

St. Barbara Monastery - 15799 Ojai Road - Santa Paula, CA 93060 - (805) 921-1563



Directions to the Monastery

From Highway 101 - Exit Hwy 126 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 5 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,

Many of you have been asking about the progress of our various projects. We are happy to be able to report that, yes, there is progress indeed. Unfortunately, there is not enough progress to make this report particularly interesting by announcing any milestones. But here is what we can tell you:

The Seneca Oil Co. has signed the paperwork connected with the new parcel map and lot line adjustment for the two acres we are purchasing from them. The (expensive) hurdle that remains is the physical placement of the new corner markers for our property and theirs. God willing, we can close escrow and the two acres will be finally ours next month.

Concerning building of our new chapel, the Ventura County Planning Dept. likes our architectural plans and foresees no problems approving them. Nonetheless, they tell us that the whole approval process to grant us a building permit will not be completed for another four to six months! This means it will be sometime in 2010 before we can actually break ground.

Meanwhile, as we mentioned in last month's newsletter, our community continues to grow in number. Along with this, the number of pilgrims and visitors likewise continues to increase. We will definitely have to enlarge our future building plans to accommodate more persons—both sisters and guests—than previously envisioned. And we will have to find additional means to finance the larger construction project. God is blessing us! There is no doubt about it. But the tasks ahead look enormous. As always, we ask your prayers that the life and activity of our monastery may be pleasing to God.

By way of reflection, we would like to add that our monastery appears to be part of an amazing Orthodox phenomenon on the Central Coast. Not only is the monastery about to build a chapel; Holy Annunciation Church in Santa Maria, St. Athanasius Church in Goleta, and St. Demetrios Church in Camarillo are all about to break ground for new church buildings! The Central Coast has become a "happening place" for Orthodoxy! Then, not far away at all, St. Andrew Church in Riverside and St. Michael Church in Van Nuys are also constructing new church buildings. What should we make of this? The Holy Spirit is surely moving among us and inspiring us to undertake great things for the glory of God and for the salvation of our souls and of many around us. May we all approach this holy work, unworthy though we be of such outpourings of grace, with repentance, humility, self-sacrifice and love for God and all his people!



Abbess Victoria
and the community
of St. Barbara Monastery

*Our future monastery complex – residential wing
on the left, chapel on the right*

A SPECIAL RETREAT AT THE MONASTERY ON OCTOBER 3rd



Many of you will remember the extraordinary presentation Seraphima Butler gave at the February Friends gathering on the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. She adapted this church school curriculum for Orthodox home and church schools and, along with a few other teachers, has implemented this program at St. Athanasius Church in Goleta. Interest in this method of catechesis ran high among all who heard her speak, and a number of the Friends of St. Barbara Monastery expressed a desire to learn more. So, on Saturday, October 3rd, Seraphima and her team of teachers will hold a retreat for adults (ages 18 and up) at the monastery, using actual materials provided to the children enrolled in the Catechesis as a means of acquainting the retreat participants with the program.

Far from being an academic exercise, the retreat has been designed to be relaxing and spiritually refreshing. The day will begin with a brief introduction to the general schedule, song, and (weather permitting) a gentle group movement activity. An adult reflection on a key parable of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd will follow. Afterwards, participants will be free to pursue work and prayer within a prepared environment. A variety of activities will be available as a means to prayer: art, calligraphy, journal-making, prayer "rope" beading, and reading of additional catechetical materials for further Scriptural reflection. These are all options, but strolling the grounds, personal journaling, and quiet fellowship are all encouraged. The morning will conclude by praying the 6th Hour with the monastic community and lunch.

The afternoon session will mirror the morning. The group will begin with a brief discussion period reflecting on the morning's activities. Using a set of materials related to the morning presentation, participants will be invited to reflect on the presence of Christ in the Eucharist and deepen their consideration of the themes presented. Independent work time will continue afterward, followed by concluding comments, questions, and information.

If you are a parent, a grandparent, a godparent, or simply someone involved with teaching children about the Faith, this is a retreat you don't want to miss. And, if you are someone who has said "I want catechesis for myself!" – then this is likewise a retreat you don't want to miss.

Cost for the day-long retreat, including materials and lunch, is \$40.00. Seating is limited, so please call the monastery at 805-921-1563 or email the sisters at sbmonastery@gmail.com as soon as possible to make your reservation.

WE HAVE A WEBSITE AT LAST!

We are pleased to announce that St. Barbara Monastery now has a website! You can access it at www.stbarbaramonastery.org. The website was developed by our novice Paraskeva with extraordinary help and encouragement from our close Friend, Liviu Constantinescu. Without him we probably wouldn't have undertaken the project ourselves.

In addition to keeping up with the latest monastery news, you will also be able to read past newsletters, make a donation, or order items from our online bookstore. The website also offers general information about our monastery and links to other Orthodox websites. The website is updated regularly, so check back often!



Novice Paraskeva, our webmaster, duly supervised by Punkin the Cat, fills orders for St. Barbara Monastery label honey placed through our new online store.



Liviu Constantinescu and Paraskeva collaborate on web design and content.



Sister Pearl, our monastery's avid vegetable gardener, chooses what will be on the supper menu.

OH, DEER!

Stephen Coler's Eagle Scout project, the raised garden beds that he and his Boy Scout Troop from St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Camarillo built early in the summer at the monastery, are providing us with an abundance of tasty vegetables—especially green beans, yellow squash, and now tomatoes. Why the high fence around this small garden? The answer is “deer—lots of deer.” The family that lives just behind us on the hill and frequents our property daily is flourishing, so that we may soon be referring to it as a herd. The deer keep the roses, geraniums, and many other plants perpetually pruned (to Sr. Mary's chagrin) and devour any small citrus branches and tasty greens that reach out of the cages Brother Lawrence built for the trees. So far, the sturdy, tall deer fencing Stephen and his fellow scouts put up around the raised beds has successfully done its job. We are very grateful to them for their hard and careful work.