

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

The February Gathering of the Friends of St. Barbara Monastery

Sunday, February 27th, 2011

4:00 pm Presentation

A CHOSEN FAST: OF THE HEART, THE MIND, AND THE WILL

*Speaker – V. Rev. John Finley – Department of Missions and
Evangelism of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese*

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 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,

Lent is opening before us! There is a palpable and contagious ripple of excitement that passes through the preliminary texts of the *Triodion*. To all of us who muster our desire for God and resolve to “do Lent,” Lent presents the promise of high adventure.

We do well to prepare a little and make some decisions ahead of time concerning how we shall spend our Lent, what small spiritual labor or *podvig* (the Slavic term) we shall take on. Because Lent consists not only of the special church services, but of our own spiritual labor at home, at work, or wherever life may take us.

What might these labors be? We remember one Lent many years ago when there was a schoolgirl who resolved to spend a little recess time each day with the “outcast” child in her class. A woman we knew decided that she would read the complete Morning and Evening Prayers without fail from beginning to end each day. A businessman confided to us that he spent an afternoon a week doing laundry at the local homeless shelter and visiting with the folks staying there. All of these people undertook something that required some sacrifice and then performed what they had vowed to do in the Name of the Lord and out of desire “to get to God” (to use St. Ignatius’ wonderful turn of phrase). “*Pray and make your vows unto the Lord our God,*” the Prophet David writes.

Each of these people was rewarded with the promised grace of God many times over. “*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled*” (Mt. 5:6,7). “*Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together; and running over will be put into your bosom*” (Lk 6:38).

All of these people happened to be from a single parish. There are no words to describe what Pascha was like in that church that year! May yours be as glorious!

Abbess Victoria
and the community of
St. Barbara Monastery



Mouse Architecture

AN ARCHITECTURAL WONDER

Monk Lawrence happened to open the oven in his RV kitchen, and what should he find? This amazing construction, made mostly of insulation material. Yes, it is a multi-story mouse condo! The monastery field mice

specialize in unique nests made of this building material and placed in choice spots that provide their own heating—for example, computer printers, and the motors and even the exhaust pipes of vehicles. This, however, was the first to be discovered in an oven. Using the insulation has the added advantage of providing the mice with expressways through the emptied wall and ceiling cavities for purposes of lightning-quick entry and escape. The monastery cats, however, have demonstrated no interest in patrolling these areas and are not on the list of feared predators.

OUR LATEST 'GET RICH QUICK' SCHEME

Well, maybe it won't be quick and maybe we won't get rich. But we offer profound thanks to Deacon Howard and Gail Shannon, who gave us the idea of planting our meadows in lavender. It turns out that lavender has a large market but is in short supply, is easy to cultivate, requires growing conditions *exactly* like the ones we have—a south facing slope with rocky, alkaline soil—and looks beautiful, even if the plantings have a commercial purpose! We are already in touch with local growers, who have most generously demonstrated their willingness to share their expertise. And we are about to place our order for 1000 plugs (bedding plants). These will be ready to pop into the ground in late spring, and we can expect to harvest our first crop in a year. We will probably distill much of this for essential oil and use some dried lavender for wreaths and sachets.



Mother Nina, Sister Paraskeva and Punkin amid the monastery's "native" lavender.

Sunday of Orthodoxy

**Fourth Annual Pan-
Orthodox**

**Hierarchical Divine
Liturgy**

March 13, 2011

10:00 am

celebrated at

**Holy Virgin Mary
Cathedral (OCA)**

650 Micheltorena St.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
(323) 666-4977
www.hvmla.org

Presiding Bishops:
His Eminence Metropolitan
GERASIMOS
His Eminence Archbishop
KYRILL
His Grace Bishop JOSEPH
His Grace Bishop MAXIM
His Grace Bishop BENJAMIN

Please join us!



Monk Lawrence demonstrates one of the more fun work party activities.

SPRING WORK PARTY

If all goes well, the work party we are calling for Saturday, April 9th, will be the day when we prepare the ground for planting our meadows in lavender. But there will be plenty more to do: tree trimming, brush clearance, weed whacking and chipping mulch, to name a few outdoor tasks, and brass polishing, labeling envelopes, and food preparation to name a few indoor ones. We beg any of you who can spare the day or even a few hours to mark your calendar and come and help.

CATECHESIS RETREAT FOR ADULTS

Saturday, March 19th, 2011

9:30 AM – 4:00 PM at St. Barbara Monastery, Santa Paula, CA

Join Seraphima Butler and team for a relaxing and spiritually refreshing retreat modeled on key presentations with the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a Montessori based religious education method. This retreat offers adults ages 18 and up the opportunity to deepen their relationship with Christ the True Vine, reflect upon the health of their own “branch” in this Vine, and nurture their personal prayer life.

If you haven't yet registered, you can do so by calling the monastery (805-921-1563) and leaving a message on the answering machine or by sending in the form below to us.

Registration Form (*please print*)

Your name _____

Your parish _____

Please select any that apply:

I am a parent grandparent God-parent clergy Sunday school teacher
 director of religious education homeschooler public school teacher/professor.

Cost of the retreat is \$40.00, payable on the day of the retreat. This includes lunch and all materials.

If you have further questions, call Seraphima at 805-403-6754. Child care will be provided.