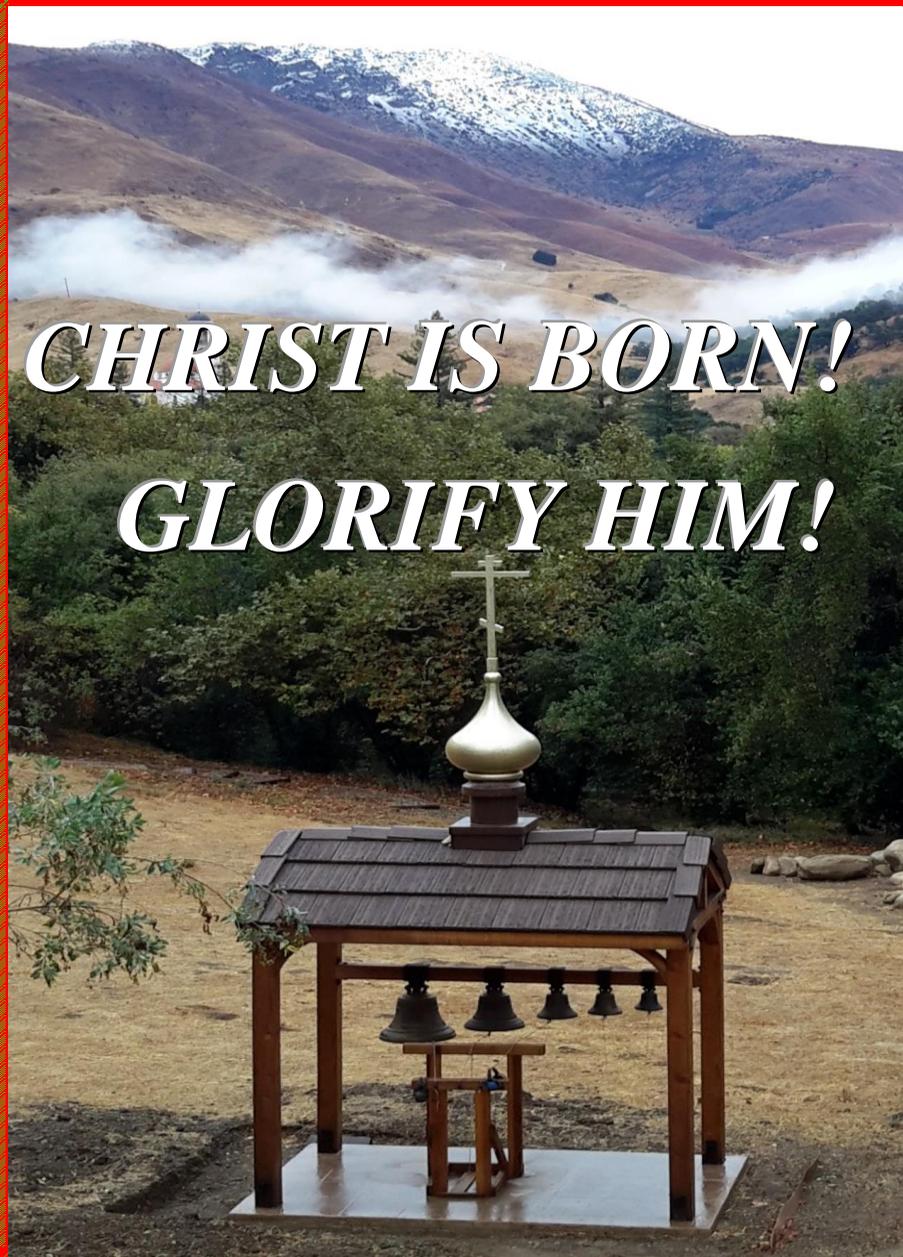


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***CHRIST IS BORN!***  
***GLORIFY HIM!***



***St. Barbara Monastery Belfry – December, 2019***



***CHRIST IS BORN!***

***GLORIFY HIM!***

**Dear Friends of St. Barbara Monastery,**

**We send you our warmest greetings for a joyful celebration of Christmas all through this blessed season! May Christ be born in the hearts of each and every one of us all!**

**As we write this Newsletter, we are in the midst of preparing for our own celebration right here at the monastery. Everything, right down to the traditional cookie-baking and decorating, feels different this year, because this will be the first time in something like fourteen years that we have had a priest at the monastery celebrating the Divine Liturgy on Christmas Day! It seems to us the very walls of our chapel are rejoicing at this turn of events. We thank God with all our hearts for His amazing care for our small monastic community in sending us Father Jude. And, along with Fr. Jude, the Lord has sent Matushka Brigitte to “mother the mothers”! *The Lord hath done great things for us, and we are glad* (Psalm 126:3).**

**In comparison to this huge development in the life of our monastery this year, everything else that has happened pales. Nevertheless, in gratitude, we want to mention a few things:**

**We have launched two major development projects by submitting to the County of Ventura 1) our application to have a cemetery on our property and 2) our proposal to build our long-desired house addition. Stay tuned for news as these two projects wend their way through the labyrinth of County departments.**

**Our lay sister Ioanna (Jill) Wallerstedt with a group of dedicated parishioners at Holy Virgin Mary Cathedral in L.A. formed what is now a successful outreach program to the homeless in the Silverlake neighborhood where the Cathedral is located.**

**A memory we will treasure forever: While still without a monastery priest, we celebrated Pascha with Fr. Michael Rozdilsky and his parish of St. George in Hesperia/Victorville.**

**As his Eagle Scout project, Elijah Dickens and his Scout Troop built us a magnificent new children’s playset.**

**Over the year, we were privileged to host something like seventeen church groups (about four hundred people!) for “monastery days,” when we provided our visitors with a taste of life at St. Barbara Monastery and received from them help with such things as maintenance of our grounds and processing our lavender. Our thanks to God and to our good Friends knows no bounds!**

**Abbess Victoria  
and the sisters  
of St. Barbara Monastery**

## ***A FILM NOT TO BE MISSED!***

We thank Rev. Deacon Ananias Sorem of St. Mary Romanian Orthodox Church in Anaheim for informing us of the existence of the film entitled ***HEALING FEAR: ST. LUKE THE SURGEON***. The film in Russian is not new, but only became available with English subtitles last summer. It is 1 hour and 48 minutes long and is accessible on Youtube.



We were already familiar with St. Luke (a 20<sup>th</sup> century bishop in Crimea), having read his biography (published in English by St. John Monastery in Manton, CA) and having some years ago received his icon with a secondary relic (a gift from the Monastery of the Veil in France and containing a bit from his vestments). We do not have the words to recommend enough to everyone this beautiful and worthy film portrayal of the saint.

## ***LADIES OF ST. ANTHONY CHURCH IN SAN DIEGO VISIT***

On Saturday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, we were delighted to host the Antiochian Ladies of St. Anthony Church, La Jolla, as part of their weekend visit to the monastery and St. Athanasius Church in Santa Barbara. As always when they visit us, they were a great help, lending willing and skilled hands to our



ongoing efforts to cultivate our lavender fields and (this time) also plant trees as part of the landscaping plan for our property. Taking time for prayer in the chapel, visiting over lunch, and a presentation on spiritual life given by Mother Paraskeva, the time together was over all too quickly!

**The schedule for Sunday Divine Liturgies at the monastery chapel is 10:00 AM preceded by the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Hours at approximately 9:30 AM.**

## ***THE FEAST OF ST. BARBARA – DECEMBER 4, 2019***



This year's Feast of St. Barbara will be remembered in particular for the remarkable visit of the wonderworking icon of the Protection of the Mother of God pictured at left. The icon, brought to us by our friend Eugene Solonin of Los Angeles, who recently travelled with the icon to many churches in Russia and Ukraine, arrived at St. Barbara Monastery just as the festal Divine Liturgy was about to begin and remained with us into the afternoon.

Despite the rain, a crowd gathered to honor the Great Martyr and join our community for the festivities. On the eve of the Feast, Rev. Yousuf Rassam served the Vigil assisted by V. Rev. Josiah Trenham and V. Rev. Jude Lepine, the monastery's priest, with V. Rev. Paul Waisanen in attendance. Then, on the day itself, with His Eminence Archbishop BENJAMIN presiding, six priests concelebrated at the Divine Liturgy: V. Rev, Timothy Baclig, V. Rev. Nicholas Speier, V. Rev. Jude Lepine, Rev. Yousuf Rassam, Rev. John Mahfouz and Rev. John Robinson, The sun came out during the Divine Liturgy, scattering the rain clouds for a few hours and making it possible to hold the traditional Cross Procession around the outside of the church.

Afterwards, the luncheon prepared by Chef Kimmy Tang was served indoors, but many guests were able to enjoy their meal outside in the warm sun—before the rain started up again in the afternoon.

