

St. Barbara Monastery – 15799 Santa Paula - Ojai Road – Santa Paula, CA 93060-9516  
(805) 921-1563 – [www.stbarbaramonastery.org](http://www.stbarbaramonastery.org)

***ST. BARBARA MONASTERY  
FRIENDS' GATHERING***

***OCTOBER 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021***

***4:00 PM Presentation:***

***“LAVENDER OF THE FIELD”***

***REFLECTIONS ON MY SEVEN YEARS***

***AT ST. BARBARA MONASTERY***

***Speaker: Mitchell Denny***

***(former Monastery Project Manager)***

***5:00 PM Vespers***

***6:00 PM Potluck***



Dear Friends of St. Barbara Monastery,

God Almighty, the Pantocrator, has revealed Himself as One Who delights in making something out of nothing. This is what He did at the Creation. And He does this again and again—if only we “have eyes to see.”

It is no exaggeration to say that He is doing this very thing at St. Barbara Monastery. And, if our main work as Christians and as monastics is to glorify God, how can we not proclaim what He is doing in our very midst?

Not many of you know the story of how St. Barbara Monastery got its start. At the beginning, there was nothing. Indeed, there was less than nothing, which is to say it turned out there was a debt. Yes, the bishop at that time (1992), Tikhon of Los Angeles, issued a decree declaring that, with his blessing, a women’s monastery was being founded in Santa Barbara. At that time there was only one nun, no place, and no money! But God provided. Out of nowhere, there came another sister, a cottage, and what might be called a loan (a story in itself).

It took a number of years, but eventually the monastery began to grow in every respect. More women came desiring the monastic life so that two houses were full to bursting, the “Friends of St. Barbara Monastery” was organized, always there was just enough income to pay our bills, and suddenly the monastery had its own priest who served in the monastery chapel every day!

This was by no means the close of the story. Even more women wanted to join the monastic community. Good, God-sent, friends advised us to look for a property outside Santa Barbara. It was at this time that we found the place where St. Barbara Monastery is now permanently located in the mountains above Santa Paula.

Even what appeared to be setbacks turned out to be blessings from God, His ongoing work of creating something from nothing. When over half of our sisters were obliged by the County authorities to leave St. Barbara Monastery because—against the code—they were living in trailers (albeit temporarily), they reinhabited an empty monastery property in northern California. Today, some twelve years later, Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga is a thriving women’s monastic community in its own right.

Now, with the (likely) purchase of the neighboring house and property, we eagerly await the day when we will have more space—principally for more sisters but also for guests. Meanwhile, we are careful to keep our minds open while we wait to see what the Lord God will create.

Abbess Victoria  
and the sisters  
of St. Barbara Monastery



## ***NEW ICONOGRAPHY IN THE MONASTERY CHURCH***



guard at each of the four points of the compass.

Our iconographer, Matushka Anna Kalinina (pictured working at right), began the iconographic work in Moscow, unable to come immediately to the United States because of travel restrictions related to the pandemic. Once she was able to begin her work on the dome on site, her husband, Archpriest Leonid Kalinin, pastor of St. Clement Church in Moscow, joined his wife at St. Barbara Monastery to help with the project.

The photo at left shows the finished iconography in the octagonal dome of our monastery church of SS. Barbara and Eugene. The scaffolding pictured in our September Newsletter was duly removed a few weeks ago revealing this truly magnificent icon of the Pantocrator, where before there was only empty white plaster. In the tier containing the windows just below, angels stand



## ***PURCHASE OF NEIGHBORING HOUSE***

Our message in last month's Newsletter about the opportunity for our monastery to acquire the adjoining house and property brought an overwhelming response from our Friends! At that time we figured we needed a daunting \$500,000.00 for the possible purchase to become a reality. Now, after just one month, the necessary amount still needed is more like one tenth of that sum! We heartily thank all who contributed and we give glory to God! We still have a little over a month to raise funds, and we are confident that, with God's help, we will meet our deadline, December 1<sup>st</sup>.

*On the cover: Yes, that's WATER flowing in the creek!*

## ***VENTURA COUNTY GREEK FESTIVAL***



The Ventura County Greek Festival—for years and years a much anticipated, local, annual event—was cancelled for the past two years on account of the pandemic. Now, as the Ventura County guidelines for dealing with the Covid virus ease up, St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church of Camarillo once again held the event, this time on the three-day weekend of October 22-24.

More often than not, over the past fifteen years or so, St Barbara Monastery has been able to accept the gracious invitation of St. Demetrios Church to have a booth at the Festival, where we sell selections from our bookstore as well as our lavender and lavender products. Keeping the tradition going, our sisters were at the booth along with a few volunteer helpers all three days of the Festival, not only selling our wares, but talking with the many people who stopped by and answering their many, many questions—not only about books and lavender, but about the Orthodox Faith. What a great opportunity for outreach and bringing knowledge of Orthodox Christianity to our neighbors!

### ***YES! THE FRIENDS' GATHERING IS ON HALLOWEEN!***

You read the information on the cover correctly! Older folks will remember when observing the holiday was innocent and simply fun. Most every family had a carved jack-o-lantern in the window with a lit candle inside. “Trick-or-treating” was about inventing costumes, wearing them to visit the neighbors and then returning home with a treasure trove of candy. When did all that turn dangerous and the holiday become dark?

Come to the monastery for the Friends’ Gathering! Apples (some dipped in caramel), candy corn and pumpkin pie are guaranteed to be on the menu for the potluck.

*In conformity with the Ventura County regulations regarding Covid, we ask our visitors, whether vaccinated or not, to wear masks inside the church.*