



# Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – August 2017

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Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

One of the steps in converting our garage into a bookstore was to encase the structure in Tyvek Home Wrap® – a weather-resistant barrier that keeps rain out but allows water vapor through, thus protecting the structure from rot (Thank you, Wikipedia!). Now that the structure is complete, the Home Wrap is invisible, yet it remains there, silently and unobtrusively protecting the building.

In a culture that has gone crazy in its quest for self-fulfillment (not to mention self-aggrandizement!), hardly anybody values the people doing the humble, but crucial tasks that protect our homes. But God does, and so does His Church. And while nobody is likely to write hymns in praise of Tyvek Home Wrap, the universe is full of the praise of the humble and joyful followers of Jesus Christ. Denying themselves for love of God and neighbor, for that very reason they become great. Nowhere is this seen so clearly as in the Theotokos. Claiming no glory for herself, she lives to glorify her Son and protect us, His Church. And all generations, in turn, call her blessed.

As we approach the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, may we give thanks to her Son and our God for His holy Mother and for all His saints who silently and invisibly protect HIS home, the Church. May He grant us the grace to do likewise!

with love in Christ,

*Mother Melania  
and the community  
of Holy Assumption Monastery*

## ZOO UPDATE – Aviary Overhaul

Following the disappearing act of the conures into the roof space of the aviary (see June's newsletter), both aviary rooms received some much-needed attention. The holes the conures had worked in the walls and ceiling were patched, and two of the sisters rewired the aviary lighting. Now both bird rooms have overhead fixtures connected to the wall switch outside the aviary, and the connecting wires are inside PVC piping to protect them from curious beaks (and to protect curious birds from electrocution!). Full-spectrum lighting is very important when caring for birds: their metabolisms depend on exposure to a wide range of light waves, a much wider range than normal light bulbs provide. Our birds have had full-spectrum fixtures for several years, but one had stopped working, and both needed to be relocated from the walls to the ceilings.

The rewiring project was especially exciting for Petie: there are few things he enjoys more than cleaning or construction happening inside the aviary! He was so interested in the work, in fact, that he stole tools and so persistently pushed his beak into the workspace that we had to move him to an outside cage for the day. Meanwhile, all of the birds received new toys and some rearranging of perches to freshen up their space. Since then, they have shown more interest in chewing wood toys than wood walls, and we want to keep it that way!



*How does this work?*



*Hmm. Not quite.*



*I think I've got it!*



*Would someone hand me a screw?*

## GOFUND ME CAMPAIGN FOR REPAIRS AT ST. SIMEON CHURCH

For several months now, St. Simeon Church has been unusable due to plumbing and other issues. Because the parish has insufficient funds to cover the costs, a loan must be secured to do the most pressing repairs, but it will need to be repaid in a most expedient manner. So, a GoFundMe Campaign has been started to help cover the expenses. For more information or to donate, please go to [www.gofundme.com/st-simeon-of-verhotursk-church](http://www.gofundme.com/st-simeon-of-verhotursk-church). Any contribution will help and be most greatly appreciated. Thank you!

## ***INSTALLATION OF ABBESS***



*Abbess Victoria assists Archbishop Benjamin in giving Mother Melania her abbatial cross*

On July 3, Archbishop BENJAMIN installed Mother Melania as Abbess of Holy Assumption Monastery. We were humbled and honored to be joined by so many of our brothers and sisters in Christ as we started this new chapter in our lives. It's impossible to name everyone who came out to support us, but in addition to His Eminence, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to two people. First to Abbess Victoria, who traveled from Southern California to join us and has guided us all these years. Second to Father Lawrence Margitich, who, as our chaplain, has wisely and patiently pastored us since we arrived in Calistoga. We are grateful beyond words!



*Our family*



## ***LAVENDER HARVEST***

How do you harvest lavender when you have none? Simple – you avail yourself of the kindness of generous friends who DO have lavender! We have a great abundance of generous friends. Every year, more and more people offer us their lavender to harvest. In fact, this year we had so many friends offering us their lavender that we were wondering how we could possibly harvest it all. How grateful we were when a hardy work group from St. Katherine Mission in Kirkland, WA came to our rescue, gamely braving the heat, terrain, insects, etc. to help us produce the biggest yield we've ever had. Then, our friend Wally at SonomAroma did his usual fine job of distilling the lavender to give us a fresh new batch of essential oil and hydrosol for our bookstore.

Just as we were relaxing from a job well done, though, some new friends offered us more lavender than we harvested this entire year! We didn't have the manpower to accept, but they graciously extended the offer for next year. So, if you're not doing anything next July, give us a call. We'll keep you busy!



*Did anyone remember to bring the scythes?*



*We do let our helpers rest every so often*



*And that's just a part of the yield!*



*Wally at his lab sink – ready for anything, even nuns!*



## ***BOOKSTORE AND MORE***

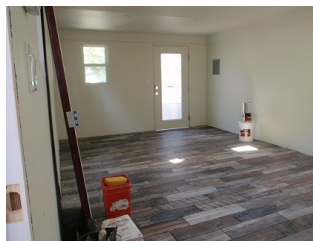
As this is being written, the final touches have been made on the interior of the bookstore, and we are starting the moving process. We hope to have the bookstore up and running within a week, and have every expectation of its being fully functional before our Dormition festivities. If that weren't enough good news, several of our parishioners took on the long overdue task of making a permanent covering for our deck. We've been watching with delight as the structure materializes before our eyes. At the rate it's going, it is likely to be finished before this newsletter is. We are thankful to God and to our friends for the love they shower on us. May our bookstore and newly improved deck be used to the glory of God and the help and comfort of our friends and neighbors for many years!



*This WAS our garage. REALLY!*



*Tape keeps nuns out - but not cats!*



*Do you think we'll ever get it this clean again?*



*Did anybody notice that there's a tree growing through the middle of the deck?*



*It doubles as exercise equipment!*

## August 2017 Schedule for Holy Assumption Monastery & St. Simeon Church

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	31 6:00pm Vigil	1 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy  <u>Procession of the Holy Cross</u>  (Dormition Fast begins)	2	3	4	5  5:00pm Vigil
6  9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy  <u>TRANSFIGURATION</u>	7	8  6:00pm Vigil	9  8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy  <u>St. Herman of Alaska</u>	10	11	12  5:00pm Vigil
13  9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	14  5:00pm Vigil followed by Lenten meal	15 9:00am Meeting of the Bishop/ Hierarchical Divine Liturgy  <u>DORMITION (Monastery's Altar Feast)</u>	16  6:00pm Lamentations Vigil  (at Monastery)	17  8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy (at Monastery)  <u>3<sup>rd</sup> Day of Dormition</u>	18	19  5:00pm Vigil
20  9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	21	22	23	24	25	26  5:00pm Vigil
27  9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	28  6:00pm Vigil	29 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy  <u>Beheading of St. John the Baptist</u>	30	31	Due to major repairs at St. Simeon Church, all services are at the Monastery until further notice.	

**SAVE THE DATE: Saturday November 5**

**Incarnating Christ in the Midst of Our World**

led by **Abbot Tryphon** of All-Merciful Saviour Monastery, Vashon Island, WA