


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



*The March Gathering of the Friends of
St. Barbara Monastery
Sunday, March 25th, 2018*

4:00 pm Presentation:

*Speaking the Truth in Love:
An Effective Christian Response to Abortion*

Speaker: Emily Wilkinson

*Director of Pro-Life Ministry
at St. Andrew Church, Riverside, CA*

5:00 pm Vespers

6:00 pm Lenten 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,

When, God-willing, we have our next Friends' Gathering on March 25th, we will have concluded the liturgical celebration of the Feast of the Annunciation. But Christians from the beginning were aware of even more significance belonging to this date than this Great Feast.

The Jews regarded March 25th as the date of the creation of the world-- an idea which the early Christians accepted. (Not so naïve an idea as it might appear at first glance.) Moreover, this was exactly the date of the Crucifixion of our Lord. (The date on the Jewish calendar is the 14th of Nisan, which corresponds to March 25th.) In the early centuries, Christians in some places even celebrated Pascha on this date--before the formula for determining the date of Pascha was set by the 1st Ecumenical Council. Then, March 25th is exactly nine months before the Nativity of Christ. Thus, it is no accident that the Church chose this date of March 25th to commemorate the Annunciation--although this was done only after the date of Christmas had been well established. "Today is the beginning of our salvation....," we sing with joy. (Troparion of Annunciation).

This information about the significance of the date helps illumine the hymnography of the Feast. While the hymnography focuses on the Virgin's exuberant response to the Archangel—(itself a hymn, the *Magnificat*), it reflects the theological vision of the Church. It was the hymnographers' gift of grace to understand this vision and the deep connections between the creation (and, by implication, the Fall), the Angel's announcement (the beginning of the new creation, that is, the Conception of Jesus Christ), and the Crucifixion (as finishing the work of that creation.)

Abbess Victoria
and the community of
St. Barbara Monastery

ALERT!

If you are planning to come to the Friends' gathering on Sunday, March 25th, we recommend that you check our website (www.stbarbaramonastery.org) or telephone (805-921-1563) to make sure the event has not been cancelled. As this Newsletter goes to press, we have received a voluntary evacuation order because of an expected storm of sufficient intensity to cause flooding and mud slides that could lead to closure of Highway 150. (As of Monday evening, we are not planning to evacuate, but the order could change to "mandatory" at any time.)

A WORD ABOUT OUR MARCH SPEAKER



Emily Wilkinson has been involved with the pro-life movement since she was a teen, starting pro-life clubs to address the abortion issue in both high school and college. She has since pursued many aspects of the pro-life movement, such as leading rallies and marches, working at a Pregnancy Resource Clinic, and organizing prayer vigils outside of abortion centers. In 2014, she moved to California to work for Students for Life of America, where she helped educate and equip students throughout CA, AZ, and NV to start pro-life clubs and be effective advocates for the preborn. Her current involvement includes organizing an annual pilgrimage to the Walk for Life in San Francisco, and starting a sidewalk advocacy program outside her local abortion center. She is presently director of Pro-Life Ministry at St. Andrew Church in Riverside, CA.



LENTEN PILGRIMS

Little did we realize that spring break would be the occasion for an influx of guests.



We hosted old friends and new from Saskatoon, Alberta, Canada; Vancouver, British Columbia; and Memphis, TN, as well as from various places in Southern California. They attended services,



helped out with various tasks (yes, those are bay leaves they are working on in the photo), and enjoyed lively conversations with the sisters exploring a host of topics.

ANNUNCIATION TEAS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

We know of at least three Annunciation Teas in Southern California, planned for Saurday, March 24th, in honor of the Theotokos: One at St. Athanasius Church in Goleta at 10:30 AM and another at St. Michael Church in Van Nuys at 10:00 AM. The third is scheduled for the afternoon at St. Andrew Church in Riverside. Details can be found at the websites of each of these churches.

LAZARUS SATURDAY WITH ARCHBISHOP BENJAMIN

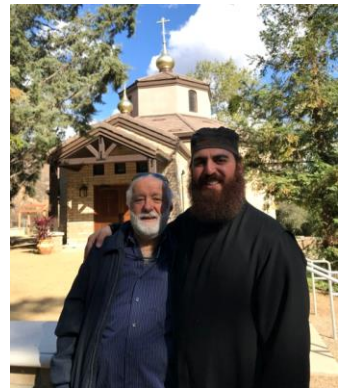
As has been the custom for many years now, Archbishop BENJAMIN will visit St. Barbara Monastery for Lazarus Saturday. On Friday, March 30th, at 4:00 PM, we will have the Vigil for the Feast, and on Saturday, March 31st, the Divine Liturgy will begin at 10:00 AM preceded by the Hours at 9:30. Following the Liturgy, everyone is invited to stay for a luncheon with His Eminence.

BAY LEAVES

The Thomas Fire destroyed a lot of our trees including some of our young bay laurels, and some of the bay trees that survived have an abundance of scorched leaves. However, most of our bay trees survived intact, and we do have an abundant supply of healthy, undamaged bay leaves. If your parish wants to order bay leaves for Holy Saturday from St. Barbara Monastery, it is not too late. Phone in your order at 805-921-1563 or email us at sbmonastery@gmail.com.

A VISIT FROM ST. MATTHEW CHURCH SENIORS

Led by their pastor, Rev. John Mahfouz, the seniors from St. Matthew Church, Torrance, visited the monastery on February 27th. The group arrived late morning, and there was time for only a cup of coffee before it was time to join the sisters in the chapel for the usual 6th Hour prayers. Afterwards, everyone enjoyed lunch together. In the afternoon, some of our visitors browsed the bookstore, while others took advantage of the great weather and explored the monastery grounds (not at their best after December's Thomas Fire, but also interesting because of that). Everyone came together for an informal presentation given by Mother Victoria about the life and history of the monastery. And then all too soon, it was time to say 'goodbyes,' and return to Torrance for the Lenten Vespers service there. Pictured at right are Father John and Rev. Deacon Barsoum Barsoum.



We will have a Presanctified Liturgy at St. Barbara Monastery

On Wednesday, March 28th, at 4:00 PM

Celebrated by Abbot Dionysie of Holy Resurrection Monastery in Temecula.

A meal will follow. Everyone is welcome.