

Magnificat

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News from
HOLY TRANSFIGURATION SKETE
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Advent
2013

The holy sayings of the Prophets are now fulfilled;
the Virgin gives birth to the All-perfect
in a cave of Bethlehem.
All creation is renewed;
let it dance and rejoice!

The Master has come to live with His servants
and frees us from the bondage of the Enemy,
who had made us subject to corruption.
In the manger and in swaddling clothes,
He is manifested as an infant Child,
the Holy Babe and pre-eternal God!

From Matins
Forefeast of Christmas

We are a Catholic Monastery of the Byzantine Rite, under the jurisdiction of the Eparchy of Chicago, and belonging to the Ukrainian Metropolis in the United States of America, which is in union with the Pope of Rome, supreme pastor of the universal Church. We embrace Evangelical poverty, chastity, obedience, and stability of life, according to the Rule of Saint Benedict and the traditions of the Christian East. In our skete at Jacob's Falls, on the shore of Lake Superior in Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula, we devote ourselves to a common life of prayer and work for the praise, love, and service of God and for the upbuilding of His Kingdom through the arts.

Cause of our Joy

Liturgy is at heart an essay in communal remembrance. Coming together, we hear the appointed readings from Scripture and recall the Lord's mighty deeds on our behalf. Liturgical proclamation of Scripture is no dry recital of past events, nor is the recollection it engenders in the faithful a mere retrieval of stored data. Enshrined amidst the praise, petitions, and thanksgiving of our worship, the holy words become living realities in our hearts, and the saving events they narrate are made present to us. Through fervent participation in the weekly and annual celebration of the Church's festivals we internalize the mysteries of our Faith and become what we have been called to be. Like observance of the perpetual ordinance enjoined on the Israelites by Moses (Ex. 12:24-28), in heeding the Lord's command, *Do this in remembrance of Me* (I Cor. 11:23-26), we are constituted as His people.

Christmas, then, or, more properly, the **Feast of the Nativity According to the Flesh of our Lord God and Savior, Jesus Christ**, is much more than a birthday party for Baby Jesus. Indeed, the Babe who lay in the manger at Bethlehem passed long ago into manhood and, through death on the Cross, to resurrection and the eternal life of heaven, where he now gloriously reigns at the right hand of God the Father. The familiar Christmas tableau, popularized throughout Western Europe by the mendicant friars of the late middle ages, depicts events narrated by the Gospels and is probably useful for impressing the story on the minds of children; it may also evoke salutary sentiments of child-like wonder in the hearts of adults, but it conveys little of the actual import of the celebration. More important than the physical details of His birth are understanding just who this Child is and the purposes

Beholding him, who was created
in the image and likeness of God,
fallen through disobedience into corruption,
Jesus bowed the heavens and came down
and dwelt without change
in the Virgin's womb,
that He might refashion Adam,
who from the depths cried out to Him:
Glory to Your Epiphany,
my deliverer and my God!

From Great Compline
of Christmas

and effects of His coming amongst us; we must open our hearts to an experiential knowledge that transcends sentimentality.

In the Byzantine tradition, Christmas and Theophany (Epiphany) may be seen as one feast of twelve days duration, celebrating our salvation and its appearance in the world in the divine and human Person of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the Son and Word of God, consubstantial with the Father, took flesh and became man in the womb of the Virgin Mother for our salvation and for the redemption of the entire world. This mystery, revealed to the Virgin at the time of the Annunciation (cf. Lk. 1:31-33), is manifested in the tender flesh of the Babe of Bethlehem. At His birth it is intimated to humble shepherds and wise kings. John the Baptist, who rejoiced at it while still in his mother's womb (cf. Lk. 1:44), has it definitively made known to him by the Father's word and the descent of the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk. 3:21f; Mt. 3:16f; Mk. 1:10f) at His baptism in the Jordan.

It becomes intimately known to us in faithful celebration of the feast.

This incarnation of the Word of God for our salvation is the cause of the shepherds' wonder, the Magi's homage and the Angels' song. It is the cause of our joy as we listen to the Gospel narratives and to the prophecies pointing to them, as we sing the mystic chants from ages past and reflect anew upon this wondrous gift and what it means for us and for the whole world.

In the Person of Jesus Christ, God has entered and become part of His creation. In His loving condescension, He has become one of us. The relationship between God and man, between God and the entire universe, has been radically

changed; nothing can ever be the same. Now, even lifeless matter is redeemed and charged with grace; by the action of the Holy Spirit it may become for us the bearer of Divine Life.

January sixth seems to be the original date kept in celebration of this wonder. Already, in the late Second Century, Clement of Alexandria speaks of a festival on that day in commemoration of Christ's baptism by John; by the middle of the Fourth Century we find the feast spread throughout the East. Known as Epiphany (*manifestation or shining forth*), its principal focus remained the Lord's baptism, but it commemorated His birth, as well, and also his first miracle, at the wedding of Cana (Jn. 2:1-11) – all events manifesting His divinity to the world.

Introduction from the West, later in the Fourth Century, of a particular commemoration of the Lord's Nativity (Christmas) encouraged development of the celebration into its present form. The Infancy Narratives – the first two chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel and the second chapter of St. Luke's – form the scriptural core of our Christmas observance; concentration on the Synoptic accounts (Mt. 3:13-17; Mk. 1:9-11; and Lk. 3:21-22) of Christ's baptism by John in the Jordan returns the earlier feast to its primitive emphasis. While the scriptural events commemorated differ, the burden of both feasts remains the same: the manifestation of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, God-with-us.

At His birth and during His infancy, the mystery of Jesus Christ as true God and true man was made known – and, then, indistinctly – to a few individuals. At His baptism the voice of the Father proclaims Him His beloved Son, which the Holy Spirit confirms by visibly descending

upon Him in the form of a dove. In her profound meditation on this first distinct revelation of the Holy Trinity, the Eastern Church has bestowed on the ancient feast a new name; Epiphany, *manifestation, shining forth*, is now more commonly known as Theophany, *manifestation of God*.

The other readings from Scripture and the liturgical texts enshrining the Gospel narrative at Christmas testify as to who the Christ Child is and the purpose of His coming amongst us. Those of Theophany, while reiterating these insights, proclaim its effects. The entire universe, in the beginning created very good, but corrupted by sin, is now restored in Christ Jesus. By His coming, He makes all things new.

You, who in Bethlehem
shone forth in the flesh from the Virgin,
now hasten to the Jordan
to wash away the defilement
of those born on earth,
leading those in darkness to the light,
through holy Baptism.

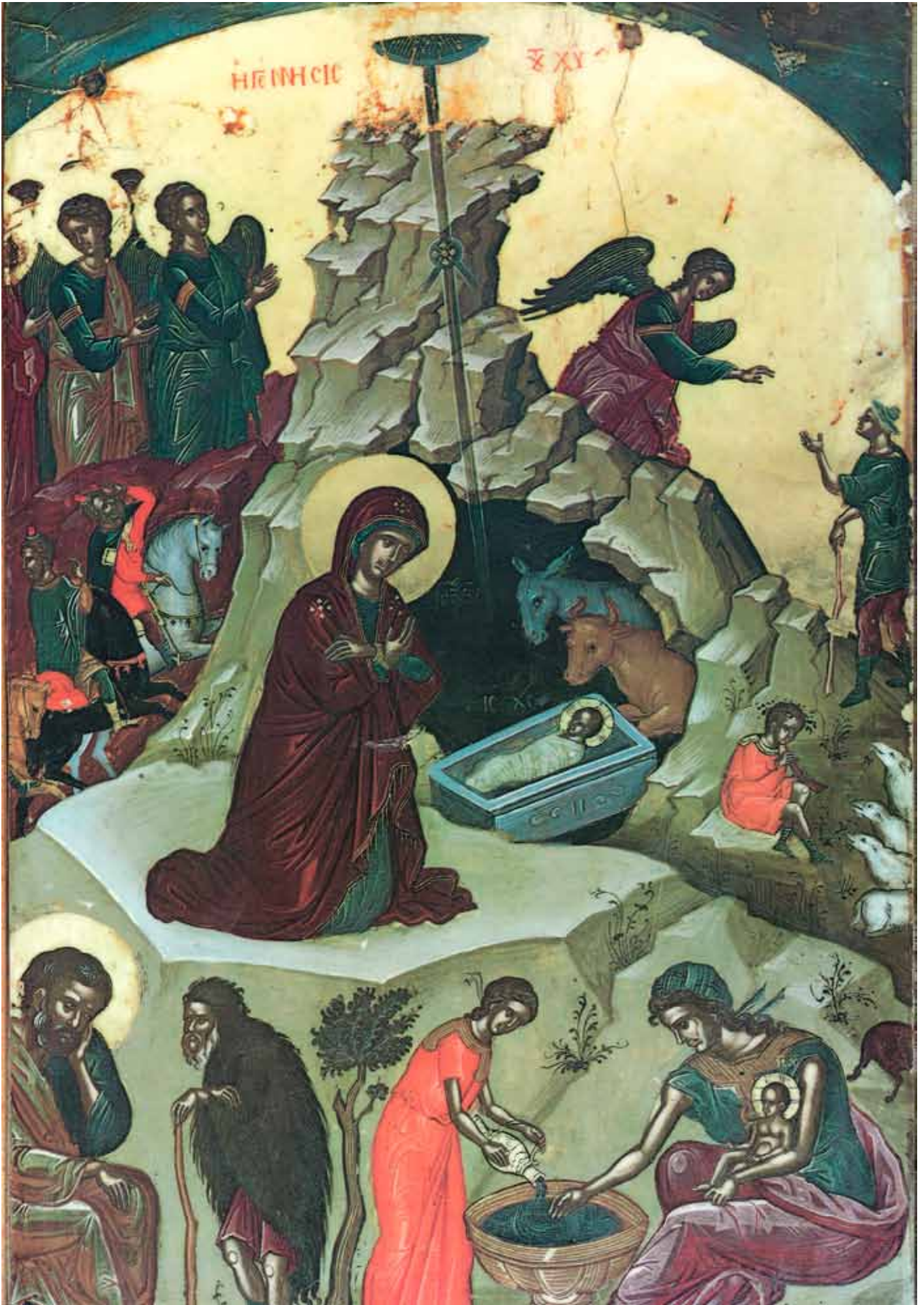
From Matins
Forefeast of Theophany

Jesus, perfect God and perfect man, approaches the Jordan and accepts baptism from John not for His own cleansing, but for the cleansing of the whole world. Immersing His divine flesh in the waters of the Jordan, He purifies all the waters of the earth. He restores that primordial element

(cf. Gen. 1:2) to its original goodness, and with it He sanctifies all creation. In the waters of Baptism, we, too, are sanctified, restored to our original life of goodness after the death of sin. The water blessed at Theophany and preserved for use throughout the year physically conveys to us this great cause of our joy.

Happy, indeed, are we who have been born again in Baptism. We have been incorporated into Christ and made sharers of His divine nature. As members of His body, the Church, we constitute His continued and active presence on earth. May we always live our lives so as to manifest Him to the world.

In Theophany, Christmas is fulfilled; may it also continue to be fulfilled in us.



Services, Christmas 2013

Saturday, 21 December 2013 -- Saturday before Christmas

6:00 am	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom	1) Galatians 3:8-12; 2) Luke 13:18-29
5:30 pm	Solemn Vespers	1) Genesis 14:14-20; 2) Deut. 1:8-11,15-17; 3) Deut. 10:14-21

Sunday, 22 December 2013 -- Sunday before Christmas

10:00 am	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom	1) Hebrews 11:9-10,17-23,32-40; 2) Matthew 1:1-25
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Tuesday, 24 December 2013 -- Vigil of Christmas

5:00 am	Matins and First Hour Pss: 5, 44(45), 45(46)	1) Micah 5:2-4; 2) Hebrews 1:1-12; 3) Matthew 1:18-25
9:00 am	Third Hour Pss: 66(67), 86(87), 50(51)	1) Baruch 3:35-4:4; 2) Galatians 3:23-4:5; 3) Luke 2:1-20
11:00 am	Sixth Hour Pss: 71(72), 131(132), 90(91)	1) Isaiah 7:10-16;8:1-4,8-10; 2) Hebrews 1:10-2:3; 3) Matthew 2:1-12
1:30 pm	Ninth Hour Pss: 109(110), 110(111), 85(86)	1) Isaiah 9:6-7; 2) Hebrews 2:11-18; 3) Matthew 2:13-23
4:30 pm	Solemn Vespers and Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great	1) Genesis 1:1-13; 2) Numbers 24:2-3,5-9,17-18; 3) Micah 4:6-7,5:2-4; 4) Isaiah 11:1-10; 5) Baruch 3:35-4:4; 6) Daniel 2:31-36,44-45; 7) Isaiah 9:6-7; 8) Isaiah 7:10-16;8:1-4,9-10; 9) Hebrews 1:1-12; 10) Luke 2:1-20
9:00 pm	Great Compline and Solemn Matins Pss: 134(135), 109(110), 110(111)	1) Matthew 1:18-25

Wednesday, 25 December 2013 -- Christmas Day

10:00 am	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom	1) Galatians 4:4-7; 2) Matthew 2:1-12
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Services, Theophany 2014

Friday, 03 January 2014

6:00 am	Matins and First Hour Pss: 5, 22(23), 26(27)	1) Isaiah 35:1-10; 2) Acts 13:25-33; 3) Matthew 3:1-11
11:00 am	The Royal Hours Pss: 28(29), 41(42), 50(51) Pss: 73(74), 76(77), 90(91) Pss: 92(93), 113(114-115), 85(86)	1) Isaiah 1:16-20; 2) Acts 19:1-8; 3) Mark 1:1-8 1) Isaiah 12:3-6; 2) Romans 6:3-11; 3) Mark 1:9-15 1) Isaiah 49:8-15; 2) Titus 2:11-14;3:4-7; 3) Matthew 3:13-17
4:30 pm	Vespers	

Saturday, 04 January 2014 -- Saturday before Theophany

6:00 am	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom	1) 1 Timothy 3:14-4:5; 2) Matthew 3:1-11
5:30 pm	Solemn Vespers	1) Deut. 31:7-13; 2) 1 Samuel 2:18-21; 3) Micah 7:14-20

Sunday, 05 January 2014 -- Sunday before Theophany, Vigil of Theophany

10:00 am	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom	1) 2 Timothy 4:5-8; 2) Mark 1:1-8
4:30 pm	Solemn Vespers	1) Genesis 1:1-13; 2) Exodus 14:15-18.21-23.27-29; 3) Exodus 15:22-16:1; 4) Joshua 3:7-8.15-17; 5) 2 Kings 2:6-14; 6) 2 Kings 5:9-14; 7) Isaiah 1:16-20; 8) Genesis 32:1-10; 9) Exodus 2:5-10; 10) Judges 6:36-40; 11) 1 Kings 18:30-39; 12) 2 Kings 2:19-22; 13) Isaiah 49:8-15; 14) 1 Corinthians 9:19-27 15) Luke 3:1-18
	Great Blessing of Water	1) Isaiah 55:1-13; 2) 1 Corinthians 10:1-4; 3) Mark 1:9-11
8:30-9:00 pm	Great Compline and Solemn Matins Pss: 96(97), 131(132), 111(112)	1) Mark 1:9-11

Monday, 06 January 2014 -- Theophany

10:00 am	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great	1) Titus 2:11-14;3:4-7; 2) Matthew 3:13-17
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Work in Hand



At last, the infrastructure improvement envisioned more than a year ago is moving toward fulfillment. Sounds of earthmoving and heavy equipment have filled the air around the monastery for the past ten days as ground has been cleared, broken, and readied for the drain field that will complete the **Jampot**'s new septic system. Having lost two months of production at the season's beginning and then having had to have the new septic tanks pumped and the effluent hauled away each week for the past four months, we are most grateful the project is finally nearing completion. We thank God that the mayhem is confined to the forest across the highway from the monastery, and, far from disturbing, we find the sounds of progress music to our ears.

Meanwhile, another project is underway, closer at hand and, initially, more disruptive.

We noted in our last issue of **Magnificat** that the dedication of our new carillon served as a fitting close to our first thirty years on this shore. The highpoint of the period, however, came some ten years earlier. The consecration of our Monastic Church of St. John the Theologian in August of 2003 gave the monastery a visual presence it

had not previously had; even now its crosses and golden domes invite gazes and photographs from passers by. More importantly, it provided an appropriate environment for the worship that is vital to our Byzantine monastic life. With three times the area and ten times the volume of our previous chapel, it could adequately accommodate the liturgical action of a community twice

our present size, and, from our first Service in the new church, we have found its acoustics an astounding delight. It has continued to serve well as a worthy vessel for the praise and petitions we continually offer up to God in behalf of the whole world.

But the years have taken their toll. The prayerful burning of beeswax, olive oil, and incense, during the myriad Services over the past decade deposited a sooty film over the walls and ceiling of the Holy Place. Such dimming is inevitable in a well used church, but, here, thermal bridging brought about an uneven distribu-



tion of the patina, which revealed the building's framing and would have played havoc with any artwork applied directly to the interior surfaces. Moreover, the leak repaired a year and a half ago had resulted in some significant water damage to the walls and ceiling of the church's sanctuary area. The thermal bridging problem will necessitate external insulation of



the building during a future expansion; the current project is limited to cleaning, repairing, and repainting the interior. The contractors estimate it will take five or six weeks to complete.

But monks need a place to pray, and a number of people have come to depend on us for Sunday Divine Liturgy; a return to our former chapel was in order. The old one room schoolhouse, which had been our original abode at Jacob's Falls, had served as a parlor for the past ten years. In that capacity it had housed many gatherings and seen many people fed at recital receptions; now it would again serve as a locus

of spiritual nourishment. Its furniture removed to storage and its iconostasis reinstalled – with some difficulty due to continued settling of the old structure – worship returned to the intimate space with Divine Liturgy on Friday, November first, the feast of Sts. Cosmas and Damian in the Byzantine Calendar.

We had forgotten just how intimate it was! The community is a third larger than when we last celebrated Services in the old building, and since summer we have regularly had a congregation of fifteen or twenty for Divine Liturgy on Sunday. Despite the close quarters and the shakiness of the structure, all has gone well. We quickly adjusted to singing in the less resonant space, and, with very careful movement, we have experienced no collisions or overturned lamps. Nonetheless, we will be most grateful for the completion of the work and our return to our accustomed place of worship.

Progress has been swifter than initially expected. The contractors arrived at the now vacated church on Monday, November 3, and began installing layers of Styrofoam and OSB to protect the tile floor from spills and fracture.





On Tuesday they laid planking over the OSB and installed supports under the floor trusses to support the weight of the scaffolding and the lift that would allow access to the dome; by day's end the walls and ceiling of the sanctuary had been cleaned and a coat of primer applied to the apse. The lift arrived on Wednesday morning, and by afternoon we began to see some color in the apse.

Constraints of time and budget had necessitated a number of economies during original construction; revisiting the church interior now allows us to improve upon some of them. Most immediately apparent will be the introduction of color. Initially painted a uniform white, the walls and ceiling of the church will now exhibit a palette of earth tones drawn from the tile floor, as well as a few highlights in contrasting colors. The new, deeper hues should prove warmer and more restful and provide a good background for future artwork, as well as serving to render the accumulating patina less obtrusive. While we have access to the dome, we will take the opportunity to upgrade its cove



lighting, and we will provide better-designed sconces for the walls, as well. The sum of these changes should significantly enhance the appearance of what is already a functional and inviting worship space.

We are grateful for the excellent work, we thank God for its quick progress, and we look forward to being back into our refurbished church for Christmas Services.





Labor Day were quickly wiped out by bulk buyers, and the busy Saturdays devastated the bakery counter. Running the kitchen at full tilt, however, we managed to fill the requests in timely fashion of those who had placed advance orders for pick-up, and we were often able to supply later in the day – or on the next day – bakery items customers had found missing when they first came in.

Even with all the problems and frustrations, the final weeks were joyful, full of good wishes for the coming winter, and rich with the expectation of seeing old friends once again in the spring. Despite the revenue loss and the production downtime of its first two months, **Jampot** finished its season of door sales with a modest increase over its previous, very good year.

After a brief foray into Wisconsin to retrieve cranberries for coming production, we returned to an evening with forty college students, a week of setting up and moving into our temporary chapel, several retreatants, the beginning of the church's repainting, and the resumption of work on the **Jampot** septic system. Production has also continued apace, we have rebuilt our inventory and dispatched most of our early orders. We now stand ready to fulfill your personal and gift-giving needs with the items on the following pages.

Our cooler and wetter than normal summer yielded to an unusually dry and warm September. As everything else this year, the color was slow in arriving, and many longtime patrons making their regular visit late in the month were surprised at how little the trees had turned. Still, the beautiful days brought great numbers of people to the roadways, and **Jampot** was thronged with customers most days during the second half of the month.

The weather began to cool as we entered October, but the beautiful days continued for the most part, and, with the onset of vibrant color, **Jampot** was more packed than ever. Many days saw lines of customers waiting to get into the shop, and the first two Saturdays of the month proved the busiest of the year. We extended our season to October 19th this year, and, as expected, traffic lessened considerably during the third week of the month, particularly as the color came down and the weather returned to normal. Still, we were spared our usual mid-October snow, and the days – as regular patrons stocked up on cookies and muffins for the winter – were busier than most in May and June.

The inventory problems resulting from the two months of downtime at the season's beginning continued to plague us to the end. The gains made during the quieter days after



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Towards Thanksgiving

In many ways the year just passed was one of the most distressing of the thirty we have now spent on this blessed shore. The delay in beginning **Jampot** production was a particular source of anxiety. **Jampot** accounts for about seventy percent of the monastery's annual revenue, and much depends on its successful operation each year. Many long hours of consistent effort and many loyal patrons have allowed it to grow into the nurturing enterprise it is today. The thought of uncaring, impersonal forces threatening its opening – indeed, its survival – left us angry and devastated.

Yet, in retrospect, we find ourselves grateful for the experience. Although we still feel the effects of the lost time, the affair ended well; we were able to get back to work soon enough to stave off disaster. Most importantly, it reminded us of just how precarious our life here remains, it revealed the reach of the forces arrayed against the survival of this monastery, and it taught us who are the friends we can count on to help. These lessons will not soon be forgotten; they leave us wiser and better equipped to face the future.

And we face it with confidence. We enter our fourth decade at Jacob's Falls serenely joyful and

grateful for the work that sustains our life. Far from wearing us down, the year's experiences and brushes with disaster have strengthened our resolve to proceed. We continue to plan and work to elaborate the dream of this ongoing monastic endeavor. We know that we are not in charge, that the work moves forward despite our own personal inadequacies. We thank God for including us in His design for this holy monastery.

We thank Him also for those who share with us the burden of this noble work: our friends who sustain us and occasionally snatch us from the fire, the patrons whose loyalty over the years have prospered the **Jampot**, and our many benefactors who have made possible so much of what this monastery is today. We pray God bless them, fulfill all their plans for good, give them happiness in this life, and lead them to eternal life. We are also grateful and pray, as well, for those whose efforts have worked against us; we know that they, too, in some way unknown to us, are part of God's plan.

As we approach our national day of Thanksgiving, we hold each of you in our hearts.