

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

# *The May Gathering of the Friends’ of St. Barbara Monastery*

*Sunday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012*

*4:00pm Presentation*

*The Intelligent Faith of Irenaeus vs. Superstition,  
Then and Now*

*Speaker: V. Rev. Paul Waisanen,  
Pastor of St. Herman Church, Oxnard*

*5:00 pm Vespers*

*6:00pm 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.



Dear Friends of St. Barbara Monastery,

What becomes increasingly clear to us as the years go by is that virtually every detail in the life and practice of the Church is laden with meaning—often multiple layers of meaning. Our predecessors in the Faith took great delight and great care in making sure that everything that was instituted and decided over the centuries should be harmonious and reflect not only the good order but the very intricacy of the work of God Himself. One result of this is that we, the inheritors of the priceless treasure of their thoughtfulness and care for the Church, have the delight of discovering this meaning anew for ourselves. This process of discovery occurs endlessly, for example, in the texts of the services, where—no matter how many times we may have read and sung them—there is always something fresh to be found, some connection or meaning not noticed before. Lately, this has come to our attention regarding the liturgical calendar.

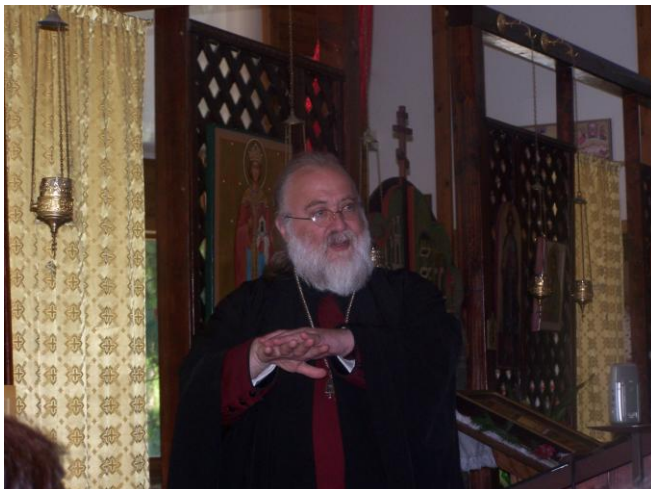
It's fairly common knowledge that the calendar dates appointed for the celebration of various saints are most often the days of their falling asleep, that is, their “birthdays” into eternal life. And, as one might expect, the celebrations of historical events are appointed for the calendar dates on which the events being commemorated occurred. Thus, the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross is appointed for September 14th, the date on which the true Cross was elevated for veneration in the year 335 after its discovery by the Empress Helen. All this seems straightforward. But why the Feast of the Transfiguration on August 6th? This date, which might seem to be arbitrary, turns out to be exactly forty days ahead of the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross. Our Holy Fathers intentionally chose this date to underscore the connection between the Transfiguration and the Cross, for as the Kontakion of the Feast of Transfiguration reveals: “Thou wast transfigured on the mount, O Christ God. . . so that when they should see Thee crucified they would know that Thy suffering was voluntary.”

Looking at another part of the calendar: It is well known that the complex formula for determining the date of Pascha was set by the 1st Ecumenical Council. The dates for celebrating Palm Sunday, Ascension and Pentecost, straightforwardly following the timeline given in the Synoptic Gospels and the Book of Acts, are set respectively at seven days ahead of Pascha and forty and fifty days following the Feast of Pascha. Together with the date for the beginning of Lent, set at seven weeks before Pascha, as well as the dates for the pre-Lenten Sundays, these feasts make up what we call “the paschal cycle.” What we are not likely to suspect and what is truly astonishing is that the date of Christmas is based on the date of the Crucifixion of the Lord! Christmas on December 25th, is exactly 9 months after March 25th—which is not only the date of the Annunciation (the Conception of Jesus) but correlates with the 14th of Nisan on the Jewish calendar, the date reckoned to be the date of the Crucifixion. This date of March 25th was also considered in antiquity to have been the date of the creation! In other words, creation and salvation (through the Cross) were effected on the same date!

Abbess Victoria  
and the community of  
St. Barbara Monastery

## ***A Day With Archbishop BENJAMIN***

As part of our ongoing celebration of our 20th anniversary in 2012, our "Day With Bishop BENJAMIN," held at the monastery on Saturday, May 12th, turned out to be a memorable and successful event. At the beginning of the day's activities, however, we learned that our title for the event was no longer appropriate and needed to be changed to "A Day With Archbishop BENJAMIN." The bishop was elevated to the rank of archbishop the previous week. We congratulate him and pray that he may continue as our archpastor for Many Years!



About seventy people came to hear His Eminence give two talks on "The Jewish Roots of Christianity." The talks were so well received that His Eminence has already been invited to give them again in at least two places. As the monastery's recording of the talks turned out to be defective, they will be recorded again at one of those future presentations and duly made available for distribution.

The day proved so enjoyable and enriching that there are already tentative plans to have another "Day With Archbishop BENJAMIN" again next year.

## ***TEENS FROM ST. NICHOLAS CATHEDRAL VISIT***

On Saturday, May 19th, the teen Sunday School class from St. Nicholas Cathedral in Los Angeles visited the monastery. For some in the group, this was a second visit, but for all who attended it was their first time to experience the "nature walk" with Sister Paraskeva and Mother Nina. The visit ended with a "reader's" Great Vespers in the absence of a priest, at which several of the teens helped the sisters with the reading of the psalms and prayers.



## ***SUNDAY SCHOOL FROM ST. GEORGE CHURCH IN UPLAND VISITS***

On Saturday, May 5th, the Sunday School children of St. George Church in Upland—along with their priest, Fr. George Manneh, parents and teachers—spent the day at the monastery. Besides learning about monastic life, there was time for a “nature walk” with Mother Nina and Sister Paraskeva to learn about the flora growing on the monastery grounds as well as to explore the creek and give the monastery’s tire swing a good workout. Everyone pitched in to help the sisters with weeding in the lavender field or gathering up dead branches in the woods (for fire prevention) before ending the day with Great Vespers. The pictures tell the story better than words possibly could.

