

THE TORCHBEARER • Ջահակի

St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit

22001 Northwestern Highway • Southfield, MI 48075

248.569.3405 (phone) • 248.569.0716 (fax) • 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*



KOMITAS CHOIR AND CENTENNIAL CHORALE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS.....

On Sunday, December 28th, over 60 members and guests of St. John's Komitas Choir and the Centennial Chorale came together with their families and friends to celebrate the sacred season of our Lord's Birth at the Italian American Club in Livonia.

Guests were greeted by dinner organizers Yeretzgin Roberta Kochakian and Dolly Matoian in the Clubhouse Room, beautifully decorated for the season with table centerpieces. Appetizers were served followed by a repast *abbondanza* of delectable Italian cuisine topped off with dessert and treats provided by many choir members.

Yeretzgin Roberta greeted everyone and asked Der Garabed to offer grace. He invited all the voices to sing the *Hayr Mer*, which resounded throughout the complex in four-part harmony. She then invited every table to "sing for their supper" by offering a Christmas carol designed for each table. With no words, but only memory, suddenly mobile phones appeared as



a frantic search began for the lyrics of each song.

After dinner came the entertainment of the evening, a light-hearted Armenian-style comic presentation by Harry Berberian, son of Detroit opera star Ara Berberian. Everyone enjoyed his presentation that ended with the "12 Days of Armenian Christmas" with lyrics created by him and sung by all. Deacon Rubik, our Maestro Director, accompanied by Margaret Lafian, our good and faithful organist, then led everyone in a Christmas carol sing-along before the concluding prayer. The gathering was also fortunate to have former Choir Director Khachig Kazarian and his wife Christine present, and a surprise guest, the new pastor of St. Vartan Armenian Catholic Church, V. Rev. Father Mikael Bassale.

Over fifty children's gifts were brought to the event by the guests, each one beautifully wrapped. The gifts were to be given to needy inner city children by the Orthodox Detroit Outreach Mission at SS

Peter and Paul Orthodox Cathedral in downtown Detroit. The gifts were distributed on New Year's Day, our *Gaghant*, at their soup kitchen and weekly meal. Thank you to everyone for their generosity!

The evening ended with the final benediction offered by Father Garabed, Father Abraham and Father Mikael. Thank you goes to Yeretzgin Roberta and Dolly for a memorable celebration!

Pictured above: Carol Hovsepian, Marianne Dardarian, Diane Nolff, Deborah Zazaian, David Dardarian

Pictured below: Sandra Nigoghosian, Dr. Joyce Yeghissian, Alice Nigoghosian, Dn. Richard Norsigian, Margie Simonian, Barbara Norsigian



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

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2014

METRO DETROIT EVENTS FOR THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE CENTENNIAL
WWW.ARMENIANGENOCIDECENTENNIALMI.COM

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21 AT 7:30 PM AND 10:00 PM, “Orphans of the Genocide,” MapleTheatre, Bloomfield Hills (free admission, however reserved tickets are available at St. John’s Church Office.)

SATURDAY, MARCH 7 AT 7:30 PM, Isabel Bayrakdarian In Concert, Ford Performing Arts Center, Dearborn (tickets available at \$50, \$35, \$25 through Leslie Balian 248.303.4690) This concert will be an all-Armenian program in honor of the martyrs. Participating will be Serouj Kradjian, pianist, and Henrik Karapetyan, violinist with string quartet.

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 10:30 AM, Wayne State University, lecture by Khatchig Mouradian, adjunct professor, Rutgers University. Musical performance by Nune Milikian, Siberian-born Armenian violinist, jointly sponsored by Armenian Genocide Centennial Committee & Cohn-Haddow Center for Judaic Studies at WSU.

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 7:00 PM-8:30 PM - Holocaust Memorial Center, Farmington Hills, Lecture by Taner Akcan, Kaloosdian/ Mugar Professor of History at Clark University. Topic: “The State of Armenian Genocide Studies: Problems and Challenges”

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 9:00 AM-6:00 PM Workshop: “Teaching About Genocide: Approaches and Challenges” Organized by Melanie Tanielian, Assistant Professor, History, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor.

MONDAY, APRIL 13, 7:00 PM - Holocaust Memorial Center, Farmington Hills - Lecture by Khatchig Mouradian (On Arm. Genocide) and a second speaker on the Holocaust to be announced - Co-sponsored by University of Michigan-Dearborn, WSU, Holocaust Memorial Center.

FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 7:00 PM - Ecumenical Service St. Mary’s Antiochian Orthodox Basilica, 18100 Merriman Road, Livonia. Clergy from various faiths have been invited to take part. Choirs from 4 Armenian churches will sing. Principal Homilist, Abp. Allen Vigneron, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Detroit. Sponsored By 4 Armenian Churches Of Detroit.

FRIDAY EVENING, JUNE 19 - St. John’s Komitas Choir will sponsor a concert to celebrate Armenian culture by the Armenian Community Chorale at the Max Fisher Orchestra Hall, Detroit.

PLEASE NOTE THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE OF METRO DETROIT.

NATIONAL COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE CENTENNIAL
info@armeniangenocidecentennial.org | www.armeniangenocidecentennial.org

On May 7, 8 and 9, 2015, thousands will gather in Washington, D.C. to commemorate the centennial of the Armenian Genocide. While remembering those who were lost, we will also give thanks for the creation of a new Armenia and for thriving Armenian communities around the world. Please refer to the announcement in the main lobby for details.

THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL, MAY 7, 7:00 PM - His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, and His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, will lead Armenian clergy and representatives of other faiths in an ecumenical service. Present will be Armenia’s President Serge Sargsyan and other dignitaries.

THE MUSIC CENTER AT STRATHMORE, MAY 8, 8:00 PM - The acclaimed Hover Chamber Choir of Armenia and other renowned musicians will present “A Journey Through 100 Years of Armenian Music.” The program will include a range of music from the classic melodies of Komitas Vartabed to contemporary pieces composed for this centennial.

NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, MAY 9, 10:00 AM - His Holiness Karekin II and His Holiness Aram I will lead a unified celebration of the Armenian Divine Liturgy. The liturgy will be sung by a united choir from Armenian churches around the country. The 3,000-seat basilica is on the campus of Catholic University.

THE MARRIOTT MARQUIS HOTEL, MAY 9 AT 6:00 PM - A reception and banquet offer “A Time to Give Thanks.” The keynote speaker will be Dr. Vartan Grgorian, President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Mark Giragos will host the evening of musical performances and awards.

EXHIBITIONS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, MAY 7-9 - Innovative workshops, films, and exhibits will be mounted in public spaces in the nation’s capital and around the Marriott Marquis. Activities will be provided for children, with entertainment and childcare available during the banquet.

TO OBTAIN THE NCAGC SPECIAL ROOM RATE OF \$159 PER NIGHT, BOOK THROUGH THIS LINK:
resweb.passkey.com/go/441f5d02



St. John Armenian Church 20th Annual Retreat Seminar
Sponsored in part by the Yeretzhin Rosalie Papazian Endowment Fund

Saturday, March 21, 2015, 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

“VICTORS FOR CHRIST: WHO IS A SAINT?”

Guest Speaker: Dr. Roberta Ervine
Professor of Armenian Studies
St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, New York

This year's Lenten Retreat Seminar participants will be witnessing history, as we remember, and now celebrate the sanctification of the brave men, women, and children whose lives were sacrificed for their faith. This year's theme will correlate with the planned Canonization of the Armenian Martyrs as "Saints" on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

The day's presentation will focus on the qualifying attributes to sainthood. Are we, ourselves, worthy to be saints? Would you willingly give your life for Christ and your faith? There are Biblical references to the word saint, and many miraculous works of the Apostles and Disciples of Christ. These and other aspects of sainthood will be discussed during the Seminar.

In addition, this year's Seminar participants are invited to bring a list of their beloved family members' names or surnames who were martyred during the Armenian Genocide. A final requiem service will be offered for these Christian martyrs, in memory of their courageous spirits which led them on their march to Sainthood 100 years ago.

We hope you will join us for this very special Lenten Retreat Seminar. We know it will be a spiritually uplifting and memorable day.

Donation: \$15 includes all materials, continental breakfast, and lunch.

*To register, please phone the Church Office at 248.569.3405 by March 12, 2015.
Please make checks payable to: St. John Armenian Church (memo: Retreat), and mail to
22001 Northwestern Highway, Southfield, MI 48075*

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms & Chrismations

November 2014

- 8 Wolfgang Charles
Son of Jeffrey & Renee Axt
Godparents: Jerry Burgess & Yn. Roberta Kochakian
- 15 Ariana Sona
Daughter of Edvard & Asmik Snkhtchian
Godparents: Gerald & Lena Montgomery
- 29 Viken Michael
Son of David & Seena Zulkiewski
Godparents: Gregory & Nayiri Karapetian

December 2014

- 13 Titas Laurinaitis - Adult
Godfather: Edmond Azadian
- 28 Maral Ohanes
Daughter of Ohanes & Dania Hovnanian
Godparents: Dikran Missak & Aida Toma

Weddings

November 2014

- 1 Jeffrey Berj Aris & Jessica Anne Stamboulion
Khachyeghpayr: Michael Stamboulion
Bestman: Greg Plakoudas
Maid of Honor: Ani Stamboulion

January 2014

- 24 Margarita Davydova & Titas Laurinaitis
Khachyeghpayr: Edmond Azadian
Bestman: Douglas J. Smith
Maid of Honor: Angelina Smith

Funerals

November 2014

- 19 Agnes Dourjalian, 93, Woodlawn
- 29 Dorothy Mavian, 89

December 2014

- 8 Isabel Arevigian, 89, Woodmere
- 12 Mitchell Mikael Darboian, 72, Woodlawn

January 2014

- 5 Richard M. Torigian, 81, Oakland Hills
- 7 Masis Kayayan, 61, Oakland Hills
- 9 Elizabeth Melidosian, 84, Woodmere
- 14 Shakey V. Godoshian, 93 White Chapel
- 26 Esther Janigian, 93, Woodlawn

Gospel Marathon

Affirming the Good News that Jesus Christ Brings

The Reading of the Gospel of Saint Mark

Wednesday, February 25, 2015 and Wednesday, March 4, 2015

6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

St. John Armenian Church Sanctuary

The readings will be done on two consecutive Wednesday evenings prior to, during and following the ACYOA Lenten Fish Dinners. High School students of the Church School will be the lectors.

The continuous reading for 2-1/2 hours in 10-minute reading intervals will be a challenge to complete the Gospel of Mark, which is the first of the Holy Gospels to have been written. At the conclusion of each 2-1/2 hour time frame, we shall conclude with a Lenten Prayer. All the faithful are invited to hear the Good News / *Avedis* read to us by our youth.

POMEGRANATE BLESSING.....



TLC LUNCHES AND LEARNS.....

On Tuesday, November 11, 2014, the Tuesday Lunch Club had the pleasure of a presentation from Eric Crisenbery on "Veterans Health - The On-Going Battle." As this was Veterans Day, the subject was important. The thirteen attendees were made aware that the wounds of war can go far beyond what meets the eye concerning returning veterans. Mental health issues, pain and illness face veterans long after they have left the battlefield. In many instances they suffer from traumatic brain injuries, PTSD and have suicide rates twice that of the general population. Veterans account for one in four homeless people even though they are only about 11% of the population. Remember, not only do returning veterans suffer but also their families.

Veterans need to talk about their issues but it is difficult for many to discuss what they have gone through. Besides family, pastors, physicians and friends are their network of care. This support group needs to help veterans overcome their feelings of not talking about what they have seen or endured. Remember to thank all who have served, whether in uniform or not, because of them we have freedoms which millions in the world only wish they had.

- Daniel Cristiano -

WOMEN'S GUILD KEEPS BUSY.....

The St. John's Women's Guild looks forward to every year as its most significant year. This year is certainly no exception. In addition to all of the traditional activity that our Guild performs in service to our church, this year we will also be humbled by participating in the 100th commemoration of the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

We began our year by providing Armenian Christmas luncheon to a very large and receptive number of churchgoers. We have made our first visit to Manoogian Manor and look forward to yet another in the coming months. We are beginning our preparations for our much anticipated annual Palm Sunday Bake Sale. In addition, our members are able to participate in committees and activities of all kinds that not only serve the church but the greater Detroit community as well. We have provided toys and teddy bears for children in personal and emotional need. Our members knit blankets for local hospitals and we provide personal articles for young women at risk, who may not have the resources to secure the small things we take for granted. College students from our parish family also receive good will from our Guild, and this year, the Guild sent a substantial gift package to the nine seminarians at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary. We also make visits to those who cannot come to us. All of these are people in need - some that we will never know. This is, after all, the mission of our Guild, to reach out and give service.

You may see us cooking and baking and yet, we are so much more. You may not see the Altar Guild or the Mahs ladies, you may not ever need to receive the Visitation Committee, but we are there. If these activities of service sound like they are up your alley, then you should come and join us. Plus, you'll get to meet some terrific women just like you. Beginning January 27, and every Tuesday following, we will be gathering in our church kitchen to bake our special treats for our Palm Sunday Bake Sale. Keep in mind that no matter how proficient some of our members may appear, they all had a first day on the job!

Last but not least, our darling Mrs. Helen Mekjian has made a very loving and generous gift of her family silver coffee and tea service to our Guild. The gleaming silver serves as a shining tribute to her service to our Guild and our church. Her membership dates back to 1955 and will continue on as a brilliant legacy of humility and service. Thank you, Helen.

Come and join us and experience faith through fellowship.

- Yerchanig J Callan, Chairman -

MEN'S SOCIETY WORKS HARD!

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 imaginable 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 -

PARISH CHRISTMAS CARD OMISSION

We thank James and Laura Skubal of Wisconsin for their gift to the Social Concerns Fund and wish to convey their best wishes for the New Year and Christmas to all in our parish. Their request arrived too late to be included in the Christmas Card.

WE GET LETTERS.....

Dear Father Garabed and Greg,

I want to thank you for your very kind hospitality. What a wonderful experience to join you for the Divine Liturgy and to meet so many of the great parish family you have there at St. John's. Thank you once again for making the soup kitchen, especially J House, the beneficiary of the Men's Society Pancake Breakfast. I hope it accomplished what you had in mind, and I know that whatever donations were collected will be deeply appreciated by us and by the men who benefit from the J House ministry. May God continue to guide you in your ministry and reward you richly for your goodness.

Gratefully,

Br. Bob Malloy

Note: J House / Jefferson House is a twelve-bed residential treatment facility for indigent males seeking to reclaim their lives from addictions. Residents normally complete their stay in 6-9 months. During that time they learn to practice honesty, courage and other virtues essential to recovery and to the development of a sober, healthy and happy life. They participate in twelve-step recovery meetings, and are encouraged to continue such participation following their departure from Jefferson House. The program also provides opportunity to work at other Capuchin Soup Kitchen locations for which these men are paid a modest stipend.

Dear Father Garabed,

On behalf of the Alex & Marie Manoogian School, I would like to thank the Senior Department of the Sunday School for delivering the baskets of food so generously prepared by Mr. George Saboonjian.

The families were overwhelmed by the generosity of so many. The baskets were overflowing with goods and, of course, kind wishes for the holidays.

The students are also to be complimented for their participation in the annual Thanksgiving Dinner. It was wonderful to see so many of our young adults and most importantly, their parents, coming together to prepare Thanksgiving dinner for our Parish. It was truly an example of the Christian spirit.

I extend my congratulations to Mrs. Rosean Manoogian Attar and Mr. George Saboonjian for their continued dedication to our Church School. They have helped our students to be aware of the concerns and welfare of not only our parishioners but the surrounding communities as well.

Thank you again for helping make a holiday season so bountiful for so many families. They felt very blessed to have received the baskets.

Have a blessed holiday season.

Sincerely,

Dyana Kezelian

Principal Elementary and Middle School

Dear Father Garabed and St. John's Men's Society:

Thank you for the check for \$802.34 to be used for Jefferson House/Capuchin Soup Kitchen. As I am certain Br. Bob and Br. Joe expressed to you on November 2nd, the men at Jefferson House are a true inspiration to all of us at the Soup Kitchen. For they are living proof of the Resurrection; they who were for all purposes dead, are coming back to life. We are so proud of them.

Thank you for your support of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. We look forward to a continuing relationship with you in the future.

Br. Jerry Smith

Dear Father Kochakian,

I want to thank you for the warm congratulatory letter. Your support means so much to me. I am very excited to walk the halls of Congress! I hope you will come to me with any issues you are concerned about so I can best serve you.

Brenda Lawrence

SERVICE THROUGH ACTION.....



On Monday, December 28th Father Garabed and Yeretzgin Roberta delivered children's Christmas gifts donated by St. John's Komitas and Community Choirs to Orthodox Detroit Outreach in Southwest Detroit, now known as Focus Motor+City. Newly appointed Executive Director Eric Shanburn and local Coordinator Matthew McCroskery were both thrilled and most appreciative of the generous donations that came through the door! We learned how the outreach program started, its current service delivery model, tour of the facility, pantry, dining room and kitchen where Sunday dinner is served to the homeless. Naturally this led to a heartfelt discussion on the importance of "Serving through Action" and future partnerships. In addition, the tour included the vegetable garden outside the building and a review of the expanded plans for Spring 2015. Although it was a chilly day, one could see that the garden was a labor of love, surrounded by beautiful icons that were displayed throughout! The garden even has its own self-sufficient water system! Eric and Matthew are looking forward to a future visit to St. John's and an opportunity for collaboration in "Service through Action!"

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lish an endowment, or supplement
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Contact the Church Office, your
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for ways to leave a legacy to
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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 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

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.....

February

- 12 Feast of Sts. Vartanantz (off site)
 14 Presentation of the Lord to the Temple
 15 *Poon Parekendan*
 Closing of the Altar Curtain
 Blessing of Infants
 Thank You Tea for Volunteers
 16 First Day of Great Lent
 18 ACYOA Fish Dinner; Lenten Vigil Service
 22 Requiem Service for Armenians who
 perished during Azeri pogroms 1988-1990
 25 ACYOA Fish Dinner; Gospel Marathon; Lenten
 Vigil Service

March

- 4 ACYOA Fish Dinner; Gospel Marathon; Lenten Vigil Service
 11 ACYOA Fish Dinner; Lenten Vigil Service
 21 Annual Lenten Retreat & Seminar
 Guest Speaker: Dr. Roberta Irvine
 Topic: "Victors for Christ: Who is a Saint?"
 25 ACYOA Fish Dinner; Lenten Vigil Service
 29 Palm Sunday; Opening of the Altar Curtain
 ACYOA Day
 31 Holy Tuesday- Remembrance of the Wise &
 Foolish Virgins

April

- 2 Holy Thursday: Divine Liturgy;
 Feet Washing Service
 Betrayal & Passion of our Lord
 3 Holy Friday: Order of the Crucifixion of Christ;
 Entombment of our Lord
 4 Holy Saturday: Reading of Scriptures,
 Divine Liturgy, Easter Eve Supper
 5 **Easter-The Glorious Resurrection of our Lord
 and Savior Jesus Christ**
 Easter Tea prepared by the Women's Guild
 Project White Cross
 12 Armenian Genocide Centennial Ecumenical
 Service, St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox
 24 Basilica, 18100 Merriman, Livonia, 7:00 pm

IN THE COMMUNITY.....

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 8:00 PM

Armenian Culture Night on Detroit Public Television

The documentary film "The Armenian Genocide" is the story of the more than one million Armenians who died at the hands of the Ottoman Turks in World War I. Produced by Emmy Award-winner Andrew Goldberg. The program is narrated by Julianna Margulies, Ed Harris, Natalie Portman, Laura Linney, Orlando Bloom and others. It includes interviews with Pulitzer Prize-winning author (and current US Ambassador to the UN) Samantha Power, as well as never-before-seen historical footage.

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2015, 9:30 PM

World premiere of 1-hour documentary "Guardians of Music: A History of Armenian Music in Detroit" produced by Ara Topouzian to be shown on Detroit Public Television.

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2015 (time to be announced)

"Voices from the Lake: The Secret Genocide" by J. Michael Hagopian
 On Detroit Public Television

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