



Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – August 2015

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Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

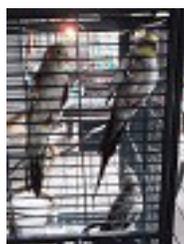
Earlier this summer, a very disturbing article appeared, concerning Yannick N, a homeless German man who was recruited by ISIS and became a suicide bomber (www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/world/article25186381.html#storylink=cpy). Yannick N had not been raised Muslim, nor had he radicalized himself on the internet (to which, apparently, he had no access). Rather, he was one of a "new batch" of ISIS recruits, including not only the homeless but also "youth in foster care and unaccompanied refugees ... anyone ... who is simply desperate for any kind of acceptance."

Finding the best political and military response to ISIS is a complicated and serious question, about which people of good will may disagree. The degree to which we are responsible for affecting political policy is also an important question without a clear answer. But we are all responsible for caring for the outcast near us. Doing this is not going to stop ISIS or address our current national and global crises. Still, if somebody had reached out to Yannick N, there probably would have been one less suicide bomber and many fewer victims. True, we will never know all the ramifications of doing – or failing to do – an act of kindness to another. But there is ONE thing, we DO know, for Christ Himself said it – how we treat our brother is how we treat Him. We all have a “brother” somewhere close whom we aren't seeing. God grant us eyes to see Christ in our brother – no matter where he is, how he looks, or what he has done!!

with love in Christ,

*Mother Melania
and the community
of Holy Assumption Monastery*

ZOO UPDATE – Cockatiels and apologies



*No, we are NOT
jail birds!*

Our aviary temporarily doubled in size during late June and early July, when our neighbors the McBeardsleys went on vacation and brought their three cockatiels (Cinnamon, Mama, and Roberta) here to keep Petie, Pixley, and Cha Cha company. Their stay coincided with some of the hottest weather we have had thus summer. So, the cockatiels were introduced to spray bottle showers. At first, they were not sure what to think about being sprayed down, but they soon were spreading their wings to get the full effect. Last we heard from the McBeardsleys, the cockatiels now expect a shower every day – whatever the weather!



*Jameson, JARR's
namesake*

Also, we wish to take this opportunity to apologize to Jameson Animal Rescue Ranch for leaving their name out when we mentioned the help we receive from Wine Country Animal Lovers. These two organizations have worked closely together to help our ever-growing zoo to be happy and healthy and wise! To learn more about these wonderful groups, please go to their websites – <http://www.jamesonanimalrescueranch.org/> and <http://winecountryanimallovers.org/>



July 12 Friends' Meeting

Most people in a position of authority experience the frustration of trying to lead people who don't want to follow. In light of this, we were intrigued by a phrase in the troparion of St. Sergius (July 5):

From thy youth thou didst receive Christ within thy soul, O venerable one, and didst desire more than all to withdraw from the tumult of the world. Thou didst manfully dwell in the wilderness, and therein didst produce **the fruit of humility, the children of obedience**. Wherefore, as thou becamest the abode of the Trinity, thou hast illumined with thy miracles all who have recourse to thee with faith, granting healing in abundance unto all. O Sergius, our father, entreat Christ God, that He save our souls.

Of course, the leader's humility is not a guarantee of his followers' conduct, nor is it the only reason people will follow him. But as Christians, we must realize that no matter what we're doing, the goal is union with Christ and the path to that goal is the Cross. And we are fools if we think we can willingly get people to follow us on that path if we are not humbly doing so ourselves.

The above troparion shows some milestones on that path. First, we must receive Christ in our souls, which we do through the sacraments, prayer, setting our gaze on Him in our day-to-day lives, etc. Next, we must leave behind the turmoil of the world and settle in the wilderness. Most of us will never do this literally as St. Sergius did, but we all need to turn our hearts away from the world's turmoil. Some suggestions for doing this include saying the Jesus Prayer throughout the day; keeping set prayer times, both alone and with family; and turning off the television or whatever else is bombarding us. These things help to lay the groundwork of humility. As we seriously attempt to receive Christ and turn away from the turmoil of the world, we see how poorly we succeed, which helps produce humility. And, of course, the more we receive Christ and focus on Him, the humbler we become – after all, we can't be filled with Christ and full of ourselves at the same time! To the degree that we are willing to empty ourselves and be filled with Christ, we become abodes of the Trinity. Insofar as this is true, we increasingly become vessels through which God enlightens and heals others.



The sisters and some of our faithful friends

The conversation then turned to the question, “What does humble leadership look like in day-to-day life?” Aspects include being obedient to our own superiors; admitting our mistakes; seeking counsel; listening to subordinates; showing true concern for people, not just their output; using severity as a last resort, and even then, with compassion, etc. In short, to be humble leaders, we must see ourselves as servants to others, lead by example, and love those whom God has entrusted to us.

A comment was then made that we are ALL leaders. Whether we know it or not, people look at us and are influenced by what we do. So, whether we have obvious positions of leadership or not, we can all help lead others towards God by humbly following the path of loving service to those around us.



HERE & THERE

Monastic “Mini-Retreat”

After serving Liturgy here on July 8, Fr Nebojsa Pantic gave the sisters a mini-retreat on *How to Read the Desert Fathers*. Space does not permit a recap, but one hugely important point is that these sayings are meant to be pondered over and over and lived out in our lives. We are looking forward to the next installment – *How to Read the Desert Mothers!*



Don't worry. We did get to sit down for the lecture!

Have Bookstore, Will Travel

Lately, we have been getting more and more invitations to take our bookstore to festivals and other events at churches in the Bay and Sacramento areas. Many thanks to all of you who have invited us to your events, who kindly provide any help needed in setting up, and who buy our goods!



Now, I just need some customers

August 2015 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 5 pm Vigil (at Monastery)
2 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)			5 5 pm Vigil (at Monastery)	6 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>Transfiguration</u> (Visiting Clergy)		8 5 pm Vigil (at Monastery)
9 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>St. Herman of Alaska</u> NO FRIENDS MEETING (Visiting Clergy)					14 5 pm Vigil (at Monastery) followed by Lenten Potluck	15 9:00am Meeting of the Bishop/ Hierarchical Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) DORMITION (Monastery's Altar Feast) 5 pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish)
16 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish) 5 pm Vigil (at Monastery)	17 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>3rd Day of Dormition</u> (Visiting Clergy)	18 5 pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish)	19 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish) <u>Transfiguration</u> (OC)			22 5 pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish)
23 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish)				27 5 pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish)	28 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish) <u>Dormition</u> (OC) 5 pm Vigil (at Monastery)	29 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>Beheading of St. John the Baptist</u> (Visiting Clergy) 5 pm Vigil (both at Monastery)
30 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)	31					