

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

# ***CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED, HE IS RISEN!***

***The April Gathering  
of the Friends of St. Barbara Monastery  
Sunday, April 27, 2014***

***4:00 pm Presentation:  
ORTHODOX SOCIAL ACTION  
AND EVANGELISM***

***Speaker: Charles Ajalat  
Founder of IOCC***

***Chairman of the Board for FOCUS North America***

***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.



***Christ is risen!***

***Indeed, He is risen!***

Dear Friends of St. Barbara Monastery,

You may have heard the observation that, were some disaster to occur causing the loss of all the Church's written theological treasure, the fullness of Orthodox Christianity could be recovered through faithful performance of the liturgical services alone. Such is the value we Orthodox place on our rich liturgical inheritance. Having just completed the course of Holy Week, culminating in the celebration of Pascha, however, we wonder if this observation might not apply with little exaggeration to this week alone!

We all know that the core of our Christian Faith resides in the events of the three days from Great and Holy Friday through Pascha. Add to that, Great and Holy Thursday with its commemoration of the Last Supper. But what about Great and Holy Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday? Do we not tend to regard the liturgical content of these days—the Bridegroom Matins and the texts meditating on certain parables of Jesus—as simply “filler” for the time between Palm Sunday and Holy Thursday? (What was Jesus doing on these days anyhow? The Gospels do not really tell us.)

Well, on close examination, this supposed liturgical “filler” is found to be significant and even essential. Surprisingly, the *Conversation of St. Seraphim with Motovilov*, entitled “*A Revelation to the World*,” turns out to be a key opening up the meaning of these first three days of Holy Week, because the content of this *Conversation* is to a large extent drawn from the liturgical texts appointed for them.

The overall theme of the services and of this *Conversation* is the basic Orthodox teaching concerning prayer and grace: what they are and how to pursue them. In other words, the first three days of Holy Week give us the practical spiritual framework with which to respond to the great events of the latter part of the week. The troparion at Matins on each of the three days recalls the Parable of the Ten Virgins preparing for the coming of the Bridegroom, and St. Seraphim devotes the first part of his *Conversation* to explaining the deep meaning of this parable: the Bridegroom is Christ, of course, and the oil in the lamps of the virgins is the grace of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the oil is purchased by the wise virgins with the “money” of good works done in the name of Christ, and he describes what these might be. All his comments hark back to the stichera and troparia sung at the services on these days:

“ . . . Each of us according to the measure that we have received, let us increase the talent of grace. Let one gain wisdom through good deeds; let another celebrate the Liturgy with beauty; let another share his faith by preaching to the uninstructed; let another give his wealth to the poor. So shall we increase what is entrusted to us, and as faithful stewards of His grace we shall be counted worthy of the Master's joy. . . .” (1<sup>st</sup> sticheron of the Aposticha at Matins of Holy Tuesday)

We regret we have no space here to explore all this further, but we wish to mention that St. Seraphim himself tells us that his teaching in this *Conversation* is the most important of all that he has to impart.

Abbess Victoria  
and the community of  
St. Barbara Monastery

## ***LAZARUS SATURDAY AT THE MONASTERY***

Once again this year, His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN, spent Lazarus Saturday at St. Barbara Monastery. Arriving on Friday afternoon, he served Vespers and, after supper, Great Compline. On Saturday, we were joined by a number of visitors for the Divine Liturgy celebrated by His Eminence and for the potluck luncheon afterwards. We treasure this annual celebration of the Resurrection of Lazarus with His Eminence, when he takes time to be with us just prior to the celebration of Palm Sunday at his cathedral in Los Angeles and the commencement of the great observances appointed for Holy Week.



## ***PILGRIMS FROM HOLY TRINITY***

### ***ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, GLENDALE***

Our close friend and benefactor Liviu Constantinescu arranged a day's visit to the monastery for members of his parish, Holy Trinity Romanian Orthodox Church in



Glendale. A group of Sunday School children and their parents made the trip together on Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. They were welcomed by the sisters, who gave them a tour of the grounds and the new chapel construction prior to gathering in the chapel for the usual 6<sup>th</sup> Hour service. Following a Lenten luncheon, Mother Paraskeva presented a short talk to the pilgrims about the monastery and monastic

life and answered their questions. We look forward to seeing these new friends of the monastery here again soon.

# ***COMMUNITY OF ORTHODOX EGYPTIAN SISTERS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA***

For a couple of weeks during Great Lent, St. Barbara Monastery hosted Mother Thekla and one other sister (Sister Photini for the first week and Sister Theodora for the second), members of a community of eight lay sisters, which recently settled in Montclair, CA. The group has been accepted by His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN, into the Diocese of the West of the Orthodox Church in

A couple of the United States for some are recent refugees asylum here from and Sister Theodora interpreters for the rest first language is

The sisters are not been tonsured and not vows. However, they live a life of prayer and fasting in community and look forward to fulfilling a mission of active service and teaching to others who may not have encountered the fullness of Christian life and faith.



America. sisters have been in the time, but the majority who have been granted Egypt. Sister Photini function as English of the group, whose Arabic.

monastics, not having having made monastic

## ***CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS***

The past month has seen little progress with the construction of our chapel. This appears to be due to conflicting commitments on the part of our contractor, who works on more than one project at a time. Nonetheless, the “moat” surrounding the structure has now been filled in, so that it is possible to walk directly from the surrounding area through the doorways onto the floor of the chapel. And installation of the roof is underway.

