



# Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – July 2013

1519 Washington St., Calistoga, CA 94515

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

Website: <http://www.holyassumptionmonastery.com/>



Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

A recent article in AARP magazine strongly encouraged job-hunting Baby Boomers to extend their internet prowess far beyond checking job boards. According to this article, the chances of getting a job are slim for those without a strong presence on social media such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. This is just one of many ways in which the internet has radically changed communications. We can Skype for free with friends on the other side of the globe; find out about major (and incredibly minor events) while they're still happening; get a rough (true – often VERY rough) translation of a foreign website; look up obscure quotes in the blink of an eye ... The list goes on and on.

The funny – and sad – thing is that with such communication tools at our fingertips, we so often fail miserably to communicate with the people right next to us. How often have you listened to two siblings or co-workers, or a husband and wife recount their sides of an argument and wondered whether they were on the same planet when the argument occurred!? Most of the time – despite radically different views of what happened and who was at fault – nobody is lying. Often, both are in tears wondering why the other person could possibly have treated them the way they did. So, in one sense, our ability to communicate has grown staggeringly. In another sense, it seems as if it's never been worse.

Our major communication problem is not the language we speak or the particular words that we use, but our failure to know the Word of God and to speak the language of heaven – self-sacrificing love. No amount of technology will solve this problem. The good news is that God has solved it for us. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit reversed the curse of Babel – the division into separate tongues – when the apostles preached the Gospel and all present heard it in their own native tongues. True, it's not likely that we will experience this reversal of the curse of Babel in this particular way. But if we live a life of repentance and humility, God's Holy Spirit will abide deeply in us and we will live in true Christian union with one another and communicate the one thing needful – the Word of God.

with love in Christ,

*Mother Melania  
and the community  
of Holy Assumption Monastery*

## ***FARMERS' MARKET – plus!***

It's been about two months since we started our booth at the Farmers' Market, and we are doing a steady business. We continue to be thankfully amazed at the kindness shown to us by the market manager, the other vendors (who have given us many good tips on streamlining our booth), and the customers. In addition, Cal-Mart has started selling some of our products, and we are talking with a local restaurant about doing some baking for them. Stay tuned for updates!



*Almost sold out!*

## ***ZOO UPDATE – Monkee See, Monkee Do?***



*Monkee & his owner -  
Demetra*

No, we have not added a monkey to our zoo! That won't happen until after the sisters convince Mother Melania to let them get a dog! We did, however, have a guest named "Monkee." Monkee is a green-checked conure who came to visit his conure relatives Oscar, and Pixley and his more distant relatives Baby the Parakeet and Petie the African Grey Parrot. Oscar and Pixley were their normal vocal selves. Baby chirped sweetly. Petie, however, seemed less certain about the visitor. It is probably a coincidence, but shortly thereafter we heard Petie say, "That's pretty far out there!"

## ***JUNE FRIENDS MEETING***



*Robin Wellman*

On June 16, Robin Wellman from Fort Ross gave a lovely Friends' talk about what life was like in Ross Colony – the people who lived in and around Fort Ross when the Russian American Company was operating it (1812-1841). When she started working there 23 years ago, relatively little information was available on what life was like. A combination of archeological digs and access through the internet to others who have studied Fort Ross has given a much fuller picture.

One major misconception was that the colony was exclusively Russian. In fact, Russians were a minority among the men. The majority were always the native Alaskan men, who as skilled hunters of sea otter were the major work force. Also present were creoles, native Californians, and even some Hawaiians. There were considerably fewer women among the residents. Many of them were native Californians who were married to the Russian or native Alaskan men. The Church actively encouraged these marriages, for the sake of morality and for the welfare of the children. Another main point Robin made was that the relationship of the Russians to the local populations was unusually benign. Everyone who worked for them was paid (true, the pay was not much), and the treaty that the Russians made with the chiefs of the three local villages is the only European/native people treaty in California that was actually kept. Nobody was forced to change religion. Unlike many native Americans, who were decimated by disease and abuse, the Kashaya are still a vibrant people who still have many of their traditional ways.

Recently, a delegation of Kashaya and Fort Ross employees went to St. Petersburg, Russia, to a museum which has the world's largest collection of Kashaya artifacts. They were treated with great respect and a bond of friendship was formed between the modern Kashaya and Russians. The curator of the Kashaya collection had tears of joy when one of the Kashaya men told him that several artifacts were mislabeled and then proceeded to give the correct use and local names for the artifacts. Up till then, those who studied these artifacts had just had to guess at the uses of things because they had never spoken to someone who knew. The curator said that he would never look at these artifacts in the same way again. Before they were just things, but now they were living and had a history. In like manner, Robin expressed a hope that this recounting of everyday life at Ross Colony would help us appreciate more the common humanity that binds us all together. We thank Robin for the reminder and look forward to future talks in which we can learn more about this important part of our history.



## ***ST. NICHOLAS HOUSE UPDATE***



*At last – a really good excuse for a messy house!*

The remodeling of the bathroom of St. Nicholas House is coming along very nicely. We hope to be finished by mid-July with this portion of the remodel, which includes not only the new bathroom, but the new hallway between the bathroom and the sisters' cells. We are very grateful to everyone who contributed time and finances for this project. Special thanks go to Paul Coates for all his help and advice. With this phase nearly done, we will be doing more fund-raising in order to start the next part of the project. Details to come soon!



## ***NEXT STEPS***

On Thursday June 6, Archbishop BENJAMIN presided as several sisters took their next step in their monastic lives. Novice Theodosia received her apostolnik (the nun's head covering). Novices Xenia and Ann were tonsured ryassaphors (i.e. wearer of the ryassa – the monastic 'coat'). This step is analogous to betrothal. Sister Mary, who had been a ryassaphor, was professed as a stavrophor (i.e. cross-bearer). On profession, she received the name Mother Tabitha. If becoming a ryassaphor is analogous to betrothal, becoming a stavrophor is analogous to marriage. However, the main image in this service is not the bride of Christ, but the return of the prodigal son. May our merciful God grant these four sisters and all of us to travel the road back to Him with humble love and gratitude.



*Our newly tonsured sisters with Mother Melania*

## July 2013 Schedule for Holy Assumption Monastery & St. Simeon Church

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

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 10:00am Divine Liturgy <b>Fort Ross</b>	5	6 6:00pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish)
7 9:40am Hours/Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish)	8	9 6:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)	10 5:40am Hours/Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)  <u>Ven. Anthony of the Kiev Caves</u>	11	12 9:30am Meeting of the Archbishop/Divine Liturgy (Ss Peter and Paul Parish, Santa Rosa)  <b>Ss Peter and Paul (OC)</b>	13 6:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)
14 9:40am Hours/Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)  4:00pm <b>FRIENDS MEETING</b> (at monastery)	15	16 6:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)	17 5:40am Hours/Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)  <u>Royal Passionbearers</u>	18	19	20 6:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)
21 9:40am Hours/Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)  9:00am Divine Liturgy  <b>Holy Virgin of Kazan Church, Guerneville</b>	22	23 6:00pm Vigil (at Monastery)	24 5:40am Hours/Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)  <u>Ss. Boris &amp; Gleb</u>	25	26	27 6:00pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish)
28 9:40am Hours/Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish)	29	30	31	<b>Notes:</b> Fr. Joakim will be serving Liturgy at Holy Virgin of Kazan Church on Sunday July 21 – their patronal feast. There will also be Liturgy at the monastery, with visiting clergy.		

*Announcing*  
**THE JULY 2013 MEETING**  
*of the*  
**FRIENDS OF HOLY ASSUMPTION MONASTERY**

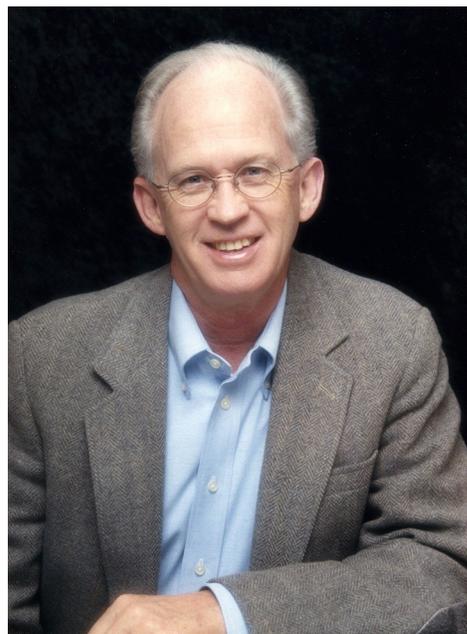
**Sunday July 14, 2013**

**MONASTICISM IN THE  
JUDEAN DESERT –  
*Hearing God in the Silence***

Presented by

***Dale Liid***

*Adjunct Faculty Member of Fuller Theological Seminary, Retired*



4:00 PM – Presentation

5:00 PM – Vespers

6:00 PM – Potluck

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**August 15 (Thursday) - Dormition** – please join us for our altar feast!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL (707) 942-6244  
or EMAIL [sisters.holyassumptionmonastery@gmail.com](mailto:sisters.holyassumptionmonastery@gmail.com)