



HOLY ASSUMPTION MONASTERY

JANUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER



Dear Friends,

I have always liked the expression "My bad," largely because of the way people usually say it – promptly after the mistake and with good humor. The last time I heard someone say it, I started to think about why I DON'T admit all my faults that readily and graciously. At one level, the answer is obvious – pride, shame, and fear. But doing something about that pride, shame, and fear? Well, that's a lot more difficult, and no doubt I will be working on those faults the rest of my life. But if that sounds hopeless, it shouldn't. I know I'm not going to conquer these faults today or tomorrow or next week. But I can certainly start working on it today. One easy thing I can do is just to look for (and TAKE) opportunities to say "My bad." That's not a bad New Year's Resolution! Will you join me? The more we say "My bad" and throw in "Thank you" and "Forgive me" while we're at it, the more natural those practices will become for us and the more easily the GOOD GOD will be able to work through us.

with love in Christ,
Mother Melania and the sisters

ZOO UPDATE - Philly and the Jesse Tree

For the past several Nativity fasts, we've done a Jesse tree. This involves reading Old and New Testament passages related to the coming of Christ and putting an ornament related to that reading on the Jesse tree.

This has been a serious conundrum for Philly. Does he stay in his nice warm cat bed on the deck and endure our singing? Or does he abandon his favorite place to spare his ears? Early in the ordeal, he came down squarely on the side of sparing his ears. Over time, he has opted more and more often to stay. It must be because our singing has greatly improved. Right, Philly? We'll let you know what he says!



I'm doing this under duress!

KIDS' BOOKS CORNER

Mother Melania is starting a newsletter dedicated to children's books and related topics. The January 2023 issue of *Mother Melania's Monthly Missives* is now available at bit.ly/MMsMonthlyMissive.

Please sign up and give feedback on what works, what NEEDS work, what you'd like to see in future issues, etc. Thanks!



ST NICHOLAS HOUSE UPDATE



No, the new house isn't going to stay yellow. Still, that would lend the house a certain character.

We can't begin to fathom the incredible generosity of our friends in helping us with our \$100,000 matching grant. We were pretty confident we could make the original \$50,000, but when an anonymous donor gave an additional \$50,000, we were grateful, but couldn't imagine how we could raise that much. As of 7pm on December 31, we have over \$91,000, several checks coming in the mail, and great hope of reaching our goal! What can we say except "Thank God and thank you all"?

CALENDAR

SUNDAYS - Divine Liturgy, 10AM
Vesperal Liturgy of Theophany - Thursday January 5, 1PM
Theophany Liturgy - Friday January 6, 9AM
For other services, please see our website.

ZOOM RETREATS

January 14 - Fr Spyridon Jajeh, Topic TBA
February 11 - Fr Anthony Roeber, Topic TBA

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DECEMBER ZOOM TALK

On Saturday December 10, Fr. Philip Halliwell spoke to us on "Lessons from the Life of Queen Elizabeth II." He bookended his presentation with the Queen's coronation and burial service. At her coronation, she was anointed as a Christian ruler and given in charge the sword of state, the orb (which represents Christ's rule of the universe), the scepter, and the crown. At the burial service, the orb, scepter, and crown were taken from her casket and put on the high altar. For Queen Elizabeth, these were clearly not just beautiful reminders of a long-ago Christendom, but tokens of the responsibilities of Christian royalty that she accepted, faithfully fulfilled, and then returned to the God who had charged her with them.



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



Fr. Philip Halliwell



Fr. Michael Halliwell

Other than the burial service, the talk was taken largely from Dudley Delffs' book, *The Faith of Queen Elizabeth*. Among other things, the book covers Her Majesty's Christian sense of duty, her family life, her sense of humor, her challenges and how she handled them.

In many ways, her life can be summed up in her own words from her 1957 Christmas speech:

I cannot lead you into battle. I do not give you laws or administer justice, but I can do something else. I can give you my heart and my devotion to these old islands and to all the peoples of our brotherhood of nations.

Her Christian faith allowed her to keep that promise. With her death, someone has gone out of the world who helped keep it together, and there will never be another quite like her. But we all have our own small parts to play in shining Christ's light in the world, and she is an example to us. This was beautifully expressed by a woman who was reflecting on whether the Queen's griefs – especially the death of Princess Diana – changed how she led the nation.

“No, luv,” Sheila said. “There was no overnight turning point then. It’s a matter of degrees, daily and imperceptible. As we grow older, well, one must choose, mustn’t one? How will we love those around us, the way Jesus showed us to love, and still carry on with whatever we’re called by duty to do? It requires suffering, doesn’t it? No matter whether you’re the Queen of England or a widowed pensioner like myself, you accept life as a slow parade of losing those you hold most dear. Or you can retreat from life and withdraw to one’s own devices, but you miss the joy of the parade, then, don’t you?”

A special aspect of this talk was the presence of Fr. Philip's father – Fr. Michael, who is an Anglican priest who twice met the Queen and Prince Philip. We are grateful to both Fr. Philip and Fr. Michael for sharing their knowledge and love of the Queen. May we all become at least a little bit more like her in her Christian devotion.

<https://holyasumptionmonastery.com/december102022lessonsfromthelifeofqueenelizabethii>

CHRISTMAS 2022



Charlie Brown's tree has some serious competition!



Are we following OSHA regulations?



Christmas Eve Liturgy - Fr. Edward Henderson



Christmas Liturgy - Fr. Nicholas Carr



Out Christmas Caroling - Hopefully not a bridge too far!



Come on! Just ONE more carol?

HERE & THERE

Christmas Cookie Decorating - Dec 14



This was fun. When do we get to do it again?!

Sonshine Kids Retreat - Dec 17



Lots of kids and lots of joy!