



# Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – October 2011

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Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

In September, we are blessed with two Great Feasts – the Nativity of the Theotokos and the Elevation of the Cross. In the service for the Nativity of the Theotokos, there is a beautiful verse that speaks of Christ as the Hope of the Hopeless, Who causes His mother to spring forth from a barren root. Christ is the one sure Hope, but He is not the Hope of those who still have hope in themselves, nor those who do not know themselves to be barren – in our case, not of children but of holiness.

On the Elevation of the Cross (and, in fact, every day at matins), we ask God to grant us “the invincible trophy, the weapon of peace.” Ironically, though, we must turn this invincible weapon towards our own souls and allow it to kill everything within ourselves that is not at peace with God. Then, we will see for ourselves why the Cross is the weapon of peace and invincible trophy.

We live in very uncertain times. Many of us constantly agonize over the economy, the war on terror, the deterioration of the moral fiber of our culture ... Yet while we still have hope in our goodness and ability to bring peace, our hopes will constantly be dashed and our peace remain insecure. However, to the degree that we come to terms with our own barrenness and our own lack of peace with God, we will be bearers of Christ and His peace to the world around us.

with love in Christ,  
*Mother Melania  
and the community  
of Holy Assumption Monastery*

## HAWAII ICON!!

On Saturday August 27, our community had the great blessing of a visit from the Hawaii Myrrh-streaming icon. After an akathist at the monastery, we processed over to St. Simeon Church (probably a first in Calistoga and certainly quite a sight to our fellow Calistogans!) and celebrated a molieben before the icon had to depart.

We thank Reader Nectarios Yangson (guardian of the icon), Fr. James Corazza (San Francisco), and their drivers for bringing the icon; Fr. Alexander Krassovsky (Santa Rosa), Fr. Mo'een Hanna (Rohnert Park), and Fr. George Washburn (Orinda) for celebrating the akathist; and the many faithful from San Francisco to Sacramento who came to worship with us. Most of all, we thank our Lord and the Theotokos for their care for our little community here in Calistoga.



*Entering the chapel*



*Singing the akathist*



*Anointing the faithful*



*Processing to St. Simeon*



*Venerating the icon*

## A NEW BENCHMARK

Next time you come to visit our bunnies, you can sit down and contemplate them at your leisure, thanks to the new fence and bench built for us by Thomas Prager (pictured on the far right of the first two pictures below) and Boy Scout Troop 18 as Thomas' Eagle Scout project. We are thankful for the beautiful bench and are looking forward to more interactions with this fine group of young men.



*How deep did you say this hole had to be?*



*Ready for anything!*



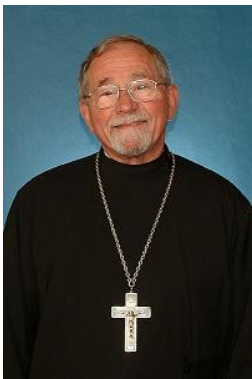
*The moms have the final say on quality control*



*Our new bench!!*



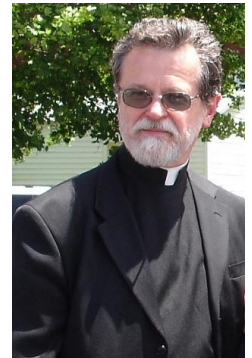
## A VERY SPECIAL SUNDAY - OCTOBER 2



God has blessed us abundantly on Sunday, October 2. Fr. Thomas Hopko will be in the area over the weekend for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Holy Protection/St. Seraphim community in Santa Rosa and he will be serving Divine Liturgy at the monastery on Sunday morning. He will also give a brief talk at the meal directly following the Liturgy.

Then, at 4 PM, our regular Friends Meeting will start with a talk by Fr. Deacon Gregory Roeber (please see attached flyer for details). They are both wonderful speakers, and we are grateful to God for His care for us in bringing them here.

*Left - Fr. Thomas Hopko*



*Right - Fr. Deacon Gregory Roeber*



## SEPTEMBER FRIENDS

On Sunday September 4, Vincent Rossi gave the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of his series on noetic prayer. Real prayer is body, mind, and spirit united in one energy before God. Everything before that is spiritual "calisthenics," designed to help us achieve true prayer. True prayer is communion of the mind with God, but the mind needs to be in a right state for that to happen, and because we are embodied beings, we must confront the passions of soul and body if we are to be attentive in prayer.

To do this, we must learn to govern with the attentive mind the two passible powers of the soul - anger and desire. These are not inherently bad (one should be angry over sin and desire God), but become passions when we focus on ourselves and not God. The person with true prayer so governs these powers that his mind is free from thoughts and images connected to the passions.



*Wait, I can't write that fast!*

If we spend our days focusing on ourselves and worldly concerns, we cannot expect to pray well. So, if we truly wish to pray, we must do nothing that is opposed to prayer so that God can truly draw near us. And thankfully, when we fail, there is repentance!

We are all grateful for this wonderful talk and eagerly looking forward to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final part in November.



*Fr. Lawrence introduces Vincent*

Announcing  
**THE OCTOBER 2011 MEETING**  
of the  
**FRIENDS OF HOLY ASSUMPTION MONASTERY**

*Sunday October 2, 2011*

**Prayer, Fasting, and . . . :**

*Reflections on Charity and Righteousness  
in the Orthodox Tradition*

Presented by

***Deacon Gregory Roeber***

*Professor of Early Modern History and Religious Studies,  
Penn State University*



4:00 PM – Presentation

5:00 PM – Vespers

6:00 PM – Potluck

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**November 6** Meeting – Vincent Rossi, independent scholar, Part 3 of 3-part series on contemplative prayer.

**December 4** Meeting – Fr. Lawrence and Mat. Ann Margitich (St. Seraphim Church, Santa Rosa) will give the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the talk on their pilgrimage – focusing this time on Constantinople

**January 8** Meeting – speaker and topic not yet determined

**February 12** Meeting – Archimandrite Irenei (Steenberg) will speak on an as yet undetermined topic

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL (707) 942-6244

or EMAIL [sisters.holyassumptionmonastery@gmail.com](mailto:sisters.holyassumptionmonastery@gmail.com)

**STARTING IN JANUARY, FRIENDS MEETINGS WILL MOVE TO THE 2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF THE MONTH**

## October 2011 Schedule for **Holy Assumption Monastery (Blue)** & **St. Simeon Parish (Red)**

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b>  5:00pm Vigil (Monastery)
<b>2</b> 9:10am Hours /Divine Liturgy (Monastery)  <b>4:00pm</b> <b>FRIENDS</b> <b>MEETING</b>			<b>5</b> 5:00pm Vigil (Monastery)	<b>6</b> 8:40am Hours /Divine Liturgy (Monastery)  <u>St. Innocent &amp;</u> <u>Apostle Thomas</u>		<b>8</b>  5:00pm Vigil (St Simeon Church)
<b>9</b>  9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy  (St Simeon Church)						<b>15</b>  5:00pm Vigil (St Simeon Church)
					<b>14</b> 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (St Simeon Church) Slavonic Liturgy  <u>Protection of the</u> <u>Mother of God</u> (Old Style)	
<b>16</b>  9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy  (St Simeon Church)		<b>18</b> 8:40am Hours /Divine Liturgy (Monastery)  <u>Apostle &amp;</u> <u>Evangelist</u> <u>Luke</u>				<b>22</b>  5:00pm Vigil (Monastery)
<b>23</b> 11:00am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (St Demetrios Chapel, Macedonian Park)  <u>St Demetrios</u>						<b>29</b>  5:00pm Reader's Vigil (Monastery)
<b>30</b> 9:10am Hours /Divine Liturgy (Monastery)  Visiting Clergy	<b>31</b>					