

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

*The October Gathering of the Friends
of Saint Barbara Monastery
Sunday, October 27th, 2013*

4:00 pm Presentation:

WEALTH ACCORDING TO THE HOLY FATHERS

Speaker – V. Rev. Michael Tassos

Pastor of St. Luke Orthodox Church in Garden Grove, 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,

Many visitors find their way to our monastery, and many of our visitors ask for a little of our time in order to speak with us personally. Eight times out of ten, the subject raised is prayer. And the particular question that is almost unfailingly asked is 'How can I pursue prayer when my life is so busy!' (Only the old folks seem to remember the days when people had time.)

The conversation then often turns to discussion of a rule of prayer, what length of time can realistically be devoted to prayer and ways to chisel out time for prayer from the routine activities of the day. And then it may proceed to the related but more fundamental question of how to pray. This is where a great deal of confusion exists—including confusion about the meaning of the word 'prayer.'

Some people try to do church services at home—with other family members or alone. Or they attempt to practice the Jesus Prayer. Or they use a prayer book and read the appointed daily prayers for morning and evening (more or less of them, depending on the edition of the prayer book they have). Some add the daily Epistle and Gospel readings or the sections of the Psalter appointed for the day of the week. Some even try to do all of these.

While some options are more reasonable than others, all are viable possibilities; and the holy fathers who write on the subject assure us that a prayer rule is personal to some degree and varies not only from one person to the next but throughout the lifetime of an individual. Nonetheless, there are basic confusions that we do well to sort out. For one thing, 'worship' and 'psalmody' and 'prayer,' strictly speaking, are different activities. The purpose of the Divine Services in Church is 'worship.' They include a lot of 'psalmody' (psalms and hymns and spiritual songs) which *may* bring us to 'prayer.' But pure 'prayer,' as many of the fathers use the word, is beyond words.

What exactly is worship? Essentially, one might say it is a review or recapitulation of all that God has done for us—of salvation history—in the context of thanksgiving. What is psalmody? It is the recitation (or reading) of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and, yes, of what we routinely call prayers. And what is true prayer? It's what worship and psalmody can lead to, but lies beyond them. True prayer is not simply 'wordless,' it is beyond words. (Any of these could use a page like this and more all by itself!)

So, how can one find time to pursue prayer in one's busy life? Any professional organizer can provide the key. Give it priority. The Lord said much the same thing: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto you."

Mother Victoria
and the Community
of St. Barbara Monastery

CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHAPEL CONTINUES

As we send out this newsletter, we are watching the newly-poured concrete border of our chapel at ground level begin to take on a vertical dimension as the first concrete block is laid. We have been amazed at the amount of preparation the construction site itself has required—no doubt because of the great weight of the block building it will support.



The building site as we go to press



Project manager Mitch Denny confers with builders



Mother Olga lends a hand

BUILDING FUND CAMPAIGN

We have planned a fundraising campaign to finish the chapel. The funds we have in hand will not get the chapel construction as far along as needed by the time the winter rains are expected. And later, more funds will be needed to complete the interior with its iconography and furnishings.



The Chapel of St. Barbara and St. Eugene presently under construction at St. Barbara Monastery

We are grateful to Mr. Anthony Callas of St. Paul Church in Irvine, CA, for his invaluable donation of time and skill to produce illustrations for the fundraising literature. And we are grateful to Fr. Michael Tassos and Anna Nasser of St. Luke Church in Garden Grove for mailing out our appeal.

Expect to receive an informational brochure from us describing the project and various opportunities for contributing either by snail mail or email in the beginning of November.



ST. ATHANASIUS JR. HIGH STUDENTS CAMP OUT

The monastery was honored to host the junior high students and their chaperones from St.



Athanasius Church in Goleta for an overnight camping trip on October 18th-19th. After battling the late Friday afternoon traffic out of Santa Barbara, everyone was ready to breathe the fresh mountain air at the monastery. Following Vespers and supper, the group gathered under a full moon at one of the monastery's campsites along Sisar Creek for a bonfire replete with the traditional

Loading mulch to spread around the lavender

marshmallows and s'mores. A bear sighting in the dry creek bed the previous day discouraged camping overnight at that spot, but fortunately other areas on the property are also amenable to pitching tents. After Matins and breakfast on Saturday morning, the group gathered for a talk from their pastor Father Nicholas Speier, before turning to various tasks to help the sisters—like pruning lavender and labeling envelopes for mailing out this newsletter. A picnic lunch and some splashing around at the ponds of the college next door along with a final teaching by Fr. Nicholas completed the outing. Everyone is already looking forward to another monastery camp out—maybe after the winter rains have had a chance to fill up the creek again.



At the TAC ponds next door