

tion was named Tihomirov (tihi is quiet, and mir is the world; the final *ov* or *off* denotes the possessive case and generally can be translated as *son*, for instance John-son). Veniaminov was the name given to John Popov. He was named thus in honor of Benjamin, the Bishop of Irkoutsk, who was much loved by all, and who had died that same year. In 1817 John Veniaminov married, after which he was ordained a deacon for the Church of the Annunciation in Irkoutsk.

Graduating from the seminary John Veniaminov was appointed teacher of a parish school, and after a year ordained a priest for the same Church of the Annunciation. In the course of his service (which was short, a little over two years) he won the esteem and love of his people as a good shepherd who cares for his flock. The inhabitants of Irkoutsk long remembered the even and grand church services of Father John, likewise his kindly nature and pastoral cares. On Sundays, before the liturgy, he would gather the children in the church and instruct them in Christian lessons. Only two years passed thus, in which he enjoyed his quiet home life; soon he must change it for a life full of privations, trouble, heavy labor and glorious undertakings.

In 1823 the Most Holy Synod requested the Bishop of Irkoutsk to send a priest to the Island Ounalashka, for the purpose of enlightening the natives with the faith of Christ. Ounalashka and the neighboring islands lie out a long distance from Siberia, between Kamchatka and America. The Prelate informed the clergy of Irkoutsk, but no one was found to accept the Holy Synod's offer. No one desired to go to a strange and distant land. The Bishop was put in an awkward position; the order of the Synod must be carried out, yet no volunteers were found, and he could not send any one against his will. Then it was that the priest of the Annunciation (parish), Father John Veniaminov came