



# Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – January 2017

1519 Washington St., Calistoga, CA 94515

Phone: 707-942-6244; Email: [sisters@holyassumptionmonastery.com](mailto:sisters@holyassumptionmonastery.com)

Website: [www.holyassumptionmonastery.com](http://www.holyassumptionmonastery.com)



Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

When you ask a priest what his day looks like, you may get a reply something like “Hospital visits, then a funeral, then a wedding, then a baptism ...” At first glance, such a day seems jarring – how do priests manage to go back and forth between such happy and sad events? On reflection, though, there is a deep unity to such a day, and we find that unity in the meaning of baptism.

In baptism, we die with Christ in order to live with Him. There is, of course, great joy in baptizing somebody into new life in Christ, but we must not forget that our life in Christ is a life of continually dying to ourselves. This is beautifully seen in the wedding ceremony, where the hymn “O Holy Martyrs” is sung as the new couple is led around the table.

We live out this death to ourselves and life in Christ in our day-to-day world with the small joys and heartbreaks and the large ones, too – such as weddings, serious illness, and death. In the moments of joy, we must not forget that they are not sustainable without consciously choosing death to our own agendas and comfort. And in our moments of sorrow, we must remember that “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning” (Ps 30:5). That morning comes in part any time that we remember to turn our hearts towards God, but comes fully only in the Kingdom of Heaven.

As we prepare to celebrate our Lord's baptism this Theophany, may we indeed share in His death that we may share in the life of the unending Day of His Kingdom!

with love in Christ,

*Mother Melania  
and the community  
of Holy Assumption Monastery*

## ZOO UPDATE – East Enders

Here, as promised, is the update on Creme the Cat. With her love of being petted and her high decibel purr, Creme has very quickly won the hearts of the monastery humans. As for the feline contingent, fellow East Ender Simba has been doing his best to explain to her that they would get along much better if she hissed less. Creme is slowly absorbing the lesson, and we have high hopes that hissing will soon be a thing of the past – in the East End at least. Once East meets West (i.e. Balou and Philly), though, all bets are off!



*May I come in?*



*You've GOT to be kidding!*



*Hmmff! Two can play THIS game!*

Back in the East End, Creme shares living space not just with Simba and a few humans, but the monastery parakeets, Snap and Crackle (alas, Pop is with us no longer). Fortunately, Creme, after a brief inspection of the keets on her second day with us, has amply satisfied her curiosity and has shown no further interest (to the joint relief of humans AND keets). So, please make sure never to show her any Sylvester and Tweety Bird cartoons, lest you give her some untoward ideas!



*Snap and Crackle – Aren't we adorable?!*

## IN MEMORY – ALEXANDRA (SHURA) LOCHANKO



*Shura Lochanko -  
Memory eternal!*

Our dear friend Alexandra (Shura) Lochanko reposed in the Lord on December 6. When we arrived at the monastery in 2009, Shura was one of the first people we met, and we were immediately struck by her graciousness. She was clearly such a matriarch (in all the best senses of the word) of the parish that we were surprised to learn that she had moved to the area only a few years previously. Yet on a little reflection, there was nothing surprising about it. Shura was the kind of person that drew everybody to her in love wherever she was and however short a time she'd been there. How fitting that she went to the Lord on St. Nicholas Day! Like that great saint, she poured out God's love to the people around her. Though we knew her for but seven of her 93 years, she was and shall ever remain an important part of our community. Memory eternal!



### HERE & THERE



*Calistoga Christmas Faire – WHO was supposed to man the booth?!?!*



*Nativity of the Theotokos Church, Menlo Park: The mynah reappears. You can't keep a good hat down!*



*Armstrong Forest - Look, Ma! I can read and walk at the same time!!*



*Back at the monastery – Tin Tin guards the home front*



### CHRISTMAS 2016

#### *Christmas Eve Liturgy*



*Fr Theodor Svane*



*Christ is born!  
Glorify Him!*

#### *Getting Ready*



*Our culinary efforts have just gone up in smoke!*

#### *Christmas Eve Holy Meal*



*Singing carols - are we ready for 8-part harmony yet?*



*Santa's helper makes an appearance.*

#### *Christmas Vigil and Liturgy*



*Some of the faithful few*



*Fr Philip Tolbert*

#### *Christmas Dinner and Sing-a-long*



*Santa's helpers don't come only in pint-size!*



*If we start practicing "O Holy Night" NOW, we might have it down cold for NEXT year!*

## January 2017 Schedule for **Holy Assumption Monastery & St. Simeon Church**

Monastery contact info – (707) 942-6244; email – [sisters@holyassumptionmonastery.com](mailto:sisters@holyassumptionmonastery.com);

website – <http://www.holyassumptionmonastery.com>

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish)	2	3	4	5 7:00am Royal Hours  1:00pm Vesperal Liturgy  6:00pm Vigil (all at Monastery)	6 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <b>Theophany</b>  5:00pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish)	7 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish)  <b>Nativity of Our Lord (Old Style)</b>  5:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)
8 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish)	9	10	11	12	13	14 5:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)
15 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)	16 6:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)	17 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)  <u>Ven. Anthony the Great</u>	18	19	20	21 5:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)
22 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish)	23	24 6:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)	25 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)  <u>St. Gregory the Theologian</u>	26	27	28 5:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)
29 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)	30	31	<b>NOTE: Our schedule sometimes changes unexpectedly. Please check our website or the recorded message on our telephone for last minute changes.</b>			

### SAVE THE DATE:

**Saturday March 11 – Retreat, topic yet to be determined  
led by Fr. Philip Tolbert, of Holy Dormition Church, Santa Rosa, CA**