

# THE TORCHBEARER • Ջահակիր

## St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit

22001 Northwestern Highway • Southfield, MI 48075

248.569.3405 (phone) • 248.569.0716 (fax) • [www.stjohnsarmenianchurch.org](http://www.stjohnsarmenianchurch.org)

The Reverend Father Garabed Kochakian, *Pastor*

Clergy residing within the St. John parish and community:

The Reverend Father Diran Papazian, *Pastor Emeritus*

The Reverend Father Abraham Ohanesian

Deacon Rubik Mailian, *Director of Sacred Music and Pastoral Assistant*

Ms. Margaret Lafian, *Organist*



## MUSIC GUILD BRINGS NEW YORK'S SIMA TRIO TO DETROIT.....

The St. John Music Guild opened its third season with the internationally acclaimed Sima Trio of New York on Sunday, October 26. The Trio includes three incredibly gifted Armenian musicians: Cellist Ani Kalayjian, pianist Sofya Melikyan and violinist Sami Merdinian.

They played to a full house and a very appreciative audience at St. John's Cultural Hall. The program was selected by the Trio to reach the heart and soul of the primarily Armenian audience in an Armenian venue. Featured composers included Alan Hovhaness, Arno Babadjanian and Gayaneh Tchekobadian as well as Josef Haydn. Speaking from the stage for the Sima Trio, Ani Kalayjian expressed to the audience their joy and anticipation of performing at St. John Armenian Church in metro Detroit. Their talent and sincerity was apparent in their performance and the audience was visibly moved.

With this concert the Music Guild initiated a new concept; that of inviting an accomplished student musician to perform. With the approval of the performing artists the student chosen was Michael Randall Hawes who is pursuing a Master's Degree in both Trumpet and Voice at Northwestern University. He is member of the Chicago Symphony Chorus and performs on both voice and trumpet in the Chicago area. For the concert at St. John he performed on solo trumpet "The Prayer of St. Gregory" by Alan Hovhaness, to rave reviews from the audience.

This concert was sponsored in memory of Michael Minasian and it was especially moving to know that our student soloist is Michael's grandson - a most fitting tribute.

A lovely Wine and Cheese reception immediately followed the concert where guests could meet the artists and enjoy Armenian delicacies. It seemed the entire audience wanted to continue the warm glow of the concert by staying to share their enthusiasm and their appreciation for the program and the artists.

To quote Cellist Ani Kalayjian, *"I so enjoyed performing at St. John's for all of you and was very happy to see such a great turn-out for the event. It was wonderful to connect with the audience afterwards as well and it was a very special ambience during the concert."*

Thanks particularly to the Minasian Family for providing major funding for this concert, and we would also like to thank our benefactors, patrons and donors for contributing to the success of this event. Without their collective support, the Music Guild would not have been able to present the Sima Trio to the greater Detroit audience at St. John Armenian Church. The Music Guild is encouraged by the audience participation at this concert which has contributed to the success of the group's efforts to bring fine music and musicians to our community.

We encourage those who have expressed a desire to support these programs at any level in the future to contact the Church or any member of the St. John Music Guild. Your participation is an imperative ingredient to continue these programs for future generations.

*Pictured above:* The Sima Trio with student performer, Michael Randall Hayes. *Pictured at left:* The Sima Trio pictured after a powerful performance of the Babadjanian Piano Trio.

- Jeanette Keramedjian -

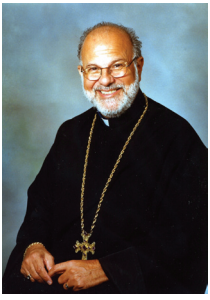
See more on Page 5...



**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: 760.832.1142

OCTOBER 2014



## FROM FATHER GARABED'S DESK.....

The four Greater Detroit Armenian Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Churches announce that Armenian Martyrs Day will be jointly commemorated at The Antiochian Orthodox Basilica of Saint Mary with a special Ecumenical Service on Friday, April 24, 2015 at 7:00 pm. The committee has already been working to organize this momentous celebration in the life of the Armenian people and churches recognizing the canonization of the Martyrs as Saints of the Armenian Church whose lives have become victorious as their souls rise from the ashes of death. The service presided over by the Clergy, Deacons and Choristers of the four Armenian churches will also invite the presence of non-Armenian clergy and laity as well, and will conclude with a reception to celebrate these victors of Christ.

His Eminence Allen Vigneron, Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit will be the principal homilist. Please reserve your calendars to join as one Armenian community united in prayer, purpose and celebration.

### Reflections about the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and the Canonization of the Armenian Martyrs as 'Saints'

**Who are the Saints?** The saints are citizens of the Kingdom of God, particular people of faith who stand out. Many of them are unknown and that is why there is a day called *All Saints Day*. Those who are known for their exemplary life, witness and spirit-driven works are celebrated in communities and venerated, *meaning regarded with special honor*.

They are declared, made official, or *canonized ... in a sense legalized ...* and noted for their piety and holiness of life, predicated and modeled upon virtuous attributes of holy living as found in the Gospels and Pauline letters. The Armenian Church does not have a formalized ritual or process as western churches may have, but nonetheless views and accepts certain individuals as models of the faith and living icons or images of Christ in totality, be they monks, priests, or lay people. Their martyrdom, miraculous efforts and works in changing what is ordinary to the level of extraordinary are so noted and celebrated in the day-to-day life of the church during the Holy *Badarak* and other services of prayer. They are remembered with loving thanks for showing the way to BE CHRIST, to emulate Jesus, to be the living eyes, hands and spirit of God in one's own humanity.

The Canonization of the 1915 Armenian Martyrs becomes a moment of conversion, of transformation from sadness and defeat to celebration and victory, exalting those whom we have mourned for 100 years to the level of *sainthood* which we should aspire to emulate. Their courageous deeds and actions become divinized with the power of victory over death. Christ has conquered death with His power and resurrection. In the same way the collective martyrdom of the victims of 1915 is now a turning point with their canonization, imbuing Armenian Christians today with strength and endurance that, as the scripture says, ***boasts in the hope of the glory of God ... in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*** Romans 5:1-5

The forthcoming canonization is a change for the Armenian people and Church, a change from victim to being victors, placing our church under a dogmatic imperative. We no longer weep for them (though we may still weep for ourselves). Rather we celebrate their memories as eternal witnesses of Christ and His Victory during the Divine Liturgy. We shall invoke their names and souls as models and icons of endurance, perseverance and holy character to help us overcome our earthly struggles and suffering and commending ourselves to become like them, fearless even unto death in and through Christ the Lord.

What lies ahead of us, with the New Saints of the Armenian Church, is a daunting challenge transforming a one-hundred year atmosphere of sorrow and victimization to the horizon of heaven where we live now in celebration and victory in the hope of joining them as co-citizens in the Kingdom of God. By God's grace, the tragedy of which we have been a part will become a testament of victory which we shall forever celebrate.

~ Father Garabed

## MEN'S SOCIETY PANCAKE BREAKFAST PROCEEDS DONATED.....

On Sunday, November 2, 2014, the Men's Society held a pancake breakfast with over 150 in attendance. A delicious menu of food and drink of every type was served. The following Men's Society members helped make this delicious breakfast: Ed Baharian, George Boyagian, Dan Cristiano, David Dardarian, John Kalajian, Robert Magee, Mark Mamassian, George Saboonjian and Peter Toukhanian.

The funds raised will go to support the Capuchin Brothers programs, especially Jefferson House, where the Franciscan Capuchin Friars and volunteer staff provides rehabilitation for men suffering from addictions. This is a new ministry of service the St. John's Men's Society has chosen to support. Please come and join us next time. The members of the Men's Society thank you for your continued support of these gatherings.

- Daniel Cristiano -

## WITH GREAT APPRECIATION.....

The following doctors support a healthy Armenian community and supported the 2014 Health Fair at St. John Armenian Church. We thank them for their dedication and support.

Dr. Gary Assarian  
Dr. David Aprahamian  
Dr. Heidi Aprahamian  
Dr. Linda Darian  
Dr. Charles Godoshian  
Dr. Robert Hogikyan  
Dr. Gregory Kalemkerian  
Dr. Jeri Kedzierski  
Dr. Harry A. Kezelian  
Dr. Christine Matoian  
Dr. Viken Matossian  
Dr. Aram Mechigian  
Dr. Berj Nercessian  
Dr. Thomas Varbedian  
Dr. Robert Vartabedian

## REMEMBERING DER ZOR.....

Touched by the tragic desecration of the Der Zor Chapel, Viken and Garo Matossian shared their feelings and words of hope and faith:

Echoes of the ordained canting  
Permeate the hallowed archstones  
Hear the faithful choir chanting  
Bless a desecrated throne  
Scattered parish faithful yearning  
Steadfast hymns of ancient reverence  
In the dark one candle burning  
Promise of the Savior's presence.

## WOMEN'S GUILD KEEPS BUSY.....

With a successful Fall Festival behind us, the Women's Guild is thankful for the dedication of everyone who participated. We are especially proud of our Women's Guild Hot Foods and Bake Goods Sales and the Delicacy Basket.

Our special thanks go to Dolly Matoian who led thirty-seven bake days over four months and to her dedicated assistants Almas Derderian, Marianne Dardarian and Joy Callan. We are inspired by the energy of Anita Arslanian and Joy Callan who worked continuously for three days and evenings in the kitchen and created the extraordinary Delicacy Basket. Our appreciation to Hot Foods' leaders Diane and Dawn Aginian who chaired all three days and to Bake Sale leaders: Sue Vian, Rose Najarian, Joy Callan, Terry Palaian and Linda DePietro.

We were pleased to have Deena Policheekeeo from Alternatives for Girls in Detroit as our featured speaker at our October meeting. For ten years, Sue Vian has led the Women's Guild in creating personal gift bags for this organization at our November meetings.

Ms. Policheekeeo explained the various programs of Alternatives for Girls. The mission of the program is to help homeless and high-risk girls and young women avoid violence, teen pregnancy and exploitation and help them explore and access the support, resources, and opportunities necessary to be safe, to grow strong, and to make positive choices in their lives. This past year 100% of the young women were eligible to graduate high school and were pursuing higher education in the fall.

*Pictured:* Father Garabed Kochakian, Alternative for Girls Representative Deena Policheekeeo and Women's Guild board member and Gift Bag Project Chairwoman Susan Vian.

- Nora Noraian -





## Baptisms & Chrismations

October 2014

- 12 Ani Izabella  
Daughter of Robert & Lindsay Lehrer  
Godparents: Steven & Natalie Hagopian
- 18 Kira Katherine  
Daughter of John & Sara Hagopian  
Godparents: Steven & Seta Hagopian
- 19 Skyler Francis  
Son of Michael McFadden & Natalie Afacanyan  
Godparents: Johnny & Aylin Afacanyan
- Paul Garen  
Son of Johnny & Aylin Afacanyan  
Godparents: Haroutyun Dulgar & Natalie Afacanyan

## Weddings

October 2014

- 3 Sam Sarkis Lucian & Christina Holly Marin  
*Khachyeghpayr*: Levon Taroyan  
Bestman: Corey Walch  
Maid of Honor: Lisa Cylkowski
- 4 Thomas Charles Stambouljian Jr. & Lucinda Seera-Yeran Selverian  
Bestman: Charles Stambouljian  
Maid of Honor: Dawn Penecale
- 18 Neal Michael Naughton & Margeaux Anahid Reizian  
*Khachyeghpayr*: Spencer Keoleian  
Bestman: Kevin Naughton Jr.  
Maid of Honor: Paulina Reizian
- 26 Grigoriy Babayan & Hripsime Grigoryan  
Bestman: Arthur Agamyan  
Maid of Honor: Ornela Mirashi

## Funerals

October 2014

- 13 Stephen Hagopian, 86, Woodmerre
- 15 Margaret Gozmanian, 85, Woodlawn
- 31 George P. Keurajian, 90, Woodlawn

## Marriages

Arrangements for weddings are to be made at least eight months in advance. Marriage preparation and counseling are required before the celebration of the sacrament. The Bestman (*Khachyeghpayr*) must be a member of the Armenian Orthodox Church. The parish office will make all necessary arrangements for the deacon, organist and soloist. Marriages are not celebrated during Great Lent.

## Baptisms and Chrismations

All baptisms must be scheduled two months prior to the sacrament's celebration. Rescheduling of a date will be allowed only once, if necessary. Pre-baptismal preparation for the godparents will take place one half hour prior to the baptism service. We ask that godparents please be on time. One of the two godparents must be a member of the Armenian Orthodox Faith.

Unlike the Sacrament of Holy Crowning/ Marriage that is not celebrated during the Great Lenten period of the Armenian Church, baptisms may take place throughout the year on Sundays after the Divine Liturgy at 1: 30 pm. They may also take place on Saturdays or by exception on any weekday. Chrismations are generally offered on weekdays or prior to the Sunday Divine Liturgy.

## Regulations for Sacramental Services

The rule of order with regard to worship and sacraments requires that all services be celebrated in the Church Sanctuary that has been consecrated for such sacred celebrations. Weddings, baptisms and funerals cannot be celebrated outside of the Church building proper.

## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER.....

We wanted to give you abundant notice that the 2014 annual Parish Assembly will occur on Sunday, February 1, 2015, in the main ballroom immediately following the Divine Liturgy.

This is the occasion when we review the accomplishments of the previous year, discuss finances, approve the annual budget, elect members to the Parish Council, Auditing Committee, Nominating Committee, Diocesan Delegates and so much more. We will also be discussing some important events such as the 100th Genocide commemoration.

We want to hear your ideas about how we can continue to strengthen our Parish. The annual meeting is one of the most important events of the year, so please mark your calendar for **February 1, 2015**.

On behalf of the Parish Council,

*Karmen A. Santourian*  
Parish Council Chairman

### Some Sima Trio "After Notes"

In a post-concert interview with Ani Kalayjian she expressed...

*"We were thrilled to plan a program that featured both classical and Armenian works from our heritage which was very meaningful to us."*

When asked what advice she would give to aspiring musicians...

*"Work your hardest, raise your standards every day. Perform as much as possible to gain concert experience. Becoming an artist is a privilege allowing you to express your unique talent and take it all over the world. Enjoy the process and go for it."*

From a member of the audience, Sarah Dergazarian...

*"The Babadjanian Piano Trio in f# minor, was performed with such mastery. The dramatic interplay between violinist Sami Merdinian and cellist Ani Kalayjian showed their understanding of the composer's intent. The final movement, Allegro Vivace, was extremely challenging and the pianist, Sofya Melikyan laid into the large chords with her whole body. Wow, what an afternoon of quality music!"*

## ACYOA SENIORS KNUCKLE DOWN.....

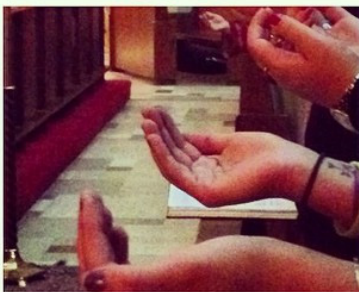
Our Detroit ACYOA Seniors shared with us that 2015 will be a year filled with much activity and work as they will host the diocesan youth at the General Assembly and Sports Weekend Thursday, May 21 - Monday, May 25, 2015.

In 2015, the Catholicos of the Armenian Church along with all the bishops in Armenia and the Diaspora will declare the Martyrs of the 1915 Genocide as Saints in a special service of canonization to be held in April. In keeping with this momentous event in the life of the Armenian nation and Diaspora, this year's ACYOA General Assembly and Sports Weekend will incorporate the remembrance and celebration of the Martyrs in a number of ways for the Armenian youth who will gather in Detroit.

Along with meetings and sporting events, cultural, educational and charitable service programs will enhance the gathering under the theme "Made in Detroit: We are the Legacy." A special "walk and talk" event honoring the newly canonized Saints is being planned as part of this commemoration that will culminate with a unique youth-focused Divine Liturgy on Sunday, May 24th in our beautiful sanctuary.

Not only the youth, but our entire parish will be the host of this special gathering in May. We ask everyone in our community who may be approached to help in extending the finest of Midwestern hospitality to our guests. Step up and make our community shine as brightly as the dome of our church.

*Pictured: Our ACYOA Seniors at Sunday service, pictured with Father Garabed and Jennifer Morris.*



## Christmas Schedule - *Տօնակարգ Ս. Ծննդեան Շրջանի*

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2014 – CHURCH SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM, Grand Ballroom, following Divine Liturgy**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2014 – ST. STEPHEN THE PROTODEACON AND FIRST MARTYR/WESTERN CHRISTMAS EVE**  
*Ս. Ստեփաննոս Նախասարկաւազ եւ Առաջին Մարտիրոս / Քրիսմբսի Նախօրեակ / “A Family Christmas Worship”*  
Carols (in English) & Scripture Readings - **10:30 pm** / Christmas Tea hosted by the ACYOA Seniors

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 2015 – NEW YEAR’S DAY – DIVINE LITURGY, 11:00 AM**

**MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2015 - ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS EVE / JRAKALOOYTS**

Vespers and Reading of Prophecies - *Ճրագալոյց / Խթան Գիշեր / Դանիէլի Մարգարէութեան Ընթերցում եւ Երից Մանկանց* - **6:00 pm**; Divine Liturgy / *Ս. Պատարագ* - **7:00 pm**

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2015 - THEOPHANY / EPIPHANY / DON ASDVADZAHAYDNOOTIAN**

**FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST / Տօն Ս. Ծննդեան եւ Աստուածայայտնութեան**

Festal Divine Liturgy / *Հանդիսաւոր Ս. Պատարագ* - **10:30 am**

Blessing of the Waters – *Ջրօրհնէք* / Godfather of the Cross: Nicolas Sarafian

A Christmas Luncheon will be hosted by the Women’s Guild in the Grand Ballroom following worship services. Please RSVP by January 2nd to the Church Office at 248.569.3405.

*Զեզ եւ Մեզ Մեծ Աւետիս - Քրիստոս Ծնաւ եւ Յայտնեցաւ*  
*Tsez yev mez Medz Avedis - Kreesdos Dzunav yev Haydnetsav*  
**Christ is Born and is Revealed - Blessed is the Revelation of Christ!**

**GREETINGS FROM YOUR PASTOR AND PARISH COUNCIL** On the occasion of the New Year and the Holy Christmas Season, the Pastor and Parish Council wish to extend to our beloved faithful community and friends their sincere prayers and good tidings for a New Year filled with God’s abundant blessings.

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION** - The Feast of Our Lord’s Birth and Baptism is a *Daghavar* / Tabernacle Feast of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church and is a day of Holy Obligation. In accordance with Armenian Church Canon, all the faithful should partake of the Sacrament of Holy Communion at the Divine Liturgies of this Holy Season.

**OLD & NEW TRADITIONS OF ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS - Yughakin – Իղազին** It is a church tradition to make a Christmas offering for religious and educational programs and charitable deeds to be offered honoring the name of our Lord and Saviour. Enclosed is an envelope for your Christmas offering, which we call *Yughakin*, meaning “price of oil.” Before modern times, oil was used to light the lanterns in our churches. In this season of giving, your offering will keep the light of Christ burning brightly as you remember your Church and all the good your gift can do.

**Home Blessing – Dnorhnek – Տնօրհնէք** It is customary to invite the Lord’s blessings into our homes during the Christmas Season. If you wish to have your home blessed during Christmastide, please call the Church Office at 248.569.3405 to schedule a visit by the pastor, who will – with joy – respond and bring the Blessings of Christ into your home.

**Altar Flowers – Խորանի Ծաղիկներ / Festal Candles – Տօնական Մոմեր** A beautiful Christmas tradition at St. John’s is the adornment of the holy altar and *bema* with poinsettia plants and special candles. If you would like to contribute towards these items, please contact the Church Office.



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CHURCH IN YOUR WILL



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lish an endowment, or supplement  
the General Fund.

Contact the Church Office, your  
Pastor or a Parish Council member

for ways to leave a legacy to  
your Church.

### The Torchbearer Staff

Fr. Garabed Kochakian, *Editor-in-chief*  
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 25<sup>th</sup> 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](http://stjohnsarmenianchurch.org)

## PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.....

### December

- 9 Conception of the Holy Mother-of-God
- 21 Church School Christmas Program
- 24 Western Christmas Eve Service
- 25 Western Christmas-Complex Closed

### January 2015

- 1 Happy New Year!  
Divine Liturgy, 11:00 am
- 5 Senior Lunch, 12:00 Noon
- 5-6 Armenian Christmas - see worship schedule

## IN THE COMMUNITY.....

**Sunday, December 7, 2014, 12:30 pm**

Children's Christmas Party

St. John's Rec Center

Sponsored by the Evereg Fenesse Educational Society

**Sunday, December 14, 2014, 12:30 pm**

Children's Christmas Party

St. John's Rec Center

Sponsored by the Knights & Daughters of Vartan

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