

St. Barbara Monastery – 15799 Ojai Road – Santa Paula, CA 93060
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CHRIST IS BORN!



GLORIFY HIM!



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Dear Friends of St. Barbara Monastery,

Our newsletter cover this month needs some explanation.

A cryptic directive in the Typikon for the 24th of December reads: “Following the Dismissal (of the Divine Liturgy), the paraecclesiarch (i.e. the lamplighter) lights a candle and sets it in the middle of the church. Then both choirs, standing together, sing the Troparion and the Kontakion of the Feast.” This is the first time that these two “theme songs” of Christmas are sung.

Oftentimes, it is a tall processional candle on a candlestand that is set in the middle of the church. But in some places the startling custom is to use a small candle in a small and ordinary, unadorned candleholder placed right on the floor. The meaning of the symbol, indeed, is best conveyed by the latter practice: The light of Christ began to shine on earth as the smallest of flames, hardly discernible and in most lowly circumstances.

The services for Christmas Day are appointed to proceed with magnificence and splendor as is fitting for such a great feast of the Church; which we have come to call “the winter Pascha.” But they are prefaced with this humble, small, lone candle piercing the darkness on Christmas Eve.

As we enter into the celebration of the Feast, may the tiny flame that is the newborn Christ be lit and shine brightly in the hearts of each and every one of us!

Abbess Victoria
and the community of
St. Barbara Monastery

FEAST OF ST. BARBARA – DECEMBER 4, 2014

Glad as everyone was to have the winter rains after ten dry months, we could hardly be downhearted at the prospect of wet weather for our feast day. Instead, we raised our usual tents on the macadam of the upper parking lot to avoid the muddy lawn, made them water tight with extra tarps, and hoped for the best. We expected attendance to be small this year because of the weather prediction, but were delighted that the usual large crowd arrived to honor the Great Martyr. We thank His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN, for coming and presiding; Hieromonks Dionisie and Bessarion of Holy Resurrection Monastery in Temecula for attending the Vigil, V. Rev. Paul Waisanen, V. Rev. Nicholas Speier, V. Rev. John Sommer, Rev. Yousuf Rassam and Rev.



Nathan Thompson for concelebrating at the Divine Liturgy; Ruth Rutledge for directing the choir for the Divine Liturgy once again this year, Andrew Rassam for serving as an acolyte, James Mahlke for helping us set up the tents, tables and chairs, and Kimberly Franklin and her friend Evelyn Klausen (“guests” from Vancouver, Canada), who worked tirelessly for two days to help us prepare everything.



WOMEN OF ST. BARNABAS CHURCH VISIT



On Saturday, November 15th, the women of St. Barnabas Church in Costa Mesa spent the day at the monastery. Arriving in the late morning, they were present for the 6th Hour before serving everyone a delicious luncheon, which they had brought along with them. They spent the rest of the day helping us prepare a large fundraising mailing for the building fund of our new chapel. We thank Deacon Thomas

Braun, who stopped by in the afternoon and led us in prayer at a memorial service for the unborn infants in our small infant cemetery. Work on the mailing then continued until Vespers after which the ladies set out on their long trip home. We thank them for a huge job well done!

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2014



Mitch Denny produced a lot of caskets.



We had a bumper crop of lavender.



Thanks to Tyson Shackelford, we now have drinking water from the faucets.



We hosted a lot of work parties.



The chapel construction progressed.



We celebrated a WET Feast of St. Barbara

A Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at the monastery on the Feast of St. Stephen, December 27, 2014, at 10:00 AM, preceded by the 3rd and 6th Hours at 9:30 AM. Everyone is welcome.