



# HOLY ASSUMPTION MONASTERY

## JANUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER



Dear Friends,

For several months, I was struggling to write an article while the deadline was looming ever closer. A friend offered great suggestions for the article, but I expressed concern that I couldn't address them by the deadline. He responded, "Yes, those deadline demons!"

I laughed, but then it occurred to me that there really ARE deadline demons. They're the ones that lead us to be so anxious about our deadlines that we forget to pray, to go to Church, to be attentive to those who need our time, to see all the good things that God is blessing us with in the moment.

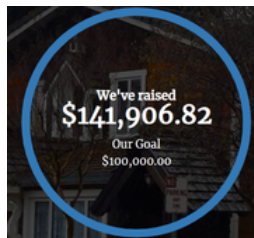
Thank God there are also deadline angels - no, make that lifeline angels. In the middle of all the anxiety, they remind us that Christ is our Life, and loving our brother is how we express His Life.

Looking for a New Year's resolution? Try this. Let's kick out the deadline demons (and their relatives in other areas of life) and through our lifeline angels, cling to Christ our Life.

with love in Christ,  
Mother Melania & the sisters

### ST NICHOLAS HOUSE UPDATE

We are thrilled and astounded to report that we have exceeded our \$100,000 matching grant, by over \$40,000. That, plus the matching grant money brings a grand total of over \$240,000 in one campaign.



What can we say but, "Thanks be to God for His love and the astonishing friends He has blessed us with!"

### ZOO UPDATE - It's UnbeBEAVERable!

In addition to the feline, fish, and feathered members of the monastery zoo, our riverside property is home to many other creatures: heron, ibis, skunk, racoon, opossum, and even fox have been spotted on our grounds at various times.



*Our beavers' stunt doubles*

All of Calistoga knows that beavers can sometimes be seen in the Napa River, but we've recently gotten more closely acquainted with them, because the beavers have been felling monastery trees! First, a little fruit sapling suddenly disappeared. The sisters were puzzled: who would cut a sapling off at the ground? Why not dig out the root ball if someone wanted to steal the tree? But on closer inspection, the stump showed teeth marks! And sure enough, a small dam began to take shape right where the sisters usually bless the river on Theophany.

A few weeks later, a sister returned from a trip and noticed something no one else had realized yet: one of our Bald Cypress trees was down in the river! We hadn't had any rain - how could it have fallen? Within another day or two we could see: the beavers were at it again! This was a second, smaller dam, a little bit downstream from the first. The beavers aren't just taking trees, either; we can see that from somewhere (not the monastery), the beavers have purloined a child's tricycle and worked it into the dam!

The dams have already suffered some damage from recent rains and higher water levels in the river, and it's possible the beavers may choose some other location to rebuild. If you visit the monastery, don't forget to take a peek down at the river, because you never know what you might see!

#### Do You Still Want the Print Newsletter?

Starting in March, we will reduce our print newsletter list. To receive our e-newsletter, contact us or sign up on our webpage. If you still want the print newsletter, please let us know by phone, mail or email (see info below). Thank you!

### JANUARY CALENDAR

Sunday Divine Liturgies - 10am

Please see our website for the rest of our services for January

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

## HERE & THERE

Calistoga Christmas Faire - Dec 2



Santa's got nothing on us!

Sonshine Retreat Group - Dec 9



Lunchtime!

Cookie Decorating with the School Children - Dec 15



Sorry, kids, we CAN'T do this every week!

## CHRISTMAS 2023

Christmas Midnight Liturgy



Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Christmas Day



Singing for our supper - Tra la la la

## BOOK UPDATES

I'm STILL working on *Quiz Yourself on the Book of I Samuel* (or I Kingdoms). Hopefully, I won't be telling you that NEXT month!

The *Monastery Cats Coloring Book* was a hit - at least with the cats, although of course, they wouldn't admit that. The next volume will be *Monastery Birds Coloring Book* (of course). It's not finished, but here are a couple of examples to whet your appetite!



Petie the office helper - I'm the best paper shredder in the business!



Bubbles - what do you mean, "Watch the birdie"?