



Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter – September 2019

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Dear Friends of Holy Assumption Monastery,

Recently we came across a great video of pro-life speaker Stephanie Gray giving a talk at Google in 2017 – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzzfSq2DEc4&t=2956s>. It is worth the hour it takes to watch it, which is why I'm mentioning the talk. But Stephanie said something in particular that set off a different train of thought. She mentioned Viktor Frankl, a survivor of Nazi concentration camps, who pondered on why some people were able to avoid despair in such horrible circumstances. He came up with an idea that is often expressed simply thus: Despair = Suffering – Meaning or $D = S - M$. What set apart those who despaired from those who didn't was whether they had meaning in their lives. For those who did have meaning, even the suffering came to have meaning.

This resonates with the very foundation of Christianity, which is rooted in the basic truth “through the Cross, joy has come into the world.” The most horrible deed ever – the murder of the sinless God-Man – is the ground for the restoration of the world and the entry into eternal life. This is especially typified in the lives of the many martyrs who follow joyfully in the steps of Christ, the people who humbly and patiently endure painful illnesses, etc. The suffering actually becomes life-giving. $D = S - M$ falls short. How do we come up with an equation to express this astonishing transformation of suffering? Perhaps an equation such as Joy = Meaning + Suffering? No, that still doesn't show the transformation of suffering, nor the deepening of meaning and joy through the suffering. Well, perhaps it's a chemical equation? For example, $2H_2 + O_2 \rightarrow 2H_2O$. When you put together hydrogen and oxygen, what you get is something entirely different, that is yet composed of the constituent elements. No, that's not quite right either. The suffering, meaning, and joy are all still there and easy to see, yet all are informed and transformed by the others. I guess we have to fall back on one of the great truths of the Faith - mystery. There is always something awesome and mysterious about God's dealings in our lives. We can describe what He does (to some extent), but never fully explain it. We find meaning as we simply acknowledge the mystery and worship the all-good God Who took on our suffering to give us His Joy.

with love in Christ,

*Mother Melania
and the community
of Holy Assumption Monastery*

ZOO UPDATE – What's a Kitty to Do?

Years ago, Mother Victoria explained to us the true definition of domestic cat – a cat that requires domestics. So, you can image the hardship one endures when his chief domestic is gone. Balou, our Russian Blue, is currently in this lamentable plight. He is the most emotional of our cats – very affectionate but also quick-tempered (more so with felines than humans, fortunately for the domestic staff!). So, we were expecting him to be seeking extra attention, but also thinking he might be touchier than usual, too. The first half of our expectation has certainly proved true, but happily the second half hasn't. In fact, there is evidence that Balou is even being more patient with the other cats. For example, Simba has been showing up in areas that he has always seemed to regard as no-go zones. Now it remains to be seen what happens when Balou's chief domestic returns! So, stay tuned!



Balou: I hope you appreciate the opportunity to be my stand-in domestic!



Simba & Cookie: If Balou can be civil, we can get along, too!



Philly: I'm not sure what you're talking about, but it doesn't matter. I'm above it all.

DORMITION 2019

Vigil on Wednesday Evening, August 14



Blessing the Artoklasia



A picture's worth a thousand words.



Neither the tomb nor death can hold the Theotokos ...



A few of our good friends who joined us for vigil and a meal!

Divine Liturgy on Thursday Morning, August 15



During the Divine Liturgy



Procession after the Divine Liturgy



Singing for our supper!



Let all creation bless the Lord!



Help Us Celebrate Our 10-year Anniversary!!!!

Saturday October 19

Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, 9 am
celebrated by Archbishop BENJAMIN
Please join us!

Tuesday October 22

Open House from 5 to 8 pm
Food and Fellowship
Please join us!



2009



2019

September 2019 Schedule for Holy Assumption Monastery

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

[website – http://www.holyassumptionmonastery.com](http://www.holyassumptionmonastery.com)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	2	3	4	5	6	7 5:00pm Vigil
8 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Nativity of the Theotokos</u>	9	10	11	12	13 6:00pm Vigil	14 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Elevation of the Cross</u> 5:00pm Vigil
15 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	16	17	18	19 6:00pm Vigil	20 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Great Martyr Eustathius</u>	21 5:00pm Vigil
22 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	23	24	25 6:00pm Vigil	26 8:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy <u>Rest of St. John the Theologian</u>	27	28 5:00pm Vigil
29 9:40am Hours/ Divine Liturgy	30					

SAVE THE DATES FOR OUR 10th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Saturday October 19

Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, 9 am

celebrated by Archbishop BENJAMIN

Tuesday October 22

Open House from 5 to 8 pm

Food and Fellowship

HELP US BUILD THE NEW ST. NICHOLAS HOUSE !



The Holy Assumption Monastery sisterhood plans to replace St. Nicholas House (the current single-story structure at 1521 Washington Street) with a new, two-story structure. This new building will provide ground-floor living accommodations for handicapped sisters and work space on the second story, both of which are essential for the monastery's future.

We need to raise \$1 million for this project, and you can help! The sisters are looking for 250 people who can donate \$1000; the resulting \$250,000 will bring us a quarter of the way to our goal. We will also be raising funds within the general Napa Valley community, and pursuing the option of a low-interest loan.

Donate \$1000 or any amount you are able, and please pray for God's blessing on this effort!

If the Lord does not build the house, those who build it labor in vain.

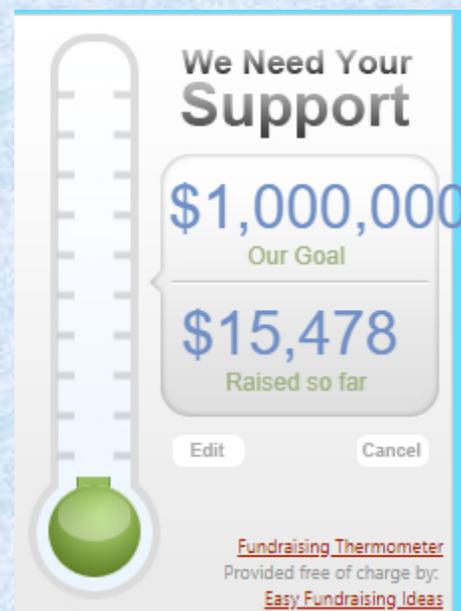
Donate via

Check made out to **Holy Assumption Monastery**

Memo line: **New SNH**

or

Online at <https://holyassumptionmonastery.com/newsnh>



Thank you for your help so far!