

as we shall see hereafter—he accomplished the undertaking. We call this work remarkable, for the reason that he had to undergo the labor of inventing the very alphabet itself, which these languages never had. Studying the Aleutian language, Father John endeavored to acquaint himself with their traditions and customs, in order to be better understood when preaching to them the Word of God. He could often be seen conversing with those who were converted before he came to the island, and also with the pagan natives, about the true religion.

He preached sermons to them adapted to their understanding; he explained the meaning of the different feasts, confession and holy communion, also repeating how necessary it is to often attend church services.

Eye-witnesses recall to memory the sermon that Father John preached on the Sunday of Cheese-Fare, on February 9th, 1828, which also happened to be the day of St. Innocentius, the Wonder-worker of Irkoutsk. The great multitude of hearers were impressed and moved to tears by the sincere words and humility of this priest. First he explained the meaning of fast and showed the difference between the primitive Christians and those of today. "The Christians of old" said Father John Veniaminov, "with great joy looked forward and awaited the coming of holy Lent, as they knew the power and benefit of Lent, and they understood wherefore it was instituted—and they knew not only with their mind, or by hearing, but by the very sense of feeling (experience). But many of the christians of today, with sorrow see the approach of the time of fast, because they do not see, and do not know, or do not care to know and see the power and benefit of Lent." Then the preacher put the question: "Why was it that Lent was instituted, and how can we fulfill the duties which it exacts of us?" Explaining this question, he then continued: