

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



### **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 hymnography of Great Lent is not only surpassingly beautiful, it is rich with the deepest theological insights. At all of the liturgical services, but particularly in this special season, we are invited to hear—not only with our ears, but with our hearts—the Church’s many-faceted reflections on the mystery of God’s love for mankind. The culmination of all these is Pascha. How can we not respond with love and joy as we embrace the Truth announced at Pascha!

In the midst of thinking these very thoughts, however, we had quite a jolt when a young friend of ours (a theological student, no less) told us that he could not understand why everyone breaks out with such exuberance and joy upon hearing the words *Christ is risen!* at Pascha. Of course, he told us, he understood that by Christ’s Resurrection death has been destroyed and we all shall rise again. But after our resurrection will come the Judgement. At best, he said, our joy is premature.

Taken aback at his words (which he told us were the remarks of one of his professors), we had no quick rejoinder. But a look at the hymnography of Lent and Pascha soon set things straight. Not only does resurrection issue from the tomb of Christ (like an isolated phenomenon), but resurrection is the sign and result of God’s mercy and forgiveness pouring out upon us. One might say the gift of resurrection is embedded in them. Note the following words from Forgiveness Sunday (the ‘Glory verse’ or *doxastichon* of the Vespers Aposticha):

*I desire not the loss of the creature which I fashioned,  
but that he should be saved and come to knowledge of the truth;  
and when he comes I will not cast him out.*

And over and over again, throughout the Paschal Matins, we sing:

*Jesus, having risen from the grave as He foretold,  
hath granted us life everlasting and great mercy.*

Abbess Victoria  
and the sisters of  
St. Barbara Monastery

## ***A VISIT FROM ST. INNOCENT CHURCH, TARZANA***

On Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, the Sunday School children of St. Innocent Church, Tarzana, along with their pastor Father Yousuf Rassam, their teachers, parents and grandparents, spent the day at the monastery.



The day began with the Divine Liturgy celebrated by Father Yousuf. As appointed for the last Saturday before the beginning of Lent, the Liturgy was in memory of the venerable monks and nuns from throughout the ages who labored in the monastic life.

Following a beautiful buffet luncheon, prepared by the ladies of the parish and enjoyed outdoors in the perfect warm weather, the afternoon's activities commenced with a talk by Mother Victoria, meant as Monastery. Afterwards, explore the property as well possible projects. While teachers visited the infant the many small crosses helping label envelopes, fill construction of the belfry, had been cut from trees Fire, etc., etc. (There are always plenty of tasks waiting to be done at any monastery!)



an introduction to St. Barbara there was plenty of time to as work at any of an array of the children and their cemetery and laid wreaths on there, the others set about lavender sachets, work on the move piles of branches that burned in the recent Thomas

Before heading back to Los Angeles, the whole group enjoyed a perfect ending to the day: a marshmallow roast at the monastery's campsite for guests, where everyone also had a chance to try out the tire swing (reported to be the best in the County). Tired but happy, visitors and sisters alike, agreed that this was a day well worth repeating!





As has become the tradition at St. Barbara Monastery, His Eminence Archbishop BENJAMIN plans to be with us for Lazarus Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. The Divine Liturgy will start at 10:00 AM, preceded by the Hours at 9:30. Everyone is welcome.



## *LAVENDER UPDATE*

A number of you have asked about our plans for our former lavender fields in the aftermath of the Thomas Fire. In a word, yes, we have decided to replant them.

While there is a chance many of the lavender plants with living root stock could grow back, on the advice of representatives from the Agricultural Department, who came in person and looked over the fire damage here, we believe we do better to plant anew. After all, these lavender bushes were already seven years old when the fire burned them. The new lavender plants (plugs) are already on order and should arrive in April. So, in March, we plan to plough the fields and otherwise prepare the ground, and in April, we plan to replant them. Of course, this summer's lavender crop will be negligible. But the new plants, nourished by the soil now enhanced with ash, should produce an especially hardy and abundant crop in the summer of 2019.

We have also decided to replace some trees destroyed in the fire, especially the fruit trees (citrus and apple). And we intend to take this opportunity to plant a few more (possibly avocado). A big “thank you” to everyone who has offered help with this big spring project!



February 25<sup>th</sup>—the last Sunday of this month, when we would normally have our Friends' Gathering—is the Sunday of Orthodoxy. Because it is the custom for parishes in a given area to gather for Vespers at one parish church and celebrate the Restoration of the Icons together, we are cancelling our Friends' Gathering. In our area (the Central Coast), this special Vespers service will be held at Holy Annunciation Church in Santa Maria. We look forward to having our next Friends' Gathering on March 25<sup>th</sup>, which is the Feast of the Annunciation.