



Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – June 2015

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Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

The other day, we passed a restaurant with a “reopening soon” sign. Often, such signs add “Under new management.” The point of the addition, one assumes, is to assure customers that things will be different this time around. Yet, not TOO different. It is the same restaurant, in the same place, with many of the same workers. Still, it will be different – and BETTER – because of the new management.

As this is being written, Pentecost is around the corner and after Pentecost, “regular” time. We can go back to this “regular” time with the same old management and suffer the same old failures, OR we can take this opportunity to “sell out” and put our lives under “new management.” If we do so, the day-to-day aspects of our lives will probably not change much, but everything will be incalculably different because of the “new management” of the Holy Spirit Who comes to guide us and live in us. For this “new management” is really the “original management” of the One Who created us and loves us. As we go back to “regular” time, may we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us each step of the way and make us what we were meant to be!

with love in Christ,

*Mother Melania
and the community
of Holy Assumption Monastery*

ZOO UPDATE – Things are hopping at the zoo!

It's been an eventful month for our zoo. After Pulgita died, we were all ready to adopt a little bunny named Chiquita as a friend for Fiver. To our dismay, Fiver died unexpectedly, and we had to disinfect the bunny hutches before getting Chiquita. Then, since SHE needed a friend, we found Ricochet (who is much handsomer than the cartoon character!) at the Napa Animal Shelter and brought him home. Little Chiquita, to our surprise, has a Napoleon complex and is trying to be the alpha. It remains to be seen whether she'll succeed, but we're glad to report that she and Ricochet DO have their calm moments!

On the bird front, Cha Cha moved into Pixley's aviary in early May. Pixley is without any doubt the alpha, and for the first few days, Cha Cha was probably thinking “Let me out of here!” But now that their order is clear, they are getting along famously and Cha Cha is delighted to have a much bigger space to roam around in.



*Okay, Chiquita, you can come up here
if you promise to be nice!!!*



*Repeat after me, Cha Cha,
“Pixley is the top bird!”*



*Mother Anna and Rocky –
Senior citizens unite!*

The latest – and by far the oldest – new member of our zoo is Rocky, an almost 19-year-old cat who has been living at the local veterinary clinic. His age and his need to be a completely indoor cat (as he is front de-clawed) made it a bit difficult to find him a home. So, the Wine Country Animal Lovers (who have very kindly been helping us out with food and other needs for the critters) asked if we could foster him. Rocky is now happily spending most of his time in Mother Anna's cell, where he is petted and fussed over as much as he can desire.

And that, we are happy to say, is ALL the zoo news – for this month anyway!

MAY 2015 FRIENDS' MEETING

Recently, a good friend sent us a video called “A message of the People of the Cross to ISIS” (http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2rfomy_who-would-dare-to-love-isis-a-letter-from-the-people-of-the-cross_webcam). The message is of astonishing love and forgiveness springing from a humble recognition of our own sinfulness. This video brought to mind some words of the recently departed Fr. Roman Braga, who, in Communist Romania, lived through some of the most horrendous and coldly calculated psychological and physical tortures that have ever been devised. Fr. Roman's words were to the effect that when people wrong us a little, we respond in anger, but when they wrong us unimaginably, we can only love and forgive them. Obviously, it is possible to REFUSE to love and forgive those who have horribly wronged us. In such circumstances, however, we are confronted with the stark choice of descending into demonic hatred ourselves or truly “letting go and letting God.”

Most of us, not yet having faced such horrors, struggle with varying degrees of success to forgive those around us. So, our discussion centered on how to get better at forgiving each other. Suggestions included remembering that God forgives us according to how we forgive others; recounting our own sins (if we can do so without destructive self-hatred) and the other person's virtues; praying consistently “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on _____, and through their holy prayers have mercy on me a sinner”; doing good deeds in secret for the person; having a vital prayer life (which puts in perspective all the seemingly huge hurts we have suffered), etc. It is also vital to be responsible to somebody – usually our spiritual father or mother – as we implement these changes; otherwise, we are likely to fall back into our old attitudes.

We ended with the line from the Paschal stichera “Let us forgive all by the Resurrection, and so let us cry 'Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.'” If we entered even a little into the true joy of the Resurrection, much of what we find impossible to forgive will become light as chaff. So, living a life directed in thankfulness and joy towards the Resurrected Christ is essential to true forgiveness and makes our seemingly unbearable loads to be lighter than a feather.



Singing for our supper



HERE & THERE

Our bookstore sisters have been getting a workout lately. Within two weeks, the sisters have been at three Greek Festivals – Ascension Cathedral, Oakland; Nativity of Christ Church, Novato; and St. Anna Church, Roseville. We are thankful to the priests and organizers and everyone at the festivals for their warm welcomes!

Ascension Cathedral, Oakland



We'll be right with you!

Nativity of Christ Church, Novato



Two Mynah hats and Mr. Cool



Honey, honey, everywhere!

St. Anna Church, Roseville



We're opening WHEN?!?!

And the Farmers' Market is still going strong!



How many more trays did you say we still have to put out?



Yes, we sell healthy stuff ...



... but not ALL healthy stuff

June 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 |
|--|---|--|---|-----|-----|---|
| 31 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy, followed by Kneeling Vespers (at St Simeon Parish) PENTECOST 5 pm Matins (at Monastery) | 1 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) HOLY SPIRIT DAY (Visiting Clergy) | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 5 pm Vigil (at Monastery) |
| 7 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) | 8 | 9 5 pm Vigil (at Monastery) | 10 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>Hieromartyr Timothy of Prussa & Metropolitan John Maximovitch of Tobolsk</u> (Visiting Clergy) | 11 | 12 | 13 5 pm Vigil (at Monastery) |
| 14 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) NO FRIENDS MEETING | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 5 pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish) |
| 21 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish) | 22 | 23 5 pm Vigil – (at Monastery) | 24 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>Nativity of St. John the Baptist</u> (Visiting Clergy) | 25 | 26 | 27 5 pm Vigil (at St Simeon Parish) |
| 28 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at St Simeon Parish) 5 pm Vigil (at Monastery) | 29 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery) <u>Ss. Peter & Paul</u> (Visiting Clergy) | 30 | REMINDER: Retreat on June 27 (See Flyer for Details) | | | |

Sat, June 27th



PRACTICAL
LESSONS FROM
THE LIVES OF SS.
PETER & PAUL

With Mother Melania, Superior

Holy Assumption Monastery

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Calistoga, CA 94515

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9am Session 1

10:15 Session 2

**12:15 pm
Akathist**

1 pm Lunch

2 pm Session 3

No fee

Limited

Capacity!

Please RSVP