

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

# *THE OCTOBER GATHERING OF THE FRIENDS OF ST. BARBARA MONASTERY*

*Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015*

*4:00 pm Presentation:*

## *LOVE YOUR ENEMIES*

*Speaker: MONK LAWRENCE*

*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.

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 mystery hidden from before all the ages  
and unknown even to the angels,  
through thee, O Theotokos, hath been revealed to those on earth. . . .*

The astonishment of the angelic world is a recurring theme of Orthodox hymnography: at the Annunciation, at seeing the Son of God born as a little child, at the Resurrection, and again at the Ascension, that is, at every step in the unfolding of God's plan for the salvation of the human race. The angels were astonished because they weren't privy to His plan; what happened was completely unknown and unexpected. Their astonishment metamorphosed to wonder, and their wonder to joy, and their joy to thanksgiving culminating in continuous praise as they worship God throughout eternity.

We should be astonished, too, just like the angels. But how different from theirs our usual human response to astonishment is. Our astonishment more often than not metamorphoses not to wonder but to doubt. We all know, of course, how our Orthodox Church regards with appreciation the doubt concerning Jesus' Resurrection expressed by the Apostle Thomas. In our hymnography we sing of "the blessed doubt of Thomas," whereby he was led to verify and confirm the Lord's Resurrection. By and large, however, when human beings entertain doubt, the outcome is not so positive. Rather, we tend to descend deeper and deeper into negative thoughts. Something challenges our faith in God, and then—rather than inspiring us to wonder—we allow it to erode our faith, perhaps to the point where nothing is left.

The angels follow the opposite path; and when we encounter the unknown and unexpected, we do well to emulate them. Astonished at something—perhaps the same unexpected and unimaginable things that astonished the angels, perhaps things entirely new and different—we do well to bring to mind our surpassing ignorance! New knowledge may astonish and astound us and seem to cast into doubt all our old knowledge. Would we not do better to allow ourselves to proceed from astonishment to wonder, embracing the mystery, rather than doubt? Thus we might then proceed from wonder to joy, and from joy to thanksgiving that we, too, might worship, praise and glorify God throughout eternity.

Abbess Victoria  
and the community of  
St. Barbara Monastery

## ***MONASTERY AT THE RIVERSIDE GREEK FEST***



Once again this year, our monastery was represented by a booth at the “Greek” Festival of St. Andrew Church in Riverside. The sisters, with the expert, invaluable and tireless sales assistance of Asia Ballew and several other Friends, peddled the monastery’s usual honey and lavender products. Besides bringing in much needed revenue, our Festival booth allowed us the opportunity to meet again with many of our good Friends in that area as well as to make many new ones. We thank Father Josiah Trenham and his flock for welcoming our monastery to the Festival so warmly, providing the booth for us gratis, and giving us the opportunity as well to enjoy the fine tours and cultural displays for which the Festival is renowned.

## ***OUR CREW OF ELECTRICIANS***

Just last week, we sent out an S.O.S. to everyone on our e-mail list in a desperate attempt to find a few helpers for Jim Morrison of St. Athanasius Church, electrician *par excellence*. Jim has been volunteering his time to install the wiring in our new chapel, but the job could use a few more hands. Besides our ever-reliable Friend Doug Jones from Ojai, who knows more than a thing or two about electricity, Matthias Parkinson, a professional electrician who attends St. Barnabas Church in Costa Mesa, turned up. Our very own Project Manager Mitch Denny also, changing the tools in his pack, became a construction electrician for a day (strictly non-union).



## ***WOMEN OF ST. TIMOTHY CHURCH, LOMPOC, VISIT ST. BARBARA MONASTERY***

On Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, the women of St. Timothy Orthodox Church in Lompoc made what has become their annual visit to St. Barbara Monastery, arriving in time for the usual Sixth Hour prayers. The weather was perfect. Indeed, several of the women were inspired to spend the afternoon helping with the pressing work of pruning the lavender field, while others chose to help indoors to prepare the mailing of this very newsletter.



The women brought food—including Syrian delicacies—for dinner and supper (as well as quite a number of future meals!), which everyone was able to share outdoors in the fresh mountain air. Following the midday meal, to add spiritual food to the table, Mother Paraskeva presented a short talk on the teaching of St. Theophan the Recluse regarding individual prayer. Later, after Vespers, Mother Victoria added a few words in remembrance of Mother Juliana of St. Barbara Monastery, formerly a member of St. Timothy Church, who some twenty years ago brought the women of St. Timothy's to St. Barbara Monastery for the very first time.

### ***St. Barbara Orthodox Monastery Chapel Building Benefit Dinner***

*at*

***St. Luke Orthodox Church  
13261 Dunklee Avenue, Garden Grove 92840***

***Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup> 2015***

***Tickets: \$50/each & \$25/under 12.***

***6 pm Wine-Tasting with Fr. John Finley***

***7 pm Dinner- featuring delicious food by Chef Kimmy Tang***

***For tickets, please contact St. Luke Orthodox Church***

***Anna Nasser: 714-971-2344 or [annasgl@yahoo.com](mailto:annasgl@yahoo.com)***

***(Monies raised will go towards completing the building of the chapel.)***