

*St. Barbara Monastery – 15799 Santa Paula-Ojai Road – Santa Paula, CA 93060-9416
(805) 921-1563 – www.stbarbaramonastery.org*

***The February Gathering of the Friends
of St. Barbara Monastery
Sunday, February 23, 2020***

4:00 pm Presentation:

***THE DRAGON OF DEPENDENCY
AND THE WAY OF ESCAPE***

Speaker: Dr. Joseph William Black
***Lecturer, Makarios III Patriarchal Orthodox
Seminary, Nairobi, Kenya***

Vespers: 5:00 pm

Potluck 6:00 pm

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 Santa Paula - 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.

From Highway 5 – Exit Hwy 126 West at Santa Clarita.

Travel 27 miles to Santa Paula, and exit at 10th St/Hwy 150.a

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,

We all have little idea what treasure we Orthodox Christians hold! With Lent, the difficult season we love so much, quickly approaching, we looked at a few books to see what we could learn about some of the special observances Lent brings us.

At the culmination of the First Week of Lent, we are called upon to celebrate the “restoration of icons,” an event which occurred on October 23, 786 AD. Even if we are somewhat knowledgeable regarding church history and understand basically what our celebration is all about, it comes as a shock to read what led up to that historic date—and, as a matter of fact, what transpired in the aftermath of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, which made that important decision.

In short, what occurred beforehand was no less than two centuries of bloody conflict, political upheaval, ecclesiastical turmoil and brutal persecution. (Those who are fearful in present times, do well to read what life was like for our heroic ancestors in the Faith during this period.) Indeed, most of the saints who come from this period of history are martyrs. And what occurred afterward was not much better. It took a long time for the controversy to abate. In short, the price that our Orthodox forbears paid to champion the icons and preserve the Faith is incalculable. (For those interested in a historical summary of the iconoclastic controversy, we suggest Chapter III, *The Age of the Iconoclast Crisis*, in Ostrogorsky’s *History of the Byzantine State*.)

We Orthodox well understand that icons are far more than beautiful adornments for our churches and homes and far more than “visual aids” for prayer and worship (and certainly not idols! as some imagine). We understand them to be a confession of our Faith in the astounding reality of God’s mercy to mankind, of His condescension to become a human being like ourselves (who can be pictured) that He might restore the living icons of His image (us!) to life in His Kingdom!

Abbess Victoria
and the sisters
of St. Barbara Monastery



A WORD ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Dr. Joseph William Black, Jr, is a Lecturer in theology and history at the Makarios III Patriarchal Orthodox Seminary in Nairobi, Kenya, and a Senior Lecturer at St. Paul's University in Limuru. He comes to us as a former co-worker of our Sister Photini who, prior to entering the community of St. Barbara Monastery, worked as a translator of liturgical texts for OCMC as well as secretary to Archbishop Makarios at the Nairobi Seminary.

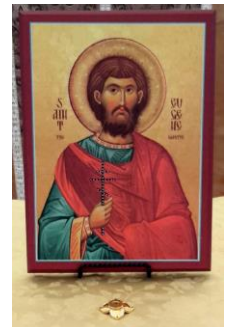
SR. PHOTINI TONSURED TO THE RANK OF RYASSAPHOR

On Saturday, February 8th, Archbishop BENJAMIN visited our monastery, where he celebrated the Divine Liturgy and tonsured our novice, Sister Photini, to the rank of ryassaphor nun (literally ‘a nun who wears the ryassa.’) For those of you who may not know about the various ranks of monastics, this is an intermediate step between reception as a novice and full profession as a stavrophor nun (‘a nun who wears or carries the Cross’). Sister Photini came to us from New Hampshire, but via Kenya, where she was sent by OCMC to work on translations important to the missionary work of the Orthodox Church there.



THE MONASTERY RECEIVES A RELIC OF ST. EUGENE

To our great joy, a relic of the Holy Martyr Eugene—for whom, along with the Great Martyr Barbara, our monastery chapel is named—was unexpectedly received as a gift from the Church of Russia on the same day as Sr. Photini's tonsure. Through the efforts of our good friend Eugene Solonin, the relic was hand-carried from Moscow and personally delivered to our monastery. The relic is in a beautiful, small, cross-shaped reliquary suitable for embedding in an icon of St. Eugene, which we hope to have made expressly for this purpose.



ST. LUKE CHURCH, GARDEN GROVE, HOLDS ANOTHER ST. BARBARA MONASTERY WORK PARTY



Members of St. Luke Antiochian Orthodox Church in Garden Grove organize work parties to help our monastery several times a year. The most recent one was just on Saturday, February 15th. Twenty-two enthusiastic children, teens and adults, including their pastor, V. Rev. Michael Tassos, arrived at the monastery bright and early to put in a day's labor helping with all sorts of tasks as well as participating in the 6th Hour church service and Vespers. They accomplished work indoors and out, cutting down dead trees, clearing weeds from the lavender beds, mowing grass, washing church windows, labeling envelopes, filling lavender sachets—all while enjoying their time together, the beautiful day in the mountains, the church services with Fr. Michael and the sisters, and 'simply being at the monastery,' as one volunteer put it..

A VISIT FROM ABBOT MATTHEW OF ALL SAINTS MONASTERY IN TRANSYLVANIA (ROMANIA)



On Sunday, February 16th, we had the honor of hosting Abbot Matthew of All Saints Monastery in the Transylvania region of Romania. He is currently visiting the monks of Holy Resurrection Monastery in Temecula, and made the long drive to Santa Paula with the help of our dear friend, Romanian translator and fearless Southern California driver, Mary Lapadat.