

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

*The April Gathering of the Friends
of St. Barbara Monastery
Sunday of the Holy Myrrhbearers
April 26th, 2015*

*4:00 pm Presentation:
THE APPEARANCES OF JESUS CHRIST
AFTER THE RESURRECTION*

*Speaker: V. Rev. John Finley
Dept. of Missions and Evangelism
of the Antiochian Orthodox Church*

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.



Christ is risen!

Indeed, He is risen!

Dear Friends of St. Barbara Monastery,

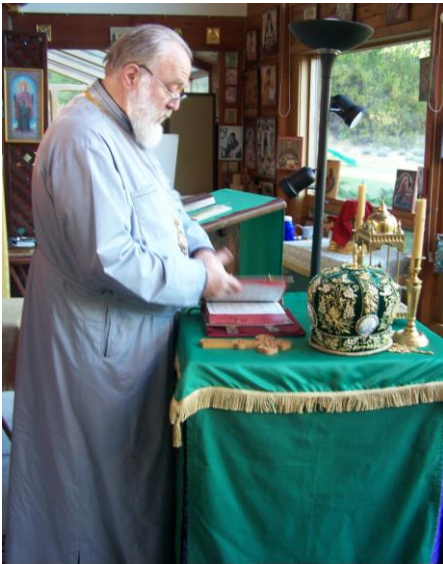
There are discrepancies between the Gospel narratives concerning which of the Myrrhbearers first came to the tomb when Jesus arose from the dead. And biblical scholars consider the identity of “the other Mary,” mentioned as the first to meet the resurrected Christ, to be inconclusive. However, no less a figure than St. Gregory Palamas—in a sermon on the Sunday of the Myrrhbearers some six hundred years ago—sorts out all the ambiguities of the various accounts and shows us that, in language intentionally veiled, the evangelists agree that the Mother of God was the first to come and the first to see the risen Lord.

In summary, this is what he says: If the evangelists seem to disagree, it is because the Myrrhbearers came to the tomb several times and in groups, but not always the same women. Mark mentions that Mary Magdalene and “the other Mary” were sitting opposite the tomb and watching when Jesus was laid in it (Mk 15:47). “The other Mary” was the Mother of God, called here “the mother of James and Joses” (who were sons of Joseph). Luke tells us there were others as well who “beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid” (Lk 23:55). They returned to Jerusalem, bought spices and myrrh, and on the Sabbath they rested. Then on Sunday “at early dawn” (Lk 24:1), they came back to anoint Jesus’ body. Matthew says it was “In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn” (Mt 28:1) that two women came. John tells us that “it was yet dark” (Jn 20:1) and that it was only Mary Magdalene who came. And Mark says it was “very early in the morning” and that there were three women who came. St. Gregory explains that all these passages refer to the time around dawn, but not all came at exactly the same time—and Mary Magdalene came once more and stayed longer. “Each evangelist refers to one occasion when the Myrrhbearers approached, and passes over the others.” But, says St. Gregory, it was the Theotokos who was first, bringing Mary Magdalene with her. And he says he concludes this, first of all, from Matthew who says “There came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary and behold there was a great earthquake.” All the other women came after the earthquake. But the Mother of God was present at the time of the earthquake when the angel descended and the stone rolled away.

St. Gregory further explains that the angel at the tomb was Gabriel, who was well known to the Mother of God, and that it was Mary Magdalene and the other women who departed with fear, while the Mother of God was possessed of great joy because she understood what had been accomplished. She then rejoined the others, and Jesus met them, saying “All Hail.” (Mt 28:9). Mary Magdalene, however, had gone to tell Peter and John, and later returned with them to the tomb. When they left, she stayed, and she too was found worthy to see the Master. Mark tells us that the Lord appeared to Mary Magdalene early in the morning, which means when full daylight had come, “but he does not state that the Lord’s resurrection happened then or that it was the first time He had appeared.”

Abbess Victoria
and the sisters of
St. Barbara Monastery

LAZARUS SATURDAY WITH ARCHBISHOP BENJAMIN



In his remarks following the Divine Liturgy on Lazarus Saturday, Archbishop BENJAMIN noted that he has celebrated this feast at St. Barbara Monastery now for something like ten years running. Indeed, we have come to rely on him to be with us annually for both Lazarus Saturday and our altar feast day of St. Barbara in December. This year, His Eminence celebrated both Vespers and Matins for Lazarus Saturday on Friday evening as well as the Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning. Joining him for the Divine Liturgy were Father Damian Kuolt (St. Raphael Mission, Temecula) and Father John Finley (Dept. of Missions and Evangelism of the Antiochian Orthodox Church). Father Gabriel Seamore (St. George Church, Victorville) also

attended. During the Divine Liturgy His Eminence elevated both Father Damian and Father Gabriel to the rank of archpriest.

Following the Divine Liturgy, there was time for all who attended to join Archbishop BENJAMIN for lunch and visit with him before he went on his way to celebrate the Vigil for Palm Sunday at Holy Virgin Mary Cathedral in Los Angeles.



PROPERTY AVAILABLE

From time to time over the years, various friends and visitors have remarked how much they wish there were property for sale in proximity to the monastery. Now we have learned that our nearest neighbors are planning on selling their property and moving away. This is the property immediately adjacent to us and which is briefly crossed as one enters the monastery driveway from Highway 150. Our understanding is that the property has not yet been listed officially. Anyone interested is welcome to contact the monastery, and we will put you in touch with the owners of the property.

A MAJOR PROJECT – ALMOST COMPLETED!



For some time, we have been thinking about how we might carve out additional living space in our house. This past month, Mitch Denny (our Project Manager for construction of the chapel) began work on a plan he created to divide our largest bedroom into two. Like most home projects, it has turned out to be more work than expected; but very soon now, where there was one, there will be two fine rooms.

A BUSY TIME!



Yes, we have been busy—like just about been during Lent and Pascha. There would seem to be nothing unusual and certainly nothing newsworthy about that! “Not so,” say some of our



friends. “The Newsletter readers want to know about your ordinary activity as much as they do about special events.” Well, we are not so sure. But here are a few photos of some of our helpers from our recent, very busy days of preparation for the Feast of Feasts.



At right are Heather and Anna West and (far right) Lisa and Peter Wuertz, who came (with a number of other helpful family members) and assisted us with preparations for Pascha.

