

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

The September Gathering of the Friends of Saint Barbara Monastery

Sunday, September 26th, 2010

4:00 pm Presentation:

Orthodox Mystical Theology: Practical Dimensions?

*Speaker – Rev. Deacon Paul (Rico) Monge of
St. Athanasius Orthodox Church in Goleta*

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,

An old acquaintance happened to write to us a few days ago asking for some information about Elder Dimitry (Egoroff) of blessed memory. In the process, he reminisced some about this holy man, whom he knew well, and what life was like for Father Dimitry pursuing monasticism in the context of our church life in Northern California in the '60's, '70's, and '80's of the past century.

He sketches a picture of someone simple and guileless by intent, someone rather radically practicing self-effacement to keep his virtue, intelligence and achievements unknown to the world, someone trying to live by the Gospel commandments and humbly build up monastic life for himself and anyone who turned to him desiring the same thing—all this in the midst of people who, even if not hostile (and some were), had little understanding or appreciation for his manner of life.

Something very odd had happened in Orthodox America in the early twentieth century. Despite the existence of a very few monastic communities, despite the icons on the walls of churches portraying saints who are monks or nuns, despite the names of monastic saints on the calendar and the texts of their services sung year in and year out, monasticism was largely forgotten. In many places it was *totally forgotten!* Some of you reading this will find it difficult to believe, but frequently one would hear it said that *We Orthodox don't have nuns or monks in our Church.* The absence of monastics would even be mentioned as a difference between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism! Perhaps someday a budding historian or sociologist or psychologist will write a dissertation on this subject and tell us how such a phenomenon could occur, how an element so central in our Church life throughout the centuries could all but drop out! What's almost as startling is that, when some realized monasticism was missing and questioned the loss, our leading professors of theology took it upon themselves to explain that monasticism was a phenomenon of former centuries and no longer appropriate in the modern world!

How much easier things are now for us monastics than they were for Archimandrite Dimitry living when he did! How much more joyful! If many Orthodox people remain more or less indifferent toward the monasteries and if monasteries are still relatively few and far between, by and large the Orthodox faithful have come to appreciate and value them. How this change came about is subject matter for another essay. But the fact is that the monasteries are wanted and supported. This is an important sign that our Orthodox Church life in America is on its way to becoming normalized at last.

Mother Victoria
and the Community
of St. Barbara Monastery



Chris Gonzales-Aden reads to the children at St. Barnabas Church, Costa Mesa.

through the monastery's property, where they will learn about the special plants that grow here as well as some of the special animals that live in our woods and creek and in the mountains round about. A second storytelling will be held at 3:00 PM and the afternoon will end with Vespers at 4:00 PM, thus allowing travel time for those who wish to return to their home parishes for the service. Please phone (805-921-1563) or email (sbmonastery@gmail.com) the monastery to RSVP.

A storytelling like the one we are planning was held at the Craft Fair at St. Barnabas Church in Costa Mesa in August. Chris Gonzales-Aden and Sister Thekla, of Holy Assumption Monastery, read to the children.



Sister Thekla reading a story to the children at St. Barnabas Church in Costa Mesa



Moses and Ruth at the July Friends of St. Barbara Gathering

A STORYTELLING FOR KIDS AT ST. BARBARA MONASTERY

Moms and Dads, mark your calendars! On Saturday, October 16th, we will have a special kids' day at the monastery for children ages 4 to 12. The event will begin with a picnic immediately following the usual monastery 6th Hour service at 12:15 PM. The first storytelling, scheduled for 1:30 PM, will be from one of Mother Melania's three new children's books published in September by The Benefactory, Inc. These and other books published by The Benefactory will be available for purchase. Later on, the children will have the opportunity to go on a nature walk with Mother Nina

McPHERSONS LEAVE FOR ST. TIKHON'S SEMINARY

On August 22nd, our good friends Moses (Morgan) and Ruth (Lindsey) McPherson of St. Demetrios Church in Camarillo, packed up their little Honda Civic and adventurously headed East to begin a new chapter in their life. Moses is now a first year student at St. Tikhon's Seminary preparing for the priesthood. Let us all keep them in our prayers.

THANK YOU!

Our warmest gratitude to everyone who read our Annual Monastery Diocesan Report in last month's newsletter and responded with a donation to help us through this financially difficult time. May God bless you for your care for the monastery!

A SUCCESSFUL FIRST USED BOOK SALE

The used book sale at last month's Friends' gathering was a much appreciated event. Many who attended found great treasures to take home for whatever price they could afford. And the monastery gained almost \$150.00. We will repeat the sale at the September gathering. So, please bring to the monastery any books you have to contribute: theology, text books, cook books, travel books, coffee table books, classics, children's books--all are welcome.

WHEN THERE'S NOT A FRIENDS GATHERING. . . .

What's it like at the monastery when there is no Friends gathering in progress? These photos give you some idea. (And, yes, we have run out of news for this issue.)



*The deer come down from the hills to
manicure the lawn*



*Punkin and Mother Juliana synchronize
their calendars*



*Okay, no one's looking.
Kick the ball now!*



*The sisters wanted a Blackberry.
Orange you glad we have a Blackberry!*



*Trixie regularly dusts the overhead
beams and enjoys the view.*



*Other friends big and small stop by.
A contingent from St. Andrew Church,
Riverside.*

DIVINE LITURGY – OCTOBER 1ST

On Friday, October 1st, we will have a Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God. The Liturgy will begin at 10:00 AM, preceded by the 3rd and 6th Hours. The date marks the fifth anniversary of our move to the Santa Paula property. Archpriest Lawrence Russell of Holy Annunciation Church in Santa Maria will be the celebrant at the Liturgy.