



HOLY ASSUMPTION MONASTERY

DECEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER



Dear Friends,

On election day, Google had a picture of the National Mall and the Washington Monument with the caption "out of many, one." That, of course, is the English translation of our national motto "E pluribus unum" that is still graven on our coins. Like everyone else my age, I learned that motto (and its translation) as a child, but I never thought about what a remarkable thing it was - until now.

The Founding Fathers faced the daunting task of forming some kind of union out of 13 colonies that differed on major issues - religion, preferred type of governance, and whether to permit slavery, to name a few of the huge ones. Thanks be to God, these colonies did have deep commonalities despite the huge differences. Chief among these were a fundamentally Christian worldview (which eventually resulted in the emancipation of the slaves), a desire to rule themselves, and a knowledge that self-rule is ultimately impossible for people who are not themselves willingly ruled by God (or, at the very least, by moral principles beyond human - or governmental - whim). Somehow by God's grace, such a union was formed - a true 'one out of many.' No, it wasn't perfect and never will be, but it was an amazing thing and a gift that I have been appreciating ever more deeply, the more tenuous it appears.

So, here we are, less than a month after this contentious election, and many of us are wondering if this unity can hold - or whether it is already hopelessly broken. I don't know the answer to that, but I DO know that God is the God of miracles and that He delights in restoring those who humbly repent and ask His help. God knows, we ALL have had SOME role in the tearing apart of our nation (if only in failing to love - or even KNOW - the people right around us). That is bad news and good news. Bad news because I can't pretend the problems of my nation have nothing to do with me. Good news because I CAN do my part to heal the rifts right around me. If we all do our little part, not least by remembering the OTHER motto graven on our coins - IN GOD WE TRUST - we may just find ourselves becoming a 'one out of many' far greater than any that we've ever seen. May it be so!

with love in Christ,
Mother Melania & the sisters

DECEMBER CALENDAR

Sundays - 10 am Divine Liturgy (Dec 8 & 22 still tentative)

Tuesday December 24 - Royal Hours and Typica 7am; Vesperal Liturgy 12pm;
12-course Christmas Eve Meal 5pm; Vigil (Great Compline & Matins) 9pm;

Wednesday December 25 - Divine Liturgy 12am

For other services, please see our website

1519 Washington St., Calistoga, CA 94515

Phone: (707) 942-6244; Email: sisterseholyassumptionmonastery.com

Website: www.holyassumptionmonastery.com

ZOO UPDATE -

Kitties, Kitties, Everywhere

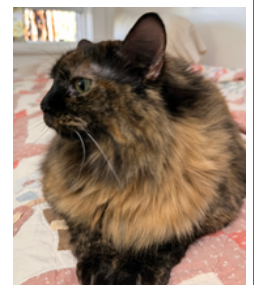
Our deep apologies to our cats, who are understandably miffed that we have been featuring BIRDS instead of them!



*You woke me up from my beauty sleep.
This had better be good!*



*Okay, I posed for you.
Can I have a treat now?*



*No, this isn't my best side.
I'm beautiful all over!*



Wake me up when this is over.

HERE & THERE

November 16, Holiday Market, Nativity of Christ Church, Novato



Ready to go!



*So much to look at.
So little time!*

Thanksgiving 2024



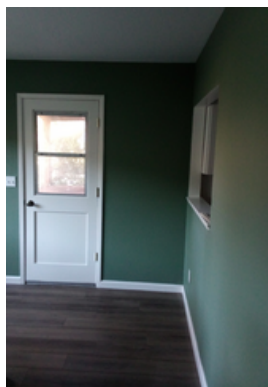
We gather together



to ask the Lord's blessing!

Renovation Updates

The renovations of St Barbara House are coming along, but we keep finding more things that need fixing. The latest is electrical issues. It's disappointing, but we're grateful to God for making these issues known to us so that we can address them!



Nice & tidy (except for what we cropped out!)



Didn't even have to crop anything out of this one!



Sweeping change!



As of this writing, the aviary is close to being finished. The birds are eagerly awaiting their new digs! So are we!

Shedding some light on our aviary construction

Mother Melania's Book Update

Quiz Yourself on the Book of Tobit is now available on Amazon as a Kindle book through the end of December for \$0.99 or as a printed booklet from the monastery for \$4.00.



Check out the December version of Mother Melania's Monthly Missive [here](#).

Classic Kids' Tales:

How the Whale Got Its Throat

After nearly two years of Beatrix Potter books, we are starting Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories*. First up is 'How the Whale Got Its Throat.'



What happens when a whale has eaten up all the fish in the ocean except one little one? That would depend on how astute that fish is. Fortunately for the little fish, he is very 'stute. So, he convinces the whale to go find - and then swallow up - a shipwrecked mariner who was 'of infinite resource and sagacity.'

True to his billing, the sagacious mariner uses his limited resources to make a grate that he puts across the whale's throat to keep him from swallowing mariners and any but the tiniest of fishes! But what happens next? Do they all live happily after? Does the mariner return home? Join us and find out!

For a free copy of *How the Whale Got Its Throat*, click [here](#).