

THE TORCHBEARER • Ջահակիր

St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit

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The Reverend Father Garabed Kochakian ~ *Pastor*
The Reverend Father Diran Papazian ~ *Pastor Emeritus*
Deacon Rubik Mailian ~ *Director of Sacred Music and Pastoral Assistant*



ANNA A. TURCOTTE VISITS ST. JOHN'S.....



For many years the Armenian diaspora has appropriately commemorated the 1915 Armenian Genocide with programs observing this painful remembrance. (In fact in less than two years we will be observing the 100th anniversary of the world's first genocide of the 20th Century.)

Unfortunately, the tragedies did not end with the events of 1915. Just 25 years ago our people once again endured a new wave of massacres and pogroms in the cities of Baku and Sumgait and Kirovabad in Azerbaijan. Thousands of innocent men, women and children lost their lives and a population of two hundred and fifty thousand were expelled and fled for safety, simply because they were Armenians.

The Armenian Community of St. John set aside Sunday, June 16th to observe this tragedy that occurred at the end of the 20th Century with a religious observance and program.

Eye witness testimony of these dark days was shared with our St. John parishioners, by Anna Astvatsaturian Turcotte, Esq., author of the recently published book, *Nowhere: A Story of Exile*. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, she shared her compelling testimony to a spellbound congregation.

As a young girl of eight years of age she witnessed the plunder and assault on the Armenian community in her own neighborhood, the attacks on her family as well and the accounts of her family's heroic story of survival, in making their way to America. This well written work of factual details from her diary was carried out primarily because of the wishes of her grandmother, who impressed upon Anna that her recollections were vital so that this story, too, could be told.

Anna, a personable young woman, eagerly communicated verbally many of the events prominently found in her book. She willingly spent most of the afternoon, not only speaking about her memories, but also signed a large number of her books.

Painful but powerful were her words as she spoke about the history of her family fleeing from the Ottoman oppression and genocide of 1915 and then confronting a near repeat of man's inhumanity to man with the same death, devastation and hardship. In spite of the travails her family encountered with them as with so many Armenians from Azerbaijan who fled, their victories were building new lives in new lands, particularly here in the Greater Detroit and Michigan area where they have relocated.

Following her presentation, everyone present was invited to the Church Hall for a memorial meal organized by Julia Papiyants and her helpful committee members. Father Garabed thanked Anna for sharing her story and teaching us another part of our present day Armenian history that needs to be remembered and shared with future generations.

At approximately 2:00 pm, many who were in attendance went outside to participate in requiem prayers offered by Father Garabed Kochakian in formal memory of the many victims of 20th Century ethnic cleansing. The prayers took place in bright sunshine at the Baku-Sumgait-Kirovabad Memorial Monument.

- Harry Avagian -

ST. JOHN CHURCH AND MUSEUM TOUR IS BACK!

Wednesday, September 25, 2013 from 10 am - 2 pm

A part of the Land of Noah's Ark Festival, the Church and Museum tour is back featuring a vocal performance by Deacon Rubik Mailian, a museum tour directed by Lucy Ardash, and a noon buffet lunch.

\$15.00 per person

Please register by Monday, September 16, 2013

For questions, contact Diane Ekizian at 248.851.4069 or dlekizian@yahoo.com

Church Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 9 AM - 5 PM

After hours in an emergency, please contact: Pastor's Cell: 248.225.9888 • Administrator's Cell: 248.880.8391

JULY 2013



FROM FATHER GARABED'S DESK.....

A Christian Union: The Sacrament Of Marriage In The Armenian Church

The Sacrament of Marriage in the Church, simply put, begins with Jesus our Lord as does every Sacrament (*Khorhoort* in Armenian). Jesus taught that marriage was an eternal union, defining both male and female as equal heirs to inherit the grace of God and empowered with unique roles and responsibilities as partners with God in establishing the Kingdom of God in their household. Jesus greatly supported the equality of women because in His day, Judaism understood a wife to have very few rights if her husband was unfaithful to her. Though Jesus Himself was not married, He taught that marriage was ordained by God and perceived it to be truly a sacred union.

In fact, His first miracle was at a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee.

In the beginning, after the creation, God said, *It is not good that man should be alone, I will make him a helper as his partner...the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man, he made into a woman and brought her to the man...bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh...a man shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.* (Genesis 2)

Jesus, in his teaching on the sacredness of marriage, used this Old Testament admonition to become the foundation for Christian union. He clearly declared this as the ideal, saying *what God has joined together let no man separate.* (Mark 10:9)

Marriage is a covenant of love between a husband and wife. Saint Paul, like Christ, viewed marriage as a lifelong commitment saying, *to the married I give this command - not I but the Lord - that the wife should not separate from her husband... and that the husband should not divorce his wife...the unbelieving husband is made holy through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy through her husband...wife, for all you know, you might save your husband, and husband, for all you know, you might save your wife.* (1 Corinthians 7:10 ff).

The Early Centuries Of The Christian Church

There were no unique ceremonies for the blessing of a marriage. As early as the fourth century there was a ritual known as Holy Crowning performed during the Sunday Eucharist or Divine Liturgy. According to St. John Chrysostom, who has written many beautiful sermons about marriage, the crowns used were of laurels and flowers and symbolized the victory of a Christian's life on earth over worldly temptations. They were viewed as the crowns of reward in God's heavenly Kingdom, granting the gift of eternal life.

Not until the ninth century, however, did the Church begin to develop a special service apart from the Sunday Divine Liturgy. Normally after entering a civil marriage, the Christian couple asked for a blessing by a Bishop or priest and then partook of Holy Communion together, thus constituting the 'sealing in communion' with the Lord and each other of their marriage vow and eternal covenant of love. The decisive step to regulate the ceremony of holy crowning as a separate Sacrament and service of blessing occurred sometime after the tenth century.

MEN'S SOCIETY HOSTS A MANTI MAKING PARTY.....



On June 26, 2013, members of the Men's Society, their families and members of the ACYOA Seniors met at St. John's kitchen to make *manti* for the Men's Society food concession at "Armenia: Land of Noah's Ark" Festival being held at St. John's September 27-29. The *manti* makers were: Dr. David Aprahamian, Greg & Edith Baise, Ara Belian, Jim Berryman, Dan and Judy Cristiano, David Dardarian, Steve, Natalie, Steve Jr. and Seta Hagopian, Gary, Pat, Ara, Alexandra, Rachel Hachigian and Khalan Isbel, John Kalajian, Joe Kludjian, Donna Lafian, Mark Mamassian, John Pochas, George Saboonjian, Edward and Haik Snkhtchyan, Tom Stambouljian, John Yavruian and Paul Yousoufian.

A special thank you goes to Alexandra Hachigian for leading the group and advance preparation, and to her mother Pat for providing her expertise in making and cooking the *manti*. Once again our

sincere gratitude goes to Gary and Pat Hachigian for rallying their family into leading another function for the Church Festival. They are responsible for running the Country Store, making jams and jellies, *tourshi* and running the Tin Can Raffle during Festival Weekend.

See you at the Men's Society and Country Store areas the weekend of September 27-29. As always, thank you for your continued support of our functions.

Pictured above, left: Ara Hachigian and Khalan Isbel are all smiles. Pictured, right: George Saboonjian and David Dardarian whip up a whole 'lotta manti!

- Daniel Cristiano -



WOMEN'S GUILD KEEPS BUSY AND GROWING!



The Annual Membership Dinner was held on Wednesday, June 5th under the chairmanship of Marilyn Sarkesian and Nancy Panaretos. This year also marks the 75th Anniversary of the Women's Guild and a special cake was prepared for the celebration.

New members were initiated in a service conducted by Father Garabed and Women's Guild Chairman Linda Stambouljian. We welcomed new members Dr. Mary Alani, Renee Axt, Joy Callan, Lilit Grigoryan, Carol Hazergian, Dar Hazergian, Sandra Jack, Adrian Keoleian, Janice Megerian, Katherine Petryszack-Channell, Debbie Stamp and Seta Yeranorian.

Members reaching milestone years of 10, 25, 40 and 50 were honored and received either a bible, pin or plaque to commemorate their years of service to the Women's Guild. Anita Kachadurian, Mary Keoleian, and Diramayr Virginia Melkonian were congratulated on their 50 years of service. Forty-year members honored were Margaret Derderian, Mary Kurkechian and Isabelle Vahratian. Our twenty-five year honorees were Alice Argnian, Grace Karougian and Alice Malakhanian. Recognized and thanked for ten years of service were Cynthia Amboian, Sara Andonian, Annrae Anusbigian, Linda Assarian, Lisa Bahm, Anna (Pepsi) Baylerian, Paula Derbabian, Lisa Derderian, Dawn Derouchie, Linda Franquist, Aralynn Haidostian, Linda Houhanisin, Denise Karakashian, Patricia Kezelian, Esther Kulhanjian, Judy Parks, Susan Reizian, Barbara Rupas, Anna Sarkisian and Sue Vian. Alice Mavian, a member for over forty years gave a heartfelt speech on the importance in her life of the love and friendships developed in the Women's Guild. She emphasized that it is created by everyone just showing up and supporting each other.



She emphasized that it is created by everyone just showing up and supporting each other.

Festival Baking is a great way to build friendships and support the church. Everyone is welcome to meet in the church kitchen every Monday and Tuesday beginning at 9 am. Baking continues until the festival in September. Can't make it during the day? Evening Bakes are July 15 and August 19 beginning at 6 pm. Contact Dolly Matoian for information at 248.737.9055.



Pictured above, upper left: New members hold lit candles and stand besides Father Garabed as he speaks. *Pictured above, right:* Forty-year members Margaret Derderian and Isabelle Vahratian stand with Father Garabed as they are honored. *Pictured below, left:* Father Garabed honors fifty-year Women's Guild members

Diramayr Virginia Melkonian, Anita Kachadurian and Mary Keoleian.

PARISH YOUTH RECEIVE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS.....

On the evening of June 12, 2013, the Twelfth Annual Merit Scholarship Awards sponsored by the Daughters of Vartan Zabelle Chapter 12 was held at St. John Armenian Church Cultural Hall. Since its inception, Jane Hovsepan has chaired the scholarship program. Committee member, LuCille Noraian was the evening's chairwoman, and organized a lovely program. The recipients of this year's awards were:

Undergraduates: Andrea Godoshian (Music Therapist), Eastern Michigan University, granddaughter of Nevart and the late George Godoshian, and daughter of Ron and Jacqueline Godoshian; Katie Kalajian (Elementary Education), Central Michigan University, granddaughter of Ralph and Rose Kalajian and daughter of John and Kim Kalajian; Cimone Safilian (Psychology/Child Development), Central Michigan University, granddaughter of Armen and Alice Safilian and daughter of Charles and Cindy Safilian.

Graduate Students: Raffi El Chemmas (MBA), DePaul University (Chicago), grandson of Diramayr Virginia and the late Dirahayr Byron Melkonian and son of Jackie and Faouzi El Chemmas; Marianne Mousigian (Medicine) Wayne State Medical School, granddaughter of Clara and the late Mike Mousigian and daughter of Michael and Susan Mousigian.

- Alice Argnian -

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms July 2013

- 11 Rebecca Faye Grider - Adult
Godparents: Benjamin & Tara Gale
- 14 Natalie Taleen
Daughter of Krikor & Anita Arman II
Godfather: Varujan Arman

Weddings June 2013

- 23 Galine Torossian & Berj Bush
Khachyeghpayr: Garen Torossian
Best Man: Raffi Bush
Matron of Honor: Diana Grigoryan
- 28 Reshmi Nair & Robert Antonyan
Best Man: Albert Antonyan
Maid of Honor: Angelina Antonyan
- 29 Seena Karapetian & David Zulkiewski
Khachyeghpayr: Gregory Karapetian
Best Man: Todd Losey
Matron of Honor: Nayiri Karapetian

July 2013

- 7 Lori Karakashian & Gregory Avdoian
Best Man: George Schweitzer
Maid of Honor: Kimberly Karakashian

Funerals June 2013

- 28 Virginia Araxie Aginian, 94, Woodlawn



Festival preparations are underway. Recently the members and friends of the Women's Guild enjoyed preparing *kufteh* for the Festival. Rolling, talking, and having fun in addition to assembling nearly 8000 balls was the order of the day. We gratefully acknowledge the continued serviced of the Women's Guild to our Parish.

CHURCH SCHOOL OPENS DOORS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH.....

St. John's Church School, once again, is happy to announce that classes will begin Sunday, September 8th at 10:00 am. We welcome all children who have been baptized in the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church. A completed registration form is required to properly register each child. Forms may be downloaded from the church web site: stjohnsarmenianchurch.com (click on "Parish Organizations" and select "Church School"). Forms also may be requested from the church office.

St. John's Church School follows the curriculum formulated by the Religious Education Department of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) for kindergarten through grade twelve.

Our Nursery and Pre-school Program invites you as parents to participate with your child of two - four years of age in providing the beginning steps that build upon what you have started at home.

From the first grade through the eighth grade our children learn the fundamentals of our Armenian Apostolic Orthodox faith tradition, including *The Bible*, , *The History of*

Faith, The Sacramental Life, The Feasts and Seasons of the Church, The Stories of Armenian Heroes and Saints, The Rules and Order of Christian Life, and most importantly, *Who Jesus Christ is in the World Today and in Their Lives*.

In the Senior High School Division from ninth grade through twelfth grade, students continue their journey of faith with more in-depth study and understanding of the Divine Liturgy, *The History of the Armenian Church, Comparative Religions, Bible Study, The Life of Christ, The Sacraments*, and our own In-Service Program. Additionally, students have the opportunity to participate in the Church School Choir, serving at the Divine Liturgy as altar servers, lectors and leaders, and in the Altar Server Training Program for boys aged 9-14.

Let St. John's become an extension of your own family as a partner in helping your children experience the fullness of God in their lives by providing religious education at every level and for every age.

Church School Principal Alberta Godoshian will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Please contact her at 248.476.4638.

ST. JOHN'S HELPS ABROAD.....

During the Patriarchal authority of His Beatitude Archbishop Torkom Manoogian of blessed memory, through the good works of Mrs. Barbara Haroutunian, a parishioner of St. John's, great care and attention was given to the St. Tarkmanchatz School for its educational advancement under the direction of the Very Reverend Father Norayr Kazazian. It came to our attention that there was a need to assist the school, not only through educational development but also the physical structure and campus, which had pressing needs as well. One such project was the establishment of a new play area for the students.

St. John's embarked upon a campaign to raise funds to assist in this project, but then learned later that it could not carry through due to matters about which we were not aware. The funds have since remained here in the amount of US \$20,000.00. Recently, Father Norayr informed St. John's as progress of the school's good and welfare continues, there is presently a pressing need for playground equipment for the kindergarteners' play area, and that our funds could cover those needs.

With pleasure then, St. John's forwarded a check for \$20,000.00 for the aforementioned need for the kindergarteners of the St. Tarkmanchatz School's play area to be used for the upgrading and enhancements so that our little ones may enjoy recreational exercises during their daily class schedules.

It is truly our doubled joy to make this presentation of our prayerful support on the auspicious occasion of Patriarchate Nourhan Manougian's enthronement and at the same time to contribute for the needs of this most worthy educational institution within the Armenian Patriarchate.

We are certain that the Lord had a plan for our community's efforts which were undertaken with much loving support and that He will be a guiding spirit in the years ahead in the Patriarchal ministry seated upon the Throne of St. James and in the name of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church.

Pictured above: Newly enthroned Patriarch Archbishop Nourhan Manougian receives a donation from Subdeacon Jordan Norsigian. This donation is for the refurbishing of the Kindergarten playground of the St. Tarkmanchatz School in the Armenian compound of the Holy See of St. James in Jerusalem. Jordan was one of the many pilgrim youth who journeyed to the Holy Land in June. The special pilgrimage was led by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, our Primate.



A NOTE OF THANKS.....



"Pahjeen eem Asdvadz haveedyan."

"My portion is God forever."

This is what we say when we receive *Mahs*, which is a portion, (the meaning of the word *Mahs*), of the Holy Sacrifice. We gratefully acknowledge the Women's Guild *Mahs* Committee chaired by Charlene Apigian.

Recently Charlene was joined by Alice Argnian, Alice Betrosian, Emma Betrosian, Samantha Brown, Zackary Brown, Susan Janigian, June Mekjian, and Helen Olson to package *Mahs*. We sincerely thank this Women's Guild committee for their invaluable service in preparing *Mahs* for our faithful.

Pictured in the photo are Susan Janigian, Zackary and Samantha Brown (cute grandchildren of Charlene Apigian) and June Mekjian.

A NEW EVENT!

*St. John Armenian Church
presents a prelude to the
2013 Armenia -Land Of Noah's Ark Festival*

Passport to Armenia



*Enjoy gourmet Armenian cuisine stations with wine and dessert while you stroll
and listen to beautiful Armenian music performed by celebrated violinist
Henrik Karapetyan*

*Experience a relaxing evening as you consider the silent auction display
featuring art, fine jewelry, children's items and more!*

Friday, September 20, 2013 6:30 in the evening

St. John Armenian Church - Main Cultural Hall, 22001 Northwestern Highway, Southfield, MI 48075

\$25.00 per Person

Please respond by September 12, 2013

*Open individual seating, or contact
Mrs. Isabelle Vahratian, 248-553-2798 for reserved tables of 8 or more guests*

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Contact the Church Office, your Pastor
or a Parish Council member for ways to
leave a legacy to your Church.



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Julia Papiyants, *Managing Editor, Copy & Layout*

Harry Avagian, Mary Davidson, Diane Ekizian, May Kafafian, Dolly Matoian

We welcome your comments and suggestions, so please feel free to contact the Church Office so we may continue to improve the way we bring information to our parishioners, subscribers and the St. John community. If you would like to help defray printing and postage costs, and are computer savvy, please consider receiving your *Torchbearer* online as 10% of our readership already does. The added bonus is that it appears in color online! Please contact the Church Office.

If you would be interested in sponsoring an issue of *The Torchbearer*, that is, assuming the costs of producing one, please contact May Kafafian at the Church Office for further information. We also need volunteers who would be interested in helping prepare *The Torchbearer* for mailing. This occurs around the 25th of the month and for just a few hours. Again, please contact the Church Office.

We invite you to visit the St. John web site for up-to-date calendar information, the Sunday Bulletin, *The Torchbearer*, event information and links to internet sites of interest to our parishioners:

stjohnsarmenianchurch.org



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JULY 2013

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.....

August

- 18 Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God
Annual Church Picnic
- 28 Day by Day Afternoon Bible Study

September

- 2 Labor Day - Complex Closed
- 8 Church School Opens
Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
- 13 Lecture: Dr. Christina Maranci
- 15 **Exaltation of the Holy Cross**
- 18 Day by Day Afternoon Bible Study
- 20 Passport to Armenia: Dinner & Auction -
Prelude to "Armenia: Land of Noah's Ark" Festival
- 21 Health Fair
- 22 Renewal of Marriage Vows & Blessing
- 25 Church/Museum Tour & Lunch
- 26 Fine Arts Exhibit Opening & Reception
- 27-29 Festival Weekend - "Armenia: Land of
Noah's Ark" Festival
- 29 Holy Cross of Varak

October

- 6 Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
- 11 Men's Society Wine Tasting
- 23 Day by Day Afternoon Bible Study
- 27 Discovery of the Holy Cross

IN THE COMMUNITY.....

Assumption Day - Blessing of the Grapes

Annual Picnic
Sunday, August 18, 2013 (after church)

Featuring...

Antique Car Show
50/50 Raffle
Women's Guild Bake Sale
Cookie Baking Contest
Water Games
(Dunk Tank & Slip and Slide)
PARENTS: Bring bathing suits & towels
for the kids!
Tavloo Boards & Playing Cards

Enjoy a picnic menu of...

Salad, pida bread, chicken, lamb or loulou kabobs,
rice or bulgur pilaf, watermelon & pop

And for children...

Hot dogs, chips & pop

Friday, September 13, 2013

7:30 PM

Vartan Room at St. John Armenian Church

September 13 Dr. Christina Maranci presents "St. John
Reborn: The Sacred Architecture of Zvart'nots and its
role in the formation of the present St. John Armenian
Church of Greater Detroit"

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