



HOLY ASSUMPTION MONASTERY

APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER



Dear Friends,

Certain native Alaskan carvers are said to believe that a specific animal spirit is inherent to whatever piece of bone they are working on. So, their mission is to bring out what is already there, not to impose their own view.

We can learn a few lessons from this humble attitude. For one, all too often we do try to impose our own view on those around us instead of patiently and lovingly seeking the real person encased in that piece of bone. By doing that, though, we are much more likely to shatter the person than to bring out the beautiful work of art God made them to be.

We do this to ourselves, too. We chip away on our outsides and think that **THIS TIME** we'll get it right. But we are not our own craftsmen. That is God's job. After all, He's not just a Master Craftsman. He is our Creator and Restorer Who brings out our real selves through the hardships of our lives. So, yes, we need to cooperate with God, but it's **HIS** responsibility to remake us, not ours.

So, as we go through Lent, may we approach others by looking not at the bony exterior, but the true person inside, and may we trust God and cooperate with His work in us.

with love in Christ,
Mother Melania and the sisters

ZOO UPDATE: All's Right with the World!

Petie and Sunrise are continuing to get along, and so is everyone else! Pixley and Shannon have become fast friends. Frisco has graciously decided he can endure Goolya (never mind that she was there first). Even Simba and Philly have been seen hanging out together. If this keeps up, we're going to have to widen our net to get enough material for the Zoo Update!



When's MY turn to be head up?



We'd rather watch television

ST. NICHOLAS HOUSE UPDATE

Work on St. Nicholas House is progressing so rapidly that we may be finished by the end of April! That is great news, but it also means we'll be doing our Pascha fund-raiser in April, not May. **Please see the attached flyer for details.**



APRIL CALENDAR

SUNDAY April 2 (St. Mary of Egypt Sunday) -
Divine Liturgy 10:00am

SATURDAY April 8 (Lazarus Saturday) -
Divine Liturgy 9:00am (tentative)

SUNDAY April 9 (Palm Sunday) -
Divine Liturgy 10:00am (tentative)

TUESDAY April 11 (Holy Tuesday) -
Pre-sanctified Liturgy 12:00pm

SATURDAY April 15 (Holy Saturday) -
Midnight Office 11:30pm

SUNDAY April 16 (PASCHA) -
Divine Liturgy 12:00am

SUNDAY April 23 (Thomas Sunday) -
Divine Liturgy 10:00am

SUNDAY April 30 (Myrrhbearers Sunday) -
Divine Liturgy 10:00am

For the rest of our calendar, please see our website

ZOOM RETREATS

NO APRIL ZOOM RETREAT

May 13 - Fr. Spyridon Jajeh, Topic To Be Announced

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CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST: The Cross in the Christian Life

On Saturday March 11, His Eminence DANIEL gave our March Zoom talk on the topic "Crucified with Christ: the Cross in the Christian Life." A journey is a common metaphor for life, as it reminds us that the destination is not our only goal. The route we choose will affect who we are now and who we are at the end of our life's journey.



His Eminence, Archbishop DANIEL

Indeed, the Cross is with us from the very beginning of our Christian lives. The first thing the priest does in the baptismal exorcisms is to sign the candidate with the sign of the Cross. After baptism, the Cross is placed around our necks and we take our first steps as Christians in a Cross procession. The Cross stays present in all our lives, up to our funerals – so much so that we must keep reminding ourselves not to take the Cross for granted.

So, it's important to pay attention to what the Cross says to us. It's the ultimate symbol of Christ's love for mankind and His victory over sin and death. It teaches us of sacrifice (looking beyond ourselves), redemption (promise of new life and resurrection), unity (we are all marked with the Cross), forgiveness (Father, forgive them...), and protection (the Cross as the weapon of peace). Through the Cross, Christ restores not just mankind, but the whole creation. It is His ultimate Pulpit. His last seven 'words' tell us key aspects of Who He is and the work He has done.

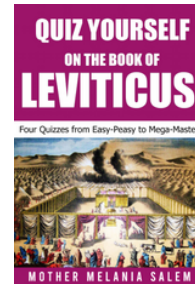
1. "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." (Forgiveness)
2. "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Salvation)
3. "Woman, behold, your son.... Behold, your mother." (The Church)
4. "I thirst." (Christ thirsted physically because He thirsted foremost for our salvation)
5. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (The Humanity of God)
6. "It is finished." (Completion, fulfilment)
7. "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." (Obedience, surrender to God's will)

Christ calls us to take up our crosses and follow Him. But how? For some, it is by actual martyrdom. For the rest of us, it is by illness, financial stress, relationships, emotional health, persecution, etc. Most of these crosses come unbidden, and in fact, we can't get rid of all our crosses. The question for us is whether we will voluntarily shoulder them or not. If we do, then they become salvific for us. So, as we proceed through our Lenten journeys, let's avail ourselves of the Lenten disciplines that help us take up our crosses and follow Christ that we may be crucified and risen with Him.

<https://holyassumptionmonastery.com/march112023crucifiedwithchrist>

BOOK UPDATES

Quiz Yourself on the Book of Leviticus is now available as a \$0.99 Kindle book [here](#). Please buy one and leave a review. Many thanks!



And check out the April issue of *Mother Melania's Monthly Missive*. This month's focus in Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Benjamin Bunny*. Benjamin gets his hesitant cousin Peter to go back into Mr. McGregor's garden and (spoiler alert) lives to regret it. Come along for the journey and see what happens!

*Sts. Peter & Paul, Ben Lomond,
Youth Retreat, March 3-5*



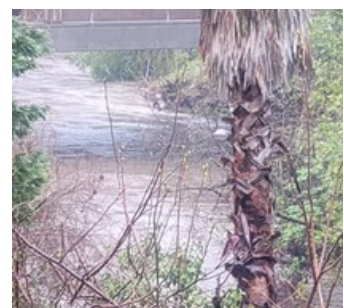
The QUICK way to get the newsletter out!

*St. Demetrios, Concord,
Church Group, March 18*



Friends old and new - the two best kinds!

A very happy Napa River



Just because!



We have a new house!

Only eight months since demolishing the old St. Nicholas House, we now have a beautiful new structure on Washington Street. Work continues with interior finishing: floors, cabinetry, and plumbing fixtures should all appear in the new few weeks.

A \$450,000 loan from the Orthodox Church Capital Improvement Fund (OCCIF), combined with the \$900k raised since 2019 has enabled the sisters to cover nearly all the costs.

April's \$100,000 total will ensure we can pay for all the finishing details for the house, as well as begin to collect the money needed to pay off the house loan.



April 2023 St. Nicholas House Campaign!

Generous friends are
pledging to match all the
funds we raise in the
month of April dollar-for-
dollar, up to \$50,000!

Donate online at

<https://hollyassumptionmonastery.com>

or send a check with memo: SNH.



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