

Jacob's Falls  
March 24, 2018  
Saturday of Lazarus

Dear Friend, Patron, Benefactor:

Glory to Jesus Christ!

With today's celebration of the raising of Lazarus, we come to the end of our Lenten pilgrimage and stand on the verge of Holy Week. Tomorrow we celebrate our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and begin our solemn walk with Him through the days of His passion and death. Finally, arriving at Pascha, we gloriously celebrate His Resurrection, the saving event that overcomes all our earthly cares.

This Lent has been less disrupted than the past several. Sadly, the illness that so frequently separated the community these past two years ended in the death of our Hegumen, Hieromonk Nicholas, some ten months ago. We thank God He was still with us at Pascha and was able to eat breakfast and interact one last time with the congregation present for the Resurrection Vigil and Liturgy. We still very much feel his loss, but, as he would wish, we continue to move forward.

In mid-December, in the presence of our God-loving Bishop Benedict, the monks gathered in Sobor and elected me Hegumen in his stead. The honor is more than a little daunting. I ask your prayers that I may faithfully discharge the responsibility. My task, as I now see it, is to stay the course, to prepare the younger monks to assume the burden as the Lord provides, and to work toward fulfilling the many projects already underway – if only in concept.

Fr. Nicholas bequeathed us a monastery unencumbered, well equipped, and financially stable. During his tenure the monastery's property expanded from three acres to seven hundred, our golden-domed church was erected, and **Jampot** grew into one of the best-known establishments in the area. Continuing this growth is our immediate concern.

**Jampot** began as the improbable enterprise of picking wild berries and making jam, and jam is still the mainstay of the business, accounting for about 40% of its revenue. But jam production has not kept pace with demand, and we have long found ourselves with greatly diminished reserves by season's end. The work currently in hand addresses the problem.

We began Phase II of **Jampot** expansion at the end of season in mid-October. Located behind and connected to the existing **Jampot** kitchen, the new facility adds about 1800 square feet of production space on two floors. The entire first floor is to be devoted to jam production, while the upper floor allows space for installation of a larger coffee roaster and the development of a gluten-free

bakery as warranted by demand. The work has gone well; tile setting proceeds on the lower floor; and equipment is being installed on the already completed second floor. We hope to have everything operational by season's opening in about a month's time. We thank God for this vital expansion of the monastery's principal means of support.

**But we continue to need your help.**

The new structure is costing about \$600,000.00 to build and equip. Christmastime gifts and a \$500,000.00 line of credit from our bank and have brought us this far. Some major expenditures are yet to come – final payments for construction, mechanical work, tile, additional equipment, etc. – and the line of credit is now nearly depleted. We pray the Lord raise up the generosity of His holy ones to bring the work to a satisfactory conclusion.

**Jampot** is a vital component in the life of this monastery. Our work there allows us to touch the lives of many people, young and old. **Jampot** accounts for about 75% of the monastery's revenue, providing for our basic needs as a community. It is the other 25% -- the generosity of our benefactors – that makes the growth possible. We see the Lord's hand in the growth these many years past, and we trust for the future.

**We beg you continue to serve as an agent of His Divine Providence.**

In anticipation of your generous response to this appeal, we keep you and those you love in our prayers and in our hearts during the coming solemnities of Holy Week and Pascha.

Yours in Christ Jesus,



Hieromonk Basil

Hegumen

and the monks of Holy Transfiguration Skete