

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

FEBRUARY GATHERING OF THE FRIENDS OF ST. BARBARA MONASTERY

February 24th, 2019

4:00 pm Presentation:

*Resurrection and Rehabilitation:
Prison Ministry in the 21st Century.*

Speaker: V. Rev. John Tomasi

*Pastor of Our Lady Joy of All Who Sorrow
Orthodox Church, Culver City, CA*

5:00 pm Vespers

6:00 pm Potluck

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.



Dear Friends of St. Barbara Monastery,

This month, two people, whose lives were intertwined significantly with the life of our monastery, fell asleep in the Lord: Mother Olga (Harrison) and Gail Shannon. You can read a little about them in this Newsletter. The world is not quite the same place without them, and we miss them.

The following words of St. Seraphim, recorded in his biography, however, brought us great consolation. Speaking about a newly departed nun at *Deveyevo*, the monastic community he had founded and for which he was the spiritual father, St. Seraphim said:

“What is there to grieve about? We ought to rejoice. Her soul took wing like a dove, and has been borne aloft to the Holy Trinity. Cherubim, Seraphim and all the host of heaven made way for her. She is an attendant of the Mother of God. She is a lady-in-waiting of the Queen of Heaven. We can only rejoice, we must not weep.”

Indeed, having glimpsed a little of the fierce struggles of these two women to live the Christian life in the midst of all kinds of temptations—particularly their struggles to endure severe illness—we can only rejoice for them, and *with* them. They have triumphed. They have reached their goal. And meanwhile, even while we sorely miss them, we can take consolation in the assurance that they have not abandoned us—for all are one in Christ!

May Christ our God, through the prayers of the Theotokos and all the saints, grant rest to the souls of His departed servants, Mother Olga and Nina (Gail’s chrismation name), and grant them Memory Eternal!

Abbess Victoria
and the sisters of
St. Barbara Monastery

NEWS FROM OUR SISTERS IN CALISTOGA

In memoriam: Mother Olga (Harrison)



Mother Olga (Harrison), better known to most all of us as Sister Thekla and earlier on as a lay person with the name of Ann Marie, fell asleep in the Lord at Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga, CA, on February 6th. Just a few weeks earlier, realizing she would not recover from her illness, she was professed as a nun of the little schema with the name of Olga (for Matushka Olga of Alaska).

One might say that, as during her life, so also at her death, she had a flare for the dramatic and a touch of Southern hospitality, in as much as she died on a spectacular day, the same day as four of her monastic sisters were tonsured (either as ryassaphor nuns or stavrophors), but she waited until the evening, not interrupting the events of the afternoon. She had led a hard life and could be a bit rough around the edges, but she had a will of steel and, underneath it all, a heart that reached out in compassion to those in need. A story is told of her in her early youth when she noticed that the mail on the military base where she was living was not evenly distributed. To remedy this, she took the mail from the mailboxes and put it back in a more “fair” manner. When the FBI somberly came knocking on the door of her home to reprimand her, she reproached them saying, “Didn’t anyone teach you to share?” No doubt everyone who knew Mother Olga could tell their own stories!

At the mercy meal following her funeral, Mother Melania said that, over the course of her illness, as her body gave out, the softness of her heart became more evident, and that she was radiant at her passing. God rest her soul! And may her Memory Be Eternal!

Nine Sisters of Holy Assumption Monastery are Tonsured!

On the evening of Wednesday, December 19th, Archbishop BENJAMIN tonsured the former Sister Margarete as a stavrophor with the name Mother Macrina (after St. Macrina the Younger) and the former Sister Xenia as a stavrophor with the name Mother Monica (after St. Monica of Hippo, the mother of St. Augustine).

[At right: M. Macrina, Archbishop Benjamin,
and M. Monica]

(continued on back)



Previously, on November 21st, the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple, the Archbishop had come and tonsured Sr. Thekla as a stavrophor nun with the name of M. Olga (for Matushka Olga of Alaska).



Then, on February 6th, the Archbishop came yet again and tonsured Sr. Katherine, Sr. Theodosia, Sr. Marie and Sr. Hannah as ryassaphor nuns, Sister Ann as a stavrophor nun with the name of M. Ioanna (for St. John Maximovich) and Sister Pearl as a



stavrophor nun with the name of M. Angelina.

Abbess Melania is at left

IN MEMORIAM: GAIL SHANNON

Gail Shannon, who was, along with her late husband Deacon George (Howard) Shannon, a founding member of St. Athanasius Church in Santa Barbara and a close friend and benefactor of St. Barbara Monastery, fell asleep in the Lord on February 9th.

Our memories of Gail go back to the earliest years of the monastery, when she would stop by to offer her friendship and help. Later, when the monastery moved to Goleta and even later when the monastery relocated to the Santa Paula area, Gail—a prominent realtor in Santa Barbara—offered the monastery her valuable professional services. When The Foundation for the Support of St. Barbara Monastery was founded to raise funds primarily for the monastery property and construction projects, Gail became a key Foundation director.



All of us at the monastery and the many friends she made here will miss her cheerful presence acutely. May God grant her rest with the saints in the Kingdom of Heaven and Memory Eternal!

CRUISE TO ALASKA: RAFFLE RESULTS

The winner of the First Prize was Nestan Tsiskaridze, a computer scientist from Georgia (the country) at UCSB, who, incidentally bought her ticket the morning of the drawing at St. Athanasius Church in Santa Barbara. Second Prize went to Colleen Allen of St. Barnabas Church in Costa Mesa. And Third Prize was won by Kristin King of St. Athanasius Church in Santa Barbara. Our sincere thanks to everyone who participated and made this raffle a success!