



Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – June 2017

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Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

As we draw near to Pentecost, we've been reflecting on the Kontakion of the feast:

When the most High came down and confused the tongues, He divided the nations; But when he distributed the tongues of fire He called all to unity. Therefore, with one voice, we glorify the All-holy Spirit.

The beginning of the hymn references the Tower of Babel. In response to mankind's attempt to attain heaven by our own power, God divided human languages, thus limiting the harm we can do by working together for evil purposes. But in His love for mankind, He did not desire this division to last forever. So, at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down as tongues of flame upon the heads of the disciples, then sent them out to preach. Miraculously, those gathered from all over the known world heard the Gospel in their native tongues.

Mighty miracle though this was, it is but a picture of a greater and more beautiful miracle – our unity in Christ. This miracle requires not merely the overcoming of language and culture barriers, but of a far more profound communication barrier – our deep-seated selfishness. This is possible only through grace and, for most of us, will be the work of a lifetime. Yet to the degree we do this, we will see the destruction of the barriers we thought insurmountable – whether they be language, culture, personality differences, or anything else – as bit by bit we conform our own lives to the self-sacrificing love revealed in Christ, the Wisdom and Power of God.

with love in Christ,

Mother Melania

and the community

of Holy Assumption Monastery

ZOO UPDATE – Hide and Seek?

We have learned the hard way that parrots are master chewers – termites have nothing on them! All our parrots have always exhibited astonishing perseverance in chewing anything and everything in their aviaries. But the conures decided to do the African Greys one better and chew THROUGH the ceiling of their aviary. So, one day, their caretaker had an unpleasant shock when she went in and couldn't find Cha Cha anywhere. Then, she saw Cha Cha's head peering through a hole in the ceiling. It took a little while before repairs could commence, and in the meantime, Pixley decided to join Cha Cha. Pixley, not being at all immune to the call of breakfast, came out immediately. But Cha Cha held out so long that we began to fear that she'd met an unhappy end. It was with great relief that we found that she just was playing hide and seek far longer than our rules had stipulated. So, now the hole is boarded up, and we will be keeping much better tabs on peck holes in the walls!



All in a day's work for the conures!



Who, us? Misbehave?



Where is our door? Humans are such killjoys!

A CHANGE

On April 12, Archbishop BENJAMIN signed a ukaz formally separating Holy Assumption Monastery and St. Barbara Monastery and appointing Mother Melania the Acting Abbess until elections could be held a few weeks later. On May 11, the sisters elected Mother Melania as Abbess. Details of the installation are still being finalized. We at Holy Assumption Monastery thank Abbess Victoria and Archbishop BENJAMIN for all their many years of loving and wise guidance. We covet the prayers of all of you as we move forward into these new chapters of our lives.



Archbishop BENJAMIN at the election of the new abbess



IT'S FESTIVAL SEASON!

It's Church Festival time again! On May 19-21, we took our bookstore to Ascension Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Oakland. The next weekend (May 26-28), the bookstore sisters attended THREE Festivals – Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church, Novato; St Anna Greek Orthodox Church, Roseville; and Holy Dormition Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Santa Rosa. Thanks once again to all our friends who so graciously welcomed us to their communities' festivals. God bless you all!

Ascension Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Oakland



And that's not the half of it!



Nine boxes distributed among four men is how many each?

Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church, Novato



All ready and time to spare!



Here are the children's books - but where's the Mynah hat?!

St. Anna Greek Orthodox Church, Roseville



Time out for a smile break!



Does honey go with ice cream?

Holy Dormition Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Santa Rosa



Okay, we remembered a table, a chair, & the merchandise - & a tent, too!

Mmm, was somebody going to man this?



NEW BOOKSTORE - UPDATE

Now that our casket workshop is up and running in "the Barn," our garage is well on its way to becoming the new bookstore! We're hoping to open the bookstore by mid-June. So, stay tuned!



Do you think we need a door?



Coming along, but still a bit drafty



Now we're getting somewhere!



Do we have a plan for the inside?

June 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 major repairs at St. Simeon Church, all services are at the Monastery until further notice				1	2 6:00pm Vigil	3 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Soul Saturday</u> 5:00pm Vigil
4 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Pentecost</u>	5	6	7	8	9	10 5:00pm Vigil
11 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>All Saints</u>	12	13 6:00pm Vigil	14 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Prophet Elisha & Patriarch Methodius</u>	15	16	17 5:00pm Vigil
18 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>All Saints of North America</u>	19	20	21 6:00pm Vigil	22 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Hieromartyr Eusebius & St. Alban, Protomartyr of Britain</u>	23	24 RETREAT AT MONASTERY (see flyer) 5:00pm Vigil
25 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	26	27	28 6:00pm Vigil	29 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Ss. Peter & Paul</u>	30	

Saturday, June 24. Gospel of Mark Workshop

John Burnett, former African missionary

(See the attached flyer)

June Retreat—Saturday June 24, 2017

Gospel of St. Mark Workshop

Led by John Burnett, former African missionary



WHAT WAS IT THAT SET THE WORLD ON FIRE 2000 YEARS AGO? WHAT HAPPENED TO THE DISCIPLES WHEN THEY MET JESUS? CAN IT HAPPEN TO YOU? COME AND SEE!

John Burnett grew up non-Mormon in Mormon Utah, which made him think deeply throughout his entire life about communicating the good news of Christ to outsiders. He has a BA in Classical languages and Buddhist studies, and an MA in Old Testament, but rather than pursuing an academic career, he took years on pilgrimage to monasteries in America, Greece, and the Middle East. In 2003 he finally realized his life's dream of teaching in Africa, where he served as dean of an Orthodox seminary in Kampala, Uganda and later as director of studies at another in Johannesburg. Though he's looking forward to returning to Africa, he's currently the Catechist and senior Reader at St Nicholas Orthodox Church in San Anselmo, California, where he also directs the St Nicholas Africa Fund, a non-profit dedicated to helping very needy African high school students and young adults complete their education or get started in business.

Mr. Burnett developed his unique approach to St Mark's Gospel while working in Africa. "I was asking why the gospels spread so fast," he says. "The key was *what happened to the disciples* around Jesus— and that's the story St Mark shares especially well— he doesn't just tell you about the steak, he gives you the sizzle! To experience it, though, we really have to see how his book works as a whole, and as far as I know, not many people these days are teaching it on that level, because we usually read the episodes separately and pay little attention to how they're put together. As a result, we're missing out on a key dimension of the Story! That's the dimension I can help you with. St Mark's Gospel really is powerful— it goes straight to the heart of Orthodoxy in a way that's deeply surprising, and very challenging!"

9:00 AM—Session 1



10:30 AM—Session 2



12:15 PM Akathist



1 pm Lunch



2pm—Session 3

HOLY ASSUMPTION

MONASTERY



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No Fee, but your generosity will support the monastery and education in Africa