

St. Barbara Monastery—15799 Ojai Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
(805) 921-1563 – www.stbarbaramonastery.org



***THERE WILL BE
NO FRIENDS GATHERING
IN FEBRUARY, 2017***

DIRECTIONS TO THE MONASTERY

From Highway 101 – Exit Hwy 126 East at Ventura.

Travel 11 miles east along Hwy 126 and exit 10th St/Hwy 150 at Santa Paula.

Turn left from the exit ramp and follow 10th St/Hwy 150 through Santa Paula.

Bear right at the fork in the road. This is Ojai Rd/Hwy 150.

Travel about five miles (1/4 mile past Thomas Aquinas College) to 15799 Ojai Road.

The monastery driveway is on the right just past our mailbox at Highway Marker 2830.

Drive across the bridge and follow the signs to the parking area.

From Highway 5 – Exit Hwy 126 West at Santa Clarita.

Travel 27 miles to Santa Paula, and exit at 10th St/Hwy 150.

Turn right from the exit ramp and follow 10th St/Hwy 150 through Santa Paula.

Bear right at the fork in the road. This is Ojai Rd/Hwy 150.

Continue as directed above.



Dear Friends of St. Barbara Monastery,

The last Sunday of February in 2017, when we would normally have our Friends' Gathering, turns out to be Forgiveness Sunday. Therefore, because it is the custom in many parishes to have Vespers, marking the beginning of Great Lent with the Rite of Forgiveness directly following the Divine Liturgy, we are cancelling our Friends' Gathering. We look forward to having our next Friends' Gathering on March 26th.

In many places, in addition to the fasting and special services appointed by the Church for Great Lent, it is the salutary custom to adopt some small personal labor or observance in the name of the Lord—what in Slavonic is called a “podvig”—for the duration of the Forty Days. A child might undertake some small daily task at home, a teen might avoid TV or give some time to helping the needy, a grown-up might add to his daily prayers or undertake to read a book of spiritual benefit. The possibilities are innumerable. The idea is to undertake something that requires some effort, and—most importantly—to do it in the name of the Lord. “Make your vows unto the Lord and keep them,” says the Psalmist. In proportion to the rich harvest of grace to be reaped from even a small effort of this kind, anyone who has fulfilled such a vow will tell you the labor was negligible. But the key, to repeat what has already been said, is to do whatever one undertakes in the Name of the Lord.

We wish each and every one of you a most blessed and grace-filled Lent!

Abbess Victoria
and the sisters of
St. Barbara Monastery



THE DROUGHT IS OVER!

The big news here—as everywhere in Southern California—is the rain. It has changed our dry creek bed into a swiftly flowing river. (That is our creek in the cover photo!) At the height of the great storm on February 17th-18th, the steady roar of the rushing water was deafening, punctuated by the sharp reports of boulders crashing as the current hurled them against one another. We found ourselves shouting to be heard over the din.

AND WE HAVE A NEW AND DIFFERENT CROP!

Seemingly overnight, the rain turned our meadow into a sea of bright green mallow, where just days ago all we had was an expanse of parched brown earth. When our Syrian friend Elian Sayegh, who has been helping with the flooring for our new chapel, happened to come by with a load of tile, he noticed the mallow at once. In Syria, he told us, mallow is harvested and used as a vegetable. We invited him to harvest as much as he wanted, and he proceeded to pull up several plants to take home and cook. He said the whole plant can be used, and suggested seasoning it with onions, lemon juice, and, if desired, some garlic. He also said it can be frozen for use later.



We wasted no time in trying it out. Having fried some onions in a little oil, we added water, threw in the leaves and stems, and half steamed, half boiled the plants. Lemon juice was added at the end. We served it for supper and—*voila!*—added a new home-grown vegetable to our diet, the leaves soft and the stems a bit crunchy. We spent part of the following day harvesting our new find, blanching, packaging and freezing it to serve during the upcoming Lenten season.

Mallow is not unfamiliar to us. We have offered a tincture of mallow in our monastery store in the past, because it is known for soothing the respiratory and gastro-intestinal tracts. We have also dried it as a tea, which actually works better in soothing irritated mucus linings, because the hot water draws out the needed properties better than alcohol. But this is the first time we have tried it as a vegetable. Thank you, Elian, for introducing it to us!

PREPARATIONS FOR OUR CHAPEL CONSECRATION

Planning for the consecration of the monastery's new chapel has begun in earnest. His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN, has approved the schedule, which will include a Vigil Service on the evening of Friday, May 5th, and then the Service of Consecration itself followed by the Divine Liturgy on Saturday, May 6th. To the glory of God, many people are expected to attend, making this a large event. Every kind of help is needed, and the monastery can use plenty of volunteers.

We invite you to lend a hand if you are at all able to participate. Please call or send an email message to let us know what you can do. We will need volunteers ahead of time

- to help send out invitations
- to sew new paraments (coverings)
- to prepare the chapel (move furniture, hang icons and lampadas, decorate, etc.)
- to prepare the grounds (rake, sweep, water, place signage, prepare the parking area)
- to set up (tents, tables and chairs).

And we will need volunteers during the event and afterwards

- to help with parking
- to assist guests
- to assist the cooks
- to serve the luncheon
- to take down tents, etc. and clean up.

The list goes on

***On the first Wednesday of Great Lent,
March 1st, at 3:00 PM
Fr. Dionisie of Holy Resurrection Monastery, Temecula
will celebrate the Presanctified Liturgy at St. Barbara Monastery.
Everyone is welcome.***