



Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – June 2014

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Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

Every so often, we come across articles about increasing human longevity – some envision us living 500 or more years! Focused as we are on the life this world can offer us, it is easy to understand why we have sunk so much money and intellectual capital into research that will help us be healthier and live longer. On the other hand, considering the various messes we make in our 80 odd years, why in the world would we want another 400 or so?!

Of course, there is nothing wrong with having healthy bodies and long life spans. The problem is having souls that are too unhealthy to direct our bodies properly. Then, our bodies do the directing and we become slaves to food, physical attractions, anger, etc. Eighty years of that is challenge enough. Five hundred would be a nightmare!

As this is being written, we are about to celebrate the Ascension of our Lord – when Christ ascended BODILY to His Father. Christ being perfect Man and perfect God, His soul and body were in perfect concord with each other and with the will of His Father. Thus, He ascended bodily to heaven, for there was nothing in Him – body or soul – not in full concord with His Father.

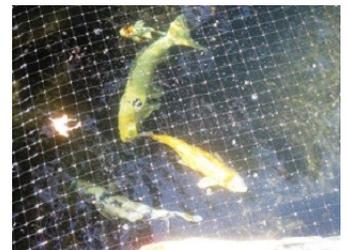
Being far from perfect, we can not say the same of ourselves. Our bodies and souls are NOT fully in concord with each other nor with the will of God. What hope do we have of ever changing that? The answer comes ten days after Ascension – Pentecost, the descent of the Holy Spirit, Who comes to live in us and make us whole of soul and body. Of course, this does not happen without our cooperation. But if we are willing to do our part – to live holy lives as best we can and to repent where we fail – the Holy Spirit will strengthen and heal us so that we, too, may ascend with Christ to the Father in Heaven.

with love in Christ,

*Mother Melania
and the community
of Holy Assumption Monastery*

ZOO UPDATE – *The Return of the Heron!!*

After an uneventful winter in which we thought that our local herons decided there were better things to eat than koi, we were distressed to find that one of them had speared *Creamsicle* (named for his white and orange coloring). We lowered the water to levels that had proved safe before, but the next morning, we also lost *Tiny Tot* (he was the smallest of his “set”). So, until we can find a more attractive solution, we have covered the pond with deer netting (at least, now we don't have to worry about deer jumping into the pond!). It has worked fine so far. We wish our herons well, but we also wish them well away from our koi!



*The koi pond's new look –
net gain for us,
net loss for the heron!*



*Fiver with his admiring public –
I could get used to this!*

On a much happier note, our new zoo members – Fiver the bunny and Stickers the cat – are settling in well. Fiver is much less timid around people than our other bunnies, which is welcome news to our young visitors. Stickers has established herself as the queen of the lower half of the monastery (just ask Simba!) and is currently extending her domain past the chapel. Balou and Philly – be warned!



*Stickers – It's a humble little
realm, but it's MINE!*

MAY FRIENDS' MEETING

The May Friends' meeting fell on Mother's Day (May 11), which provided the general theme of the talk. A priest friend of ours was speaking of the difficult life of a priest's wife – she gets all the trouble and none of the honor. So, her reward is in the Kingdom of Heaven. This brought to mind something Mother Victoria once told a priest's wife with a large family – the difference between a nun and a mother is that the nun gets to choose when she will hold vigil. The point is that the mother spends much of her days and nights attending to expected and unexpected needs of her children. If she accepts this as a service to God, then her whole life – so much of which is spent doing things that seem menial – becomes a vigil of love and service to God.



A bookish conversation

The saints, keenly aware that receiving glory from the world makes it very difficult to attain the glory of the Kingdom of heaven, gladly do menial tasks and even court dishonor. On May 10, we celebrated St. Isidora of Tabenna, who feigned madness and slothfulness in order to hide her virtue. When St. Pitirim came to the monastery and revealed her holiness, the nuns who had treated her badly repented and held her in honor. After just a few days, distressed by their praise, St. Isidora ran away from the praise of others and lived out her life in the desert. The following verse from her service explains her actions and attitude:

Come, my friends, and learn of me! I have suffered a little in this transitory life and have humbled myself. I have nourished my soul with my tears and have clothed myself in abasement as in a robe. Yet Christ the Lord hath now rent asunder my hair shirt and girt me about with divine gladness. He hath crowned me with glory and honor. Wherefore, be ye of good courage and strengthen yourselves with hope, for our Savior, Who hath great mercy, shall soon transform your sorrows into joy.

The practical application for us is, first, to decide which glory we really want. In fact, most of us want both heavenly and worldly glory, but seldom is it possible to have both. In one way or another, our paths will be strewn with tears, dishonor, and sorrows. If we keep our eyes fixed on Christ, we will come increasingly not just to endure these difficulties patiently, but to be thankful for them as invaluable aids in our journey to the Kingdom of Christ our Savior, who shall soon transform our sorrows into joy.



THIS YEAR'S KAGOR PREMIUM CHALICE WINE SOON TO BE BOTTLED!

We were very pleased with the response to our first Kagor Premium Chalice Wine. In fact, we sold out of our first bottling months ago (2011 vintage) and have been eagerly awaiting the 2012 vintage. The bottling is set for June 10. For more information on the Kagor and our traditional chalice wine, please see <http://calistogaorthodoxwine.com/>



HERE AND THERE



Fr. Nebojsa Pantic and his parishioners from Ss. Constantine and Helen Church, Vallejo, visited us in early May. We hope to see them often!



Our grounds would not be so beautiful were it not for the help of our many friends. Thanks to all of you who have given your time and energy to help us out!



We are now in our second year with the Farmers' Market. Come by when you can to say hi and sample our baked goods!



We were invited to bring our bookstore to Holy Nativity Church, Novato, for this year's Marin Greek Festival. Our thanks to all who made this a lovely event!

June 2014 Schedule for Holy Assumption Monastery & St. Simeon Church
 Monastery contact info – (707) 942-6244; email – sisters.holyassumptionmonastery@gmail.com;
 website – <http://www.holyassumptionmonastery.com>

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)	2	3	4	5	6 5:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)	7 5:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>Soul Saturday</u> 5:00pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish)
8 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy/ Kneeling Vespers (at St Simeon Parish) <u>Pentecost</u> 4:00pm Matins followed by FRIENDS Potluck (at Monastery)	9 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>Day of the Holy Spirit</u>	10	11	12	13	14 5:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)
15 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)	16	17	18 5:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)	19 5:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>St. Jude, Brother of the Lord</u>	20	21 5:00pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish)
22 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish)	23 5:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)	24 5:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>Nativity of St. John the Baptist</u> (Tentative)	25	26	27	28 9:00am-3:00pm <u>Retreat with Dr. John Klentos</u> 5:00pm Reader's Vigil (both at Monastery)
29 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>Ss. Peter & Paul</u> <i>Visiting Clergy</i>	30	THERE IS STILL ROOM AVAILABLE for the June 28 Retreat with Dr. John Klentos (see flyer for details of retreat) AND REMEMBER TO SAVE THE DATE – Saturday, November 15 – V. Rev. Stephan Meholick, pastor of St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, San Anselmo, CA, will speak on Orthodox Worship.				

Holy Assumption Monastery

Summer Retreat

Saturday, June 28th, 2014

Co-sponsored by the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute

Featuring

Dr. John Klentos

Associate Professor of Eastern Orthodox Christian Studies

Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute/Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley

The Life in Christ

according to

St. Nicholas Cabasilas

Limited Capacity – RSVP today!

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Holy Assumption Monastery

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No fee – suggested donation \$30

Schedule

9:00 am Third Hour

9:30 am Coffee Break

10-noon First Session

12:15 pm Akathist

1:00 pm Lunch

2-3:30 pm Second