

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



CHRIST IS BORN!
GLORIFY HIM!

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,

When Christ was born, very few people knew about it. Mary knew Who it was that had been born. And Joseph knew because, as the Gospel tells us, the identity of the Child was revealed to Him in a dream. It would seem that, of all the people living in Bethlehem and its environs, the only others who knew that the Savior had been born were the shepherds, who saw the angels and heard them announcing the news. Even the angels, by the way, didn't know of it ahead of time. They learned of the birth of Christ when it happened, so Tradition tells us. But, why was it the shepherds to whom the angels were sent with their joyful proclamation? A friend of ours has explained this to us: Their very profession required of the shepherds that they labor daily the year round. Thus, not keeping the commandment of Moses concerning the Sabbath, they were *de facto* transgressors of the Law, unrighteous. That the angels came to the shepherds was in itself an announcement that salvation had come for sinners, for us.

Certainly, the fellow townspeople of Mary and Joseph back in Nazareth and even their relatives—unless it be Elizabeth and her infant—did not know the identity of this Child. The Gospels make this clear recounting later on in the narratives how incredulous these people were to find Jesus teaching with authority and working miracles. Indeed, the Apostle James, known as “the brother of the Lord,” was just as devastated and disillusioned by the Crucifixion and just as unbelieving in the face of His Resurrection from the dead as the rest of the apostles.

But the secret nature of God's plan for the world is of its essence. Even when “preached from the housetops,” the Gospel remains a *mysterion*, something grasped not by everyone, but by those to whom the Holy Spirit grants the gift—and then not all at once, but more and more fully. Each Christmas offers an ever deeper experience of God's incomprehensible love for us and all His creation as expressed and manifested in the ineffable act of His becoming man.

With all our hearts, we wish each and every one of you a most blessed Christmas!

Abbess Victoria
and the community of
St. Barbara Monastery

THE FEAST OF ST. BARBARA, 2012

The accompanying photos from this year's celebration of the Feast of St. Barbara speak for themselves. People from all over Southern California gathered to honor the Great Martyr and join the nuns in their observance of the Monastery's twentieth anniversary. With His Eminence Archbishop BENJAMIN of San Francisco and the West presiding, eight priests concelebrated at the Divine Liturgy and six at the Vigil the previous evening. The choir, comprised of friends of the monastery, was led by Ruth Rutledge from St. Barnabas Church in Costa Mesa. Behind the scenes, a whole crew of volunteers worked tirelessly to accommodate and serve our many guests, making this one of the most memorable celebrations of the Feast of St. Barbara we have ever had.



A SPECIAL VISIT FROM ST. LUKE CHURCH, GARDEN GROVE



On Sunday, November 18th, a group of about 40 people from St. Luke Church in Garden Grove, led by their pastor Father Michael Tassos, visited the monastery for the day. Fr. Michael celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the monastery chapel, after which a meal

prepared by his parishioners was served to all who attended. Seeing that there was work waiting to be done and using tools recently donated by St. Luke's, a crew quickly formed and spread gravel to create a path around the house for the festal Cross Procession on the monastery's altar feast, which would take place two weeks later.

More such days are being planned for the coming year.



SOME MEMORIES OF 2012



Mother Juliana and our close friend Deacon Howard Shannon departed this life. Memory Eternal!



Construction for our new chapel began
--and then was again delayed again.



Archbishop BENJAMIN gave a seminar
on *The Jewish Roots of Christianity*.



We had our first lavender harvest.



And started our casket business.



We had lots of visitors—young and old.



And Punkin had his portrait painted in oils.