

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

The July Gathering of the Friends of St. Barbara Monastery

Sunday, July 26th, 2015

4:00 pm Presentation:

NATIVE ALASKAN ORTHODOXY

Speaker: Seraphima Carl

*Alaskan Orthodox Church Worker and
PhD candidate in Intercultural Studies*

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.



Dear Friends of St. Barbara Monastery,

We are looking forward to the July Friends' Gathering enormously, because here at the monastery we have had a preview of Seraphima Carl's presentation. She spent a few days with us in mid-July and mesmerized us with tales of Orthodox life in the area of Alaska known as the Kuskokwim River Delta, which is where she lives and works.

More important than any of her fascinating accounts in themselves, what she conveyed to us was the hidden depth of the living Orthodox Christian Faith that grounds these people. The "proof" of Orthodox Christianity is its fruit—i.e., the grace of the Holy Spirit, revealed especially in the saints. If anyone were to question Seraphima as to whether Orthodox Christianity truly had taken root among the little-known people of this remote area of North America, she would only need to recount a story or two from what she has personally witnessed—or she could offer as proof the example of Matushka Olga Michael. Matushka Olga was the wife of Father Nikolai O. Michael, an Orthodox priest in Kwethluk, a village on the Kuskokwim River. She is a saint yet to be officially glorified (canonized) by the Orthodox Church in America, but one who has touched the hearts of many and who is already venerated widely both among her own people in Alaska and elsewhere.

One might say that Matushka Olga lived an ordinary life. But the ordinariness of her life was rendered extraordinary as she went about her activities with dedication and self sacrifice. In short, besides raising her own children, she was truly a mother to her whole village. She functioned as a midwife, but also helped those in every kind of need. What is especially valuable to note is that Matushka Olga is becoming more and more widely known as the helper and intercessor for those who have suffered sexual abuse or who are psychologically or physically scarred by abortion. An Akathist Hymn to her, which is available online, provides the words to ask for her help.

Abbess Victoria
and the community of
St. Barbara Monastery

THE ANNUAL VISIT OF THE RAPTORS AND THE ST. ATHANASIUS SUMMER SCHOOL

On Tuesday, June 23rd, the second day of the Summer School term at St. Athanasius



Orthodox Church in Goleta, the Ojai Raptor Center once again provided a program on the monastery grounds for students and teachers as well as for many other friends of the monastery who came to see the program. Everyone was introduced to various owls, hawks and falcons currently in residence or in rehab at the Center, and learned something about the individual birds and what had happened to them. The presenters provided many facts about the birds' life in the wild and how humans should treat

injured birds they find. The program was followed by the Sixth Hour in the chapel and a magnificent pizza luncheon. Everyone is already looking forward to next year's program (and more pizza)!

OJAI LAVENDER FESTIVAL

For the first time, the monastery participated in the Ojai Lavender Festival, selling fresh lavender, dried bunches and the monastery's own lavender products: essential oil, sachets, and even loose florets for do-it-yourself projects. The booth was a popular stop for Festival visitors, who asked questions not only about lavender but also about the monastery and Orthodox Christianity. We are more grateful than we can say to Jill Wallerstedt, Athanasia Ballew, Laurie Baker and Diana Cage, who volunteered as "store clerks." In the seven hours that the Festival was open, our sales grossed \$3,600.00 for the monastery!



A week later, we were doing the same thing at the Parish Life Conference of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Los Angeles held in Irvine. With the dedicated sales help of our good Friends Mary Dibs and Bogdan Popescu together with Mitch Denny, the monastery's income from sales there, over the course of three days, was almost as significant.

ANOTHER VISIT FROM THE TEENS OF ST. ANDREW CHURCH, RIVERSIDE

Once again, the annual, week-long summer retreat of the teens of St. Andrew Church, Riverside, began with a visit to St. Barbara Monastery coupled with a two-day stay at nearby Steckel Park. Saturday, July 11th, found 45 teens under the direction of their leaders Subdeacon Raphael Sammons and Linda Giannakakos as well as Mitchell Denny of the monastery, busy at work staining the thirsty wood of the monastery's cedar house and finishing the job in a record half day! The second half was devoted to an array of smaller but also very important tasks—everything from filling in a construction ditch to labeling the envelopes for the mailing of this July Newsletter. Special thanks go to Deacon Paul Germain for polishing the tabernacle and seeing to the good order of the altar in preparation for



the Divine Liturgy on the following day. The sisters cannot express their thanks adequately for all the help provided. Following Vespers with the monastic community, the teens retreated to the park for supper and an evening of fellowship before returning Sunday morning for the Divine Liturgy celebrated in the monastery chapel by U.S. Navy Chaplain Lt. Joseph Butts, who was assisted by Deacon Paul of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Following a coffee hour prepared by the sisters and fond farewells, the teens spent Sunday afternoon at the beach in Ventura prior to one more night at Steckel Park and the long road trip north to Lake Tahoe for a few days of camping.

CHAPEL CONSTRUCTION RESUMES

The photo shows, right to left, Cecil Roberts (St. Innocent Church, Tarzana); Elian Sayegh (St. Michael Church, Van Nuys) and Nicholas Juganu (St. Innocent Church) trenching and laying the cable that will bring electricity from the pole on Highway 150 to our new chapel. Their generous contribution of materials and labor was coupled with the resumption of work by the construction crew of our general contractor Larry Anderson of Camarillo, CA—made possible by the generous response of our Friends and Benefactors to the monastery's spring fundraising appeal.

