense, it is with the heart of our beloved founder that we seek to labor in the vineyard of the Lord.

During the sermon for his 50th Priestly Jubilee Mass, Archbishop Lefebvre spoke of how he witnessed the spread of the Catholic Faith in Africa, describing what makes up the heart of the missionary’s work and what is the recipe for the fertility of his efforts. Speaking from his own experience, the Mass holds the first and most powerful place amongst the missionary’s “tools.”

“Certainly I knew, by the studies which we had done, what this great mystery of our Faith was, but I had not yet understood its entire value, efficacy and depth. Thus I lived, day by day and year by year in Africa, and particularly in Gabon, where I spent 13 years of my missionary life, first at the seminary and then in the bush among the Africans, with the natives. There I saw—yes, I saw—what the grace of the Holy Mass could do.”

In this new issue of the Foreign Mission Trust Magazine, we once more present to you the efforts of the SSPX priests and religious in mission countries. You will read about and see the fertility of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, of the preaching of the Faith, of the administration of the sacraments, of the power of the missionaries bearing witness to the Faith. Their work is most encouraging and their courage admirable!

Although the Society of Saint Pius X was not founded specifically as a missionary order, Divine Providence has also led us to take up a humble share in these efforts. Please let us help our missionaries and contribute to their work with both our prayers and our financial support.

In Christo,

Fr. John Fullerton
Publisher
How to help the Foreign Missions:

Please make out checks or money orders in US dollars only to: “Society of Saint Pius X Foreign Mission Trust” The mailing address is:
Society of Saint Pius X Foreign Mission Trust
PO Box 206
Farley, MO 64028

—Please do not send cash since this is against US Postal Regulations. Please call (816) 753-0073 to discuss the donation of securities or precious metals.

—Important note concerning the direction of donations and tax deductions: If you wish your donation to be used for a particular foreign mission, or even a specific project, please specify this in an accompanying note and do not write anything on the check. The Trustees normally honor such donor requests, but it must be clear that, in order to be eligible for a tax deduction, each donation must be entirely at the disposal of the Trust to use as it sees fit for the foreign missions in general.
Miracles have always been an essential part of the work and mission of our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Catholic Church. Missionary work in itself is a miracle of God. The Church must be “missionary” because Jesus sent His apostles into the world and told them to baptize and convert as many people as possible and bring them into the Kingdom of God. During this missionary work, God performed so many amazing miracles through the apostles and priests. Such a missionary miracle is now happening in Tallinn, Estonia!

God, and His most holy and Immaculate Mother Mary, through the missionary efforts of the SSPX, are beginning to build the first new Catholic Church in centuries in this former Soviet Baltic Country. This will absolutely be a miracle!

Why is this SSPX Church project in Tallinn, Estonia a miracle? Even though Estonia was actually a Catholic country in the Middle Ages and was dedicated by the Pope to the Blessed Virgin Mary (it was called Maarjama—the Land of Mary), it was later dominated by the heresy of Swedish and German Lutheranism. The Catholic Church was able to preserve its presence in Estonia during this
Protestant period, but it was always very small and humble.

Later the Russian Empire dominated Estonia for centuries and ensured that the Orthodox religion spread there. However, the Catholic Church somehow survived through all of this. Afterwards, the godless Soviet Union came to power in Estonia and tried to destroy all the remaining religious sentiment in the people.

The Catholic Church persevered throughout all of this thanks to the heroic Catholic bishops, priests and faithful who kept the Faith. We can say that the survival of the Catholic mission in Estonia is really itself a first missionary miracle in Estonia.

However, after the Estonian independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, this traumatic and unstable religious history unfortunately had quite a negative effect on the citizens. Estonians became less and less religious. In fact, for many years Estonia has been one of the most atheistic countries in all of Europe!

Along with Sweden and the Czech Republic, this tiny Baltic nation has the highest percentage of non-religious people and proclaimed atheists. Over 50% of the Estonian population practice absolutely no religion at all. Another 30% do practice some kind of religion, while the remaining 20% have no opinion whatsoever about religion.

Estonia has one of the smallest populations in all of Europe with only 1.3 million people living there. So, the 30% of the population who do practice some kind of religion is rather small.

But how many Catholics are there in Estonia? The Catholic Church currently only has 6,500 total members in all of Estonia. That is less than 1% of the population. Unfortunately, there is not even one Catholic diocese in all of
Estonia. The Vatican has only erected an “Apostolic Administration” there. Sadly, there are only about a dozen or so Catholic parishes in all of Estonia. Also, unfortunately, there are only a couple of native priests of Estonian origin. All of the Catholic priests currently working in Estonia are foreigners. Needless to say, the Catholic situation in Estonia looks bleak.

Nevertheless, a miraculous light has been quietly and subtly shining in this ancient land of Mary. God does not abandon even the smallest nations. After the fall of Communism, the work of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, Catholic Tradition, and the SSPX were brought to Estonia.

It was not easy in the beginning, but this miraculous missionary work of Catholic Tradition has been growing and growing in this tiny, secularized nation. God is truly working here and this fact is absolutely evident if you look at the statistics. There are so few people practicing religion and even fewer Catholics in Estonia. Yet, by the grace of God and the Immaculate Mary, Catholic Tradition is growing and growing. That is a miracle.

More and more young families with many children are coming to our little chapel in Tallinn. We have contacts with people in other cities in Estonia also. The grace of God through the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass has touched many souls, and now Divine Providence has shown us that It wants us to begin building a church. It will be the first Catholic Church built in Estonia in centuries.

In 2007 we purchased some land with the hope and dream to one day build a fitting and worthy home for the Traditional Latin Mass and the work of the SSPX. After praying, working, and making many sacrifices, in 2014 we finally received all of the necessary permissions to begin this miracle project. Our plan had two major stages: Stage 1: to build a small little rectory for the priests, which could be used as a temporary chapel; Stage 2: to build the
church. In 2016, we completed Stage 1 and built the little rectory for the priests. It has been used as our temporary chapel for four years now. But this temporary chapel has become much too small. There are too many people, families and children and so a new chapel must be built.

To build a Catholic parish in Estonia at this time is a miracle. In many Western European countries, they are destroying and closing churches, but we are building in Estonia. It really is a missionary miracle and it is the will of God. We have already broken ground and are commencing digging the foundations. That is why we beg you to please help us realize this milestone of Tradition in Estonia with your prayers and support. Please be a part of this missionary project to bring the work of Archbishop Lefebvre and the SSPX to more families in Estonia through this church dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The Traditional Latin Mass will be at the center of our SSPX apostolate in Tallinn, and from this source we will nourish and build a strong Catholic Community in this Land of Mary.
Relics of a More Pious Age

Ruins of Tartu Cathedral, also known as Dorpat Cathedral, shows evidence of the Catholic roots of Estonia. The cathedral was built from the 13th to 15th century and was abandoned and fell to ruins from the second half of the 16th century.
Theft in Corrientes

A Fundraising Party

On Saturday, May 22nd, the faithful in the city of Corrientes had organized a sale of ryguasu arróreve (a chicken and rice dish from Northeastern Argentina) to raise funds for the church of St. Rita in Mercedes, one of the Mass centers serviced by the priory in Corrientes.

St. Rita’s roof is in bad shape, with one sunken section and several leaks that are deteriorating the wooden structure. A couple of days later, on Tuesday May 25th—a national holiday commemorating the establishment of the first Argentine government—Fathers López Badra, prior, and Albisu, assistant, returned from the apostolate at St. Rita’s and, after praying sext at the priory, went to lunch at the house of one of the faithful in the city of Corrientes.

A Theft

Following the delicious meal, Fr. Albisu returned to the priory, only to find his bedroom in complete shambles. All the clothes were thrown on the floor, the drawers were in disarray, and the thieves had even gone through his breviary, presumably looking for additional money, leaving his holy cards strewn on the floor. He quickly informed Fr. Prior, who arrived immediately.

The two priests soon verified that the bedroom of Fr. Prior had also been ransacked. His personal money was missing, as well as part of the savings
The faithful of Corrientes prepare ryguasu arróreve (a chicken and rice dish from Northeastern Argentina) to raise funds for the church of St. Rita in Mercedes.

of the Paraguay mission, where the Fathers from Corrientes travel regularly. These savings were aimed at the founding of a priory in the near future.

In the Prior’s office, all of the mass stipends had been taken. The thieves had scoured everything, looking for the money raised at the joyful “ryguasu arróreve” fundraiser, and did not miss the opportunity of taking all the valuables they found on the way, including the laptops and personal computers.

The thieves took more than $20,000 in cash alone. The hard-earned fruit of the labors of many families from several mass centers (many of whom live in meager circumstances), collected over a number of months, had vanished in a moment.

The thieves had even vandalized the house of God, breaking in through the side entrance to the bookstore, but by God’s grace, they respected the religious objects: the chalices, ciboria, monstrance, and, most importantly, the Tabernacle, were intact.

The police arrived, followed by forensic experts, who took fingerprints and pictures, as well as e-mail addresses and bank account numbers in order to attempt tracing the electronic devices.

By 9pm, the Fathers went to the police station to formalize the complaint, filing a police report and thus wrapping up the national holiday.

Within a few days, the lock to the door that the thieves had used to force their entry into the bookstore was reinforced, and an alarm system was installed.

A Request

From heaven, Our Lady of Itatí, patroness of the Province and the Priory of Corrientes, extended her maternal mantle, so that our most sacred objects might not be profaned. We now address ourselves to you, here on earth, asking for your help to replace the stolen money, so we can continue with the projects as planned.
A Home

As you may have read in an article published in an earlier issue of this magazine, the priory of Our Lady of Itatí was founded in the city of Corrientes, capital of the same province, on September 4, 2016, on the solemnity of the feast of St. Pius X. Corrientes is located in the Northeastern Region of Argentina, known as El Litoral, “the coast,” because of its proximity to the Paraná and Paraguay rivers. This area shares many similarities with the lower Mississippi basin, especially the temperatures and humidity. These two rivers constitute the main link for the inhabitants of the area, from Paraguay to Argentina, who at least share music and food, if not also the language of the Guarani Indians, as evidenced by the name of the dish served at the fundraiser.

During the lock-down, the attendance increased by more than 70%, since the administration of the sacraments had been suspended completely in the Diocesan parishes, or, if Holy Mass was celebrated, communion in the hand was compulsory. Since the chapel in Corrientes is very small, with a maximum capacity of 40 people, and the current location affords no room for expansion, in the near future we must think about acquiring some land to build a new chapel and priory.

A Mission

The church we built in Asunción, the capital of Paraguay, does have enough space for the faithful. Given the steadily growing numbers, we are planning on starting a priory relatively soon, which shall be the beachhead for the missionary conquest of the old heart of the Jesuit reductions.

The sale of ryguasu arróreve had raised almost half of the funds needed to repair the first part of the roof of the St. Rita church in Mercedes. There was also a good amount of money that had already been saved to move the St. Michael the Archangel chapel and Our Lady of Itatí priory of Corrientes to a bigger location.

May God reward you one hundredfold for your generosity toward the missionary work of the Society of Saint Pius X in the Argentine Mesopotamia, enclosed between the Paraná, Paraguay, Iguazu and Uruguay rivers, and the jungles of Paraguay.

The thieves thoroughly ransacked everything in their search for the money raised at the “ryguasu arróreve” fundraiser. Thankfully, skilled locksmiths were available to both fix the damage and fortify the doors against future break-ins.
In the 16th Century, when the Jesuit missionary Luis Bolaños and the natives he had converted were attacked by local Indians, the Blessed Virgin Mary came to their aid. After beseeching her intercession, a breach formed on the Yaguari river, making the Itatí Mission safe from the attackers, who then withdrew. The statue of the Virgin of Itatí became known for her transfigurations, the first of which took place during Holy Week of 1624 and lasted several days. According to Fray Luis de Gamarría, “there was an extraordinary change on her face; she was more beautiful than ever before.”

The image of the Virgin of Itatí was crowned on July 16, 1900, at the request of Pope Leo XIII. The largest pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Itatí takes place on her feast day of July 9, the same day on which the independence of Argentina in 1816 is commemorated.

The imposing Basilica of Our Lady of Itatí was built in 1938 and can accommodate up to 9,000 people. On top of the 26-foot dome is a bronze statue of the Virgin that overlooks the city. The original wooden statue of Our Lady of Itatí resides in a small oratory decorated with a fresco representing natives praying to the Virgin on the banks of the Paraná River.
The Society of Saint Pius X is an international priestly society of almost 700 priests. Its main purpose is the formation and support of priests.

The goal of the Society of Saint Pius X is to preserve the Catholic Faith in its fullness and purity, not changing, adding to or subtracting from the truth that the Church has always taught, and to diffuse its virtues, especially through the Roman Catholic priesthood. Authentic spiritual life, the sacraments, and the traditional liturgy are its primary means to foster virtue and sanctity and to bring the divine life of grace to souls.

Faithful to the words of Our Lord—“Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”—the Society of Saint Pius X strives to bring the Gospel and Tradition to souls around the world. As a lifelong missionary, Archbishop Lefebvre passed on this charism to the Society. This magazine aims to both inform souls about the work of the missions and how they can be helped.