

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

***THE JUNE GATHERING OF THE FRIENDS
OF ST. BARBARA MONASTERY
June 28th, 2015***

***MISSIONS AND THE LOCAL
EUCHARISTIC COMMUNITY***

***Speaker: NATHAN HORPE
OCMC MISSIONARY TO ALBANIA***

4:00 pm: Presentation

5:00 pm: Vespers for the Feast of SS. Peter & Paul

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,

This coming Sunday evening, when we have our June “Friends of St. Barbara Monastery” gathering, we will be celebrating Great Vespers for the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul, the pre-eminent apostles of Christ. The troparia and stichera we will sing in their honor do not hide Peter’s cowardly denial of Jesus in the night of His betrayal nor do they omit the fact that Paul was a rabid persecutor of Christ’s followers before his extraordinary conversion on the road to Damascus. On the contrary, they emphasize the all too weak humanity of these men, whom the Lord *unaccountably*—we would be inclined to say—chose to be His foremost representatives! The hymnography, magnifying the New Testament accounts it reflects, does this in order to encourage us.

Just what are the hymns saying to us? They are saying that no depth of human weakness or failings or error is beyond the reach of our merciful Savior. And they are saying something much more, something that goes far beyond this insight. They are saying that it actually *takes* weakness and recognition of our weakness—of the depth of our utter helplessness and failings and errors—to be prepared to receive the Lord’s mercy.

Peter wept when he realized what he had done, to what a depth He had fallen in denying that he even knew Jesus; and his tears were for his salvation. Paul was brought to realization of his utter helplessness and humbled when he heard the voice of the Lord and was blinded on the road to Damascus—and thus was he rendered ready to ask for baptism. Throughout the rest of his life, we find him *boasting* of his weakness!

The Lord is sending us reminders of our weakness, too—incessantly—allowing us to fall so that we might allow Him to pick us up! These experiences remind us who we are—mere *creatures*, yes, but bearing the image of God.

Abbess Victoria
and the sisters of
St. Barbara Monastery

NATHAN HOPPE TO SPEAK AT FRIENDS' GATHERING

Nathan Hoppe and his wife Gabriela are working to inspire, train, equip and lead Albanians to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples in Albania. They feel a tremendous urgency to follow Christ's command to make disciples of all nations in this land, where less than a generation ago complete atheism was enforced by the totalitarian communist government. The Orthodox Church of Albania has experienced a resurrection, and this resurrection is one of the miracles of the Orthodox world today; but it is a fragile miracle and there is still much work to do.



The Hoppe's ministry is focused on seminary students, university students and children. Nathan teaches at the Resurrection of Christ Theological Academy and leads the ministry to students at the University of Tirana. He also directs the Central Children's Office of the Orthodox Church of Albania, a ministry in which he works closely with Gabriela. He represents the Orthodox Church of Albania at a number of international gatherings including the official dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church and the dialogue with the Lutheran World Federation. Nathan also serves on the steering committee of the Lausanne-Orthodox initiative (LOI), is a member of the Advisory Council for World Vision Albania and is on the board of the Inter-Confessional Bible Society. Together, Nathan and Gabriela lead a team of 25 Albanian Orthodox youth to Kosovo each year where they hold friendship camps for about 1500 Muslim Albanian children. These camps are part of the social and philanthropic work of the Orthodox Church of Albania.

Nathan was born and raised in Colombia, South America. He is a graduate of Wheaton College and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Nathan has now served in Albania for more than 16 years.

Long-term missionaries are not supported from the general fund of Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC), so the Hoppe's would be grateful if you can participate in their support by making a pledge or sending a one-time gift designated for "Hoppe family".

IT'S LAVENDER HARVEST TIME AGAIN

We will begin the lavender harvest on June 26th—two days before the next Friends' gathering—because this year for the first time we have committed to selling fresh lavender bundles (bouquets) at the Ojai Lavender Festival on June 27th between the hours of 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM. As we go to press, we are still looking for helpers with the field work and with the preparation and actual sales of the bundles and our other lavender products at the Festival. Anyone interested in lending a hand should phone the monastery at 805-921-1563 or send us an email message: sbmonastery@gmail.com.

FATHER LAWRENCE IS BACK!



Ryassaphor monk Lawrence, who labored with us through the years of the trying design and planning process of our chapel building project, is back at St. Barbara Monastery after a three-year sojourn that took him to the monastic skete on St. Herman's Spruce Island in Alaska. He has returned to us—surely at the prompting of Divine Providence—at just the moment when his knowledge of the architectural plans and his construction expertise are sure to prove invaluable. In fact, our Project Manager Mitchell Denny has just announced that, following talks he and Father Lawrence had with our contractor Larry Anderson, the decision has been made to proceed with the final phase of construction as soon as *this week!*

A MORE-THAN-SUCCESSFUL MATCHING FUNDS DRIVE

You may remember that earlier in the year we announced that a donation of \$50,000 had been made anonymously to the Chapel Building Fund, which the donor requested be used to raise a matching amount. Fundraising letters sent to the “Friends” of the monastery and to members of the Diocese of the West of the Orthodox Church in America have brought in another \$70,000 to date, so that the Building Fund now has about \$200,000 on account. While more will probably be required to finish the chapel construction project entirely (including the driveway and landscaping), the contractor—Anderson Construction of Camarillo, CA—is willing to commence work on the final phase of construction now!