



Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – April 2017

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Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

In the former Soviet Union, a local party official set out to convince the people that there is no God. After an hour or more, he allowed the priest a one-sentence reply. The priest cried out “Christ is risen!” to which the people joyfully responded “Truly He is risen!” To the party official, no doubt, this incident was proof of appalling superstition and ignorance. The Christians, though, knew what the party official did not. Truth is not a set of facts (still less is Truth whatever I happen to think it is). Rather, Truth is a Person – the Lord Jesus Christ Who was crucified and buried and rose again for our sake. Knowing this, the Christians, at the risk of torture and death, bravely confessed Him as the Truth.

In the *Lives of the Saints*, it often happens that the persecutors accuse the martyrs of insanity. The martyrs typically hurl the accusation back at the persecutors – No, YOU are the insane ones. At first glance, the persecutors seem to be correct. Who in their right mind would willingly undergo terrible tortures and death? Yet the joy, humility, and love of the martyrs loudly proclaims that THEY are the ones in their right minds. Their gaze is fixed so firmly on Christ that their torments are to be scoffed at, or rather, to be welcomed as gifts to bring to the One Who freely suffered for them. In short, those who most know deeply the Truth – Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Man, crucified and risen – are the only sane ones for they are in tune with the most fundamental reality. As we enter Holy Week, may we willingly and joyfully share in Christ's sufferings that we may also share in His glorious Resurrection.

with love in Christ,

*Mother Melania
and the community
of Holy Assumption Monastery*



Can I put this on my resume?

ZOO UPDATE – Rabbit Run Refurb

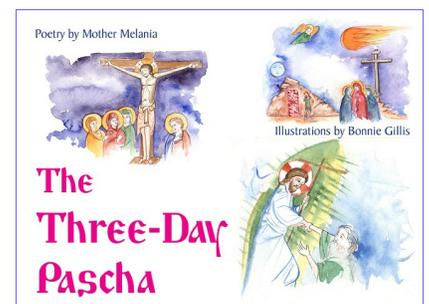
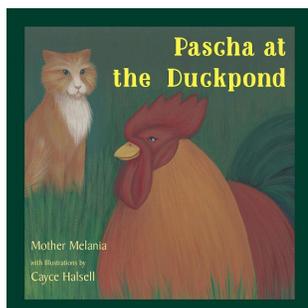
We are hoping to start some major renovations soon – including the long-awaited and much needed work on St. Nicholas House. In the meantime, the bunnies suggested that we start on THEIR abode. So, our resident interior decorators have already started beautifying the run, and the roofers are eager to get started. Now, if only St. Nicholas House were this easy!



They should have hired professionals!

CHILDREN'S BOOKS NOW AVAILABLE

The Three-Day Pascha and *Pascha at the Duck Pond* are now available! Both the print and Kindle versions are available on Amazon. Print versions are also available through our bookstore. For orders or inquiries, please email bookstore@holyassumptionmonastery.com or phone us at (707) 942-6244.



SPRING RETREAT

At our Saturday March 11 retreat, Fr. Philip Tolbert spoke on “The Divine Scriptures of the Orthodox Church: Reading the Bible as an Orthodox Christian.”



Fr. Philip Tolbert –

The first session focused on the importance of having “a standard measure” by which to guide our reading of Scripture. For example, a “cubit” was traditionally the distance from one’s elbow to the tip of the middle finger. If everyone uses his own cubit while trying to do a common work, disaster results. So, where do we find a standard measure by which to study Scripture? Three things are necessary: 1) the Canon of Scripture (which books were included and which were not), 2) the Rule of Faith (the positive content of “the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints” Jude 1:3 – the Nicene Creed being an authoritative summary of this), and 3) the Apostolic Preaching (the word translated “preaching” is kerygma – an official proclamation by an official herald. The Apostles being Christ’s heralds, all true Christian teaching must square with what they taught). Christians who focus on the first of these without knowing the second and the third cannot properly interpret Scripture.

In the second session, Father examined the apostolic kerygma (i.e. what the apostles and evangelists actually preached about Christ), primarily through the Gospel according to St. Luke. From the birth narrative to the end of his Gospel, St. Luke presents Christ as the fulfillment of Scriptural prophesy (which to the early Christians meant the writings of the Old Testament) and, indeed, the One Whom Scripture is all about (Luke 24:27, 44-45) . The earliest followers of Christ were themselves Jews, and their disagreement with the “unbelieving Jews” was at first a “family” disagreement on how to understand the Scriptures. The apostles and their followers saw in Scripture types (true historical persons and events that foreshadow Christ and in which He is present in a hidden way). This revelation of Christ in the Scriptures was NOT obvious before the Incarnation, and afterward many refused to believe. Even those who did believe could not fully understand until Christ opened their minds to the meaning of the Scripture (Lk 24:44-48) and sent the Holy Spirit, Who would bring them into all truth. So, the Scripture is not just about Christ, but only understandable when read with and in relation to Him.



Good thing we didn't have to fit one more chair in!

The last session switched focus from the Scripture OF the Church to Scripture IN the Church, i.e. the place of Scripture in the Church and how it is used. Scripture use in the Church is based on the ancient practice of psalmody (which is why so much of our services are sung), Scripture is read daily, there is an established lectionary (certain Scriptures read at certain times), the Gospel is proclaimed as often as possible by the clergy at the services of the Church, the message of Scripture is both to everyone and to each person individually, etc. Fr. Philip stressed the Patristic teaching that we cannot understand Scripture without striving to live according to the commandments and to have pure minds and souls. Studying God’s Word must be an encounter with Christ, the Word of God. Thus, it is an integral part of the Christian life. It also follows that studying Scripture cannot be a matter of private interpretation (2 Peter 1:10) but must be consistent with the Canon of Scripture, the Rule of Faith, and the Apostolic Preaching as it has been consistently proclaimed and lived in the Orthodox Church. So, Father finished the retreat by exhorting us to live and pray in such a way as to seek, to knock, and to ask of Christ that the door of understanding the Divine Scriptures might be opened to us by the Holy Spirit (cf. Mt 7:7, Lk 11:9).



It's always helpful to borrow a young pair of eyes!

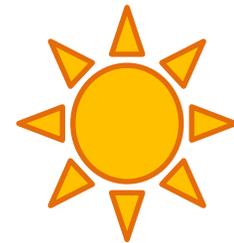
Dear Friends of the Holy Assumption Monastery and Fort Ross SHP,

Well - this is IT!!! I am writing to you to share with you the news of my departure from Fort Ross after 27 years. I have loved every minute of my work which hasn't been 'work' but a big part of my joy in life. It has been an honor to work with thousands of kids, and hundreds of different teachers, many wonderful partners, and volunteers who bring life to this place and colleagues from around the world and many members of the Russian Orthodox Church.

I have become very close to the church and those who bring the love of God to Fort Ross and into our daily lives. I want to thank Holy Assumption Monastery, the Mothers and Sisters who have blessed my life in so many ways.

I am hoping you will join me at my going away party April 22.

- 10:30 Prayers in the Chapel**
- 11:00 Kedry/Kitka songs and dance**
- 11:45 Opening blessing (Lorin and Violet)**
- 12:00 Presentations by CSP and Friends, and Bench dedication**
- 1:00 Potluck**
- 2:00 Kedry/Kitka games, dance, song.**



It would mean a lot to me if you could make it so I may thank you for being a part of my life here at Fort Ross.

Love you all dearly - Robin Joy Wellman

P.S. - if you have any questions please direct them to me at robinjoy.wellman@parks.ca.gov. Thank you.



April 2017 Schedule for Holy Assumption Monastery & St. Simeon Church
Monastery contact info - (707) 942-6244; email - sisters@holyassumptionmonastery.com;
website - <http://www.holyassumptionmonastery.com>

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Due to necessary repairs at St. Simeon Church, all services in April will be at the Monastery, except for Agape Vespers at Macedonian Park						1 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy 5 pm Vigil <u>Akathist Saturday</u>
2 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>St. Mary of Egypt</u> <u>Sunday</u>			6:00pm Pre- sanctified Liturgy		1:00pm Pre- sanctified Liturgy	8 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy 5 pm Vigil <u>Lazarus Saturday</u>
9 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy 6pm Bridegroom Matins <u>Palm Sunday</u>	10 9am Pre- sanctified Liturgy 6pm Bridegroom Matins <u>Great and Holy</u> <u>Monday</u>	11 9am Pre- sanctified Liturgy 6pm Bridegroom Matins <u>Great and Holy</u> <u>Tuesday</u>	12 9am Pre- sanctified Liturgy 6pm Holy Thursday Matins <u>Great and Holy</u> <u>Wednesday</u>	13 9am Vesperal Liturgy 6pm Matins w/ 12 Passion Gospels <u>Great and Holy</u> <u>Thursday</u>	14 7am Royal Hours 1pm Vespers 6pm Lamentations Matins <u>Great and Holy</u> <u>Friday</u>	15 10 am Vesperal Liturgy 11:30pm Midnight Office <u>Great and Holy</u> <u>Saturday</u>
16 12am Paschal Matins/Divine Liturgy <u>Pascha</u> 12:00pm Agape Vespers (Macedonian Park)					9:00am Paschal Matins/Divine Liturgy	22 5 pm Vigil
23 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Thomas Sunday</u>						29 5 pm Vigil
30 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Myrrhbearers'</u> <u>Sunday</u>	SAVE THE DATE – Saturday, June 24. Gospel of Mark Workshop Reader John Burnett					

NOTE: Our schedule sometimes changes unexpectedly. Please check our website or the recorded message on our telephone for last minute changes.