



HOLY ASSUMPTION MONASTERY

MARCH 2026 NEWSLETTER



Dear Friends,

... Here I lie half dead, on the highway of life, naked of any virtues. A Priest saw me, bruised and hurting; and thinking me incurable, he overlooked me and did not take care of me. A Levite could not stand my soul-destroying suffering, and he looked down and passed by on the other side. But You, O Christ God ... grant me healing, and pour on me the oil of Your great mercy.

- Presanctified Vespers, Wednesday 5th Week of Lent

In his February retreat here, Bishop VASILY spoke on this verse. There is much that can be said about it, but - as an abbess - I was struck by the comments about the priest and the Levite. These verses aren't condemning them, at least not the way I would have expected. The priest didn't stop to help because he thought the wound incurable. The Levite could not stand the soul-destroying suffering.

Any of us who have had care of the souls of others - whether our children, our monastic sisters, our parishioners, etc. - knows all too well that we get to a place where that person's wounds are incurable by our own feeble skill and their suffering can start destroying OUR souls. That's hugely important to recognize, but it's not an excuse. After all, we are called to heal as representatives of Christ the Physician of our souls and bodies - not as accomplished physicians who deserve to put up our own shingles! So, what do we do? Go to our OWN spiritual fathers and mothers - and the Scriptures, Liturgy, sacraments, etc. - and receive healing so that we can better carry out CHRIST'S healing ministry.

But what if you're the sick person and everybody is turning away from you? Don't lose heart. Christ Himself can - and will - pour the oil of His great mercy on anybody who is willing to let Him!

with love in Christ,
Mother Melania & the sisters

February 7 Retreat with Bishop VASILY

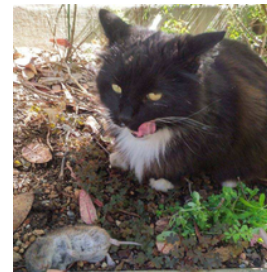
We were greatly blessed by His Grace's retreat entitled "Lent as the School of Piety and Theology." After giving us a fascinating history lesson, he led us through some key texts, reminding us that we are always being called to see ourselves in these texts, especially in seeing where we need to repent. We hope this is the first of many retreats with our bishop!



His Grace Bishop VASILY

To listen to the retreat, [click here](#).

Zoo Update - Oliver, Mighty Hunter



Oliver is now an official mouser.



I'm outta here!

MARCH CALENDAR

Sundays - 10 am Divine Liturgy (March 1, 8, & 29 - confirmed; March 15 out of town; March 22 tentative)

Wednesdays - 5 pm Pre-sanctified Liturgy (March 4, 11, 18)

Annunciation Divine Liturgy - 1 pm (Wednesday, March 25)

For other services, please see our website

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MOTHER MELANIA'S BOOK UPDATE

Quiz Yourself on Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah is now available on Amazon as a Kindle book till the end of March for \$0.99 or as a printed booklet from the monastery for \$4.00.

QUIZ YOURSELF ON NAHUM, HABAKKUK & ZEPHANIAH

Quizzes from Easy-Peasy to Mega-Master



MOTHER MELANIA SALEM

Check out the March edition of Mother Melania's Monthly Missive.

Classic Kids' Tales: The Yellow Dwarf

This month's tale is 'The Yellow Dwarf,' the story of a princess who is beautiful, proud, and very sure she knows what she wants. until she doesn't. A brave king, a meddling fairy, and one very troublesome dwarf all play their part. It's not a 'happily ever after' story, but it gets at a serious truth – and is well worth reading together.

For a free copy of 'The Yellow Dwarf,' click [here](#).

Ladylike Ladybugs

Every spring and summer the sisters hope to see ladybugs around the monastery, not just because they are cute, but to help keep the aphid population in check. Also, because the 'Lady' in ladybug refers to "Our Lady," it's particularly fitting to have them at a monastery named for the Theotokos.



So, we were joyful to see no fewer than four ladybugs have appeared in the north kliros of the monastery chapel, where the choir sings. Three were retrieved and set free outdoors; but there was one that the sisters wouldn't disturb. This little ladybug appeared on the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God that adorns the monastery iconostasis. Although the ladybug wandered across the icon for a good portion of the service, the sisters never saw it walk over the face of the Theotokos. Appreciating its instinctive reverence, they let the ladybug decide when it was ready to fly away. May we all have such simple and pure love for the Mother of God!

Liturgical Life



Fr. Nicholas Carr



Fr. Michael Vladimirov



Fr. Edward Henderson

St Athanasius Sacramento Annual Work Party - February 14



Okay, we're up here. Now what!?



A lampada polisher's work is never done!



What do you mean, we're not finished yet?



Still smiling after a hard day's work!