



# Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – November 2018

1519 Washington St., Calistoga, CA 94515

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

Website: [www.holyassumptionmonastery.com](http://www.holyassumptionmonastery.com)



Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

On Sunday evening October 14, PG&E turned off power in Calistoga and other nearby cities as a precautionary measure due to extreme fire hazard conditions. Depending where you were, power was restored somewhere between early afternoon to late evening Monday.

On Monday morning, when we went to the chapel for matins, the sky was essentially black, and we were much more aware than usual how much light our lampposts give us. Walking into the church, we were glad for the welcoming light of the candles. We start matins with only enough candles for the readers to read, but at "God is the Lord and hath revealed Himself to us," we turn on the lights. Traditionally, this is when the candles in the big chandeliers are lit, but our chandeliers are electric. With no power, that left us with not much light. This was challenging for those of us not endowed with 20/20 vision, but it was also lovely to pray the entire matins service in candlelight and whatever natural light started filtering through before the service ended.

All this reminded us of a favorite story. Once, a monk came to visit an American monastery while the elder was away. The visiting monk had recently been on Mount Athos and was insisting that church services should always be done with candlelight – never electric light. When the elder heard about this, he said in his broken English, "I think we worship God in all lights."

When earthly lights are bright, they can distract us from the Light of heaven. But when earthly light is TOO dim, that also can be distracting. On the other hand, when earthly lights are bright, we can give thanks to the One that these lights dimly imitate. And when earthly lights are dim or seem non-existent, we can embrace that very dimness as an opportunity to live in the One Who IS Light. Then, no matter how dark or light the world around us becomes, we will be awash in the radiance of the Light of the World.

with love in Christ,

*Mother Melania  
and the community  
of Holy Assumption Monastery*



*Petie – Can you get me a bigger bath tub?*

## **ZOO UPDATE: birds again**

Although Petie and Sunrise remain separated for the time being, all the birds seem to be in good spirits. In his cage on the deck, Sunrise enjoys capturing the attention of sisters in the kitchen, visitors in the refectory, children visiting the koi, and even pedestrians on the sidewalk! His "dance" of wing-raising and foot-waving has become a familiar sight. Although Petie is generally more stoic, he lets loose most days by clicking and head-bopping with his favorite people, and sometimes "chimes in" when the bells are ringing for services!

Cha-cha, however, is the undisputed "dancing queen." She flies onto the screen door at all times of day in hopes of enticing passing admirers to sing to her, so she can head-bop along to the music (okay, she's probably also hoping for a treat). Her favorite songs are "How Much is That Doggie (Birdie) in the Window," "You are My Sunshine," and "Kukaburra." Pixley doesn't dance, but she isn't shy about vocalizing along with Cha-cha... although it would be a stretch to call the conures' cries "singing." Even though the conures sometimes make us want to cover our ears, all the birds put smiles on our faces. We're very thankful for our feathered friends!



*Cha-cha – No, I'm not trying to get your attention. What makes you think that?*

## A SPECIAL VISIT



Archbishop Benjamin & Archbishop Avel visit the monastery

On Thursday October 18, we were blessed with a joint visit of Archbishop BENJAMIN and Archbishop AVEL of Lublin, Poland. Archbishop AVEL was in the United States with some of his clergy for the Sesquicentennial Anniversary of Holy Trinity Cathedral on October 19/20. It was a joy to welcome them, and we hope to do the same at the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!



Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity Cathedral's Sesquicentennial

## THE SAGA OF COOKIE MONSTER CONTINUES



Cookie Monster's wage requests having been met, he's happily back to work



More cookies! More cookies! More cookies!



It's your birthday? Did you get lots of cookies?!?!?



Everyone loves Cookie Monster!

## AROUND THE MONASTERY – In the Kitchen



Making applesauce - Hmm. The apples look better than the applesauce!



Now, that's better!



Granola making – We've run out of room for pans!



It may not be as cool as in Star Wars, but THIS light saber was very useful during the power outage.

## Around the Grounds



Cleaning the worm bins - Can I put this on my resume?



Heron alert!



What heron?



The fruit of our labors!

## Improvements & Repairs

### New cabinets for the refectory



Before



After

### Repairing the cupolas



Next time, let's get an elevator!



I think the color is off a bit.

**November 2018 Schedule for Holy Assumption Monastery & St. Simeon Church**

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

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
All services are at the Monastery until repairs are complete at St. Simeon Church.				1 there will NOT be Divine Liturgy today	2	3 5:00pm Vigil
4 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	5	6	7 6:00pm Vigil	8 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy  <u>Archangel Michael</u>	9	10 5:00pm Vigil
11 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	12 6:00pm Vigil	13 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy  <u>St. John Chrysostom</u>	14	15	16	17 <b>RETREAT AT MONASTERY</b> (see flyer) 5:00pm Vigil
18 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	19	20 6:00pm Vigil	21 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy  <u>Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple</u>	22	23	24 5:00pm Vigil
25 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	26	27	28	29 6:00pm Vigil	30 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy  <u>Apostle Andrew, the First-called</u>	

**Saturday, November 17**

***Critical Junctures in 2,000 Years of our Christian Heritage***

led by the V. Rev. John Takahashi,  
Dean Emeritus, Holy Trinity Cathedral, San Francisco, CA

(See the attached flyer)

*Fall Retreat—Saturday November 17, 2018*

# Critical Junctures in 2,000 Years of our Christian Heritage

*Conducted by the V. Rev. John Takahashi*

Learning the critical junctures in the history of Orthodoxy, we discover the true figure of Christ's One Holy, Apostolic and Catholic Church. Reviewing what was missed or overlooked by church historians—whose interests are more political and theological—we retrieve the continuous unchanging Church life, given to all mankind as a gift.



**9:00 AM—Session 1**



**10:30 AM—Session 2**



**12:15 PM Akathist**



**1 pm Lunch**



**2pm—Session 3**

**HOLY ASSUMPTION  
MONASTERY**



1519 Washington St.  
Calistoga, CA 94515  
(707) 942-6244

<http://holyassumptionmonastery.com>

No Fee—donations accepted

Call Soon—Space is limited

Father John Takahashi is an archpriest in the Orthodox Church in America and is dean emeritus of Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco. Archpriest John Takahashi has served as a priest in Japan and the United States for 47 years. He is a scholar and also a talented artist.