

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

# *The March Gathering of the Friends of St. Barbara Monastery*

*Sunday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011*

*4:00 pm Presentation*

*The Special Prayers of Lent*

*Speaker – V. Rev. Michael Laffoon – Pastor of St. Mark  
Orthodox Church in Irvine, CA*

*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,

We have had quite a jolt! The great earthquake in Japan may have been felt only there, but the destruction and danger following in its wake have left the world stunned. How fragile, how vulnerable all of us—indeed, our civilization, and the whole earth—are!

We humans cannot resist searching for meaning in events. We almost unavoidably ask ourselves: What does the earthquake mean? Is it the work of mindless, inexorable natural law? Is it demonic? Is God trying to tell us something?

This is hardly the first earthquake mankind has experienced, of course, although it is the strongest on record. The Church in her storehouse of wisdom has preserved her response to such disasters in the past. In particular, all these centuries later, The Church has never forgotten the earthquake that devastated Constantinople in 740 A.D., and this event is still commemorated every year on October 26<sup>th</sup>. The liturgical texts for that day tell us how the Church interpreted its meaning.

*“O Master, Thou dost shake the whole earth like a dry leaf, confirming the faithful in the fear of Thee, and we ever rejoice at our unending correction, O Lord.”* (From Ode I of the Canon)

*“O brethren, let us flee sin which hath given birth to bitter death, most oppressive earthquakes and unbearable plagues; and let us please God with repentance.”* (From Ode I of the Canon)

*“Them that have no fear of Thee in their minds dost Thou terrify by the shaking of the whole earth, O Thou that alone art merciful. Yet show forth the wonder of all Thy mercies upon us, as is Thy wont.”* (From Ode IV of the Canon)

Thus the Church responds not only to earthquake but to every calamity with profound repentance and fervent thanksgiving to God, always understanding them as wake-up calls that we might seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Abbess Victoria  
and the community of  
St. Barbara Monastery



*Reflecting upon the sheepfold of the Good Shepherd...*



*working individually...*



*working in a group...*



*and taking a break.*



*Seraphima Butler leading the group on a meditation on the Good Shepherd*

## ***THE GOOD SHEPARD CATECHESIS***

On Saturday, March 19, we were pleased to host another adult retreat based on the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program (also known as CGS). The catechists from St. Athanasius Orthodox Church in Goleta, CA, came with three carloads of materials and furniture and created a cozy retreat space both indoors and out. Participants were guided in group reflections on a key element of Lent, namely confession. This was facilitated by Seraphima Butler, who led the group in singing simple, prayerful songs and reading passages from John 15 (True Vine) and Luke 15 (Prodigal Son).

The lovely relaxed pace included time for personal reflection as well. Individual activities included journaling, "walking the prayer rope," art, and one-on-one presentations. Ample time was given for reading, fellowship, nature exploration, and prayer. An informative question and answer session regarding how CGS is used with children and implemented in homes or parishes concluded the day. We hope to continue holding similar retreats in the future to help adults experience what CGS has to offer and to support adults in their efforts to provide meaningful spiritual formation for children.



*Liam and Brianna Griffin showing that there is no job too small or too delicious.*

## **SPRING WORK PARTY**

On Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup> we will hold a work party from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. There is a lot to do and everyone is welcome!

While our main objective will be grounds maintenance (tree trimming, weed whacking, wood chipping), there are a variety of other tasks (brass polishing, labeling envelopes, etc.). We won't be able to plant the lavender at this time, as we had hoped. But we can prepare the mounds of earth for the new plants, so that all will be ready when they arrive a few weeks later. In short, there is more than enough to do for everyone who can come. If you have a chain saw or weed whacker, bring it along. Please call the monastery and

leave a message to let us know you are coming at 805-921-1563.

## **CHAPEL GROUND BREAKING**

AT LAST! We will hold the ground-breaking for our new chapel on Lazarus Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. We realize that this is a day when not too many of our friends will be able to join us, because each parish has so much going on at that time—usually the final church cleaning before Pascha. But it is the day when His Grace, Bishop Benjamin, is scheduled to be with us.

Maybe this is an appropriate time to tell a little of the history leading up to the decision to build the chapel here. The story begins back on the very last day of World War II. Just hours before peace was declared, the young Eugene Lurie, an infantryman and a member of Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco, was killed in battle. His grief-stricken family decided to donate to the Church a wonderful piece of property they owned at Point Reyes not far north of San Francisco as a memorial to their departed son. Hence the name of the property: St. Eugene's Hermitage. The first person to live there was Archimandrite Dimitry Egoroff of blessed memory. He continued to live there for some 18 years, most of that time by himself. After Father Dimitry, because of health reasons, moved away, the Church assigned various people to live there at different times in the hope of developing the property. The latest of these attempts was the founding of the Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco on the property. The monastic brotherhood lived there for ten years, only to find itself repeatedly stymied by Marin County officialdom from any construction or other development. Meanwhile, the brotherhood was growing with no space for new monks. So, in 2005, it was decided to move the monastery to a new location outside Manton, California, where it presently remains. Under the circumstances, His Grace, Bishop Benjamin, felt there was no alternative but to sell the Point Reyes property. Proceeds from the sale were divided, a portion going to the Monastery of St. John to build a chapel there, and another portion allocated to St. Barbara Monastery in Santa Paula, for the building of a chapel here as well. Both of these chapels have the name of St. Eugene in memory of the young soldier who gave his life for his country.



*His Grace Bishop Benjamin praying upon entering the existing chapel.*