

## MAN UP



The Men's Society of St John Armenian Church had their first overnight Retreat of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Friday / Saturday, February 3 /4, 2012 at Livonia Embassy Suites. The theme of the Retreat "YOU EXPECT ME TO DO WHAT?" was facilitated by Fr. Tateos Abdalian, Director of Department of Mission Parishes of the Eastern Diocese.

Of the twenty attendees, sixteen were members of the Men's Society, three non-members and the facilitator. The men met for dinner and then an evening session ensued with George Saboonjian's opening remarks on the aspects of what shapes us spiritually, "The Love of God and the Love of Thy Neighbor." Fr. Garabed Kochakian introduced Fr. Tateos, whose mission was to build the faith of the attendees by instructing them to LISTEN, LEARN, GO, and DO. These were the watch words of the Retreat.

The attendees were required to take the Grade 11 Sunday School Exam, which proved the adage that they were not smarter than 11<sup>th</sup> graders. Discussion and bonding was much easier for everyone as a result of the test: and, of course, the evening ended with a homework assignment.

Saturday morning began with a breakfast to energize minds and bodies. Discussions of John 9, verses 1-41, Matthew 28, verses 16-20 and a short movie entitled "Martin the Cobbler" brought about the discovery that each of the attendees now had a purpose for the future: to be the light of our Church. "YOU EXPECT ME TO DO WHAT?" was mentioned more than a few times during the Retreat. The group learned that the Gospel of John is about going from darkness to light, and the attendees of this exceptional Retreat were enlightened often throughout the presentation. Fr. Tateos made learning about the different parts of the Church service very interesting, enabling the attendees to understand what the words actually mean that parishioners say during the service. When questions were asked concerning expectations and outcomes the answers varied, but many were profound. All agreed that they were looking forward to another inspiring and enjoyable Retreat.



Thank you to Fr. Garabed, Fr. Tateos, and a special thank you to George Saboonjian and Christopher Korkoian, organizers of the event.