

# THE TORCHBEARER • Ջահապիր

## 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*



## JESUS SAID, "LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME...."

### CELEBRATING THE YOUNGEST MEMBERS OF ST. JOHN'S!

During his tenure serving St. John's Parish, Fr. Garabed has introduced many religious related activities for parishioners of all ages and interest levels.

The activities during and after the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 14, 2010 were no exception. Pursuant to a tradition Fr. Garabed established several years ago, our Church School was directly involved in the Divine Liturgy, notably the last open service prior to the onset of the period of Great Lent.

Specific parts of the Divine Liturgy in which church school students participated included the Presentation of the Gifts of Bread and Wine. On this occasion Remi, Juliette and Lucien, along with their parents Anjell & Craig Bruck made the formal presentation. The Sixth Grade students of Patricia Hachigian joined Deacons and Fr. Garabed in an extended procession around the church. The High School students led the congregation in reciting the Nicene Creed.

One of the highlights of the morning was the reading of the lections by Aram Papazian and Erin Bahm, both Sixth Grade students. Concluding their participation, Sara Andonian's Seventh Grade students offered the Kiss of Peace.

A special homily directed to over fifty primary grade students was offered by Father Garabed, who spoke about seeing the face of God and becoming God's face on Jesus Christ. He pointed out that what is in our hearts shines on our faces and when love is in our hearts God's love will shine like light upon the human face.



Kevin and Lisa Rushlow with daughter, Madison. Her grandparents are Michael and Darleen Kasper and great-grandmother is Arick Kasper.

Following the Divine Liturgy on this morning, a formal blessing of infants took place on the occasion of the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord to the Temple. Twelve infants were presented by their parents. This yearly blessing has been a much-awaited event in our parish and has met with positive support and interest.

~Harry Avagian

### ***The Sunday School elementary and middle school have been busy with many activities since the opening of the school year.***

- In September, Fr. Garabed and Principal Alberta Godoshian welcomed parents and children with achievement and attendance awards on opening day.
- All incoming 4<sup>th</sup> graders were presented with a Bible. All families received a student directory.
- The students celebrated the fall harvest by painting pumpkins while enjoying cider and donuts.
- All year, children have been living the Divine Liturgy by listening to the children's homily, reading scripture, presenting the Gifts for Holy Communion, giving the Kiss of Peace and participating in the *Tapor*.
- The Christmas program, with all elementary and middle school students participating, was held in the sanctuary of the Church.

### **Church Office Hours**

**Monday - Friday: 9 AM - 5 PM**

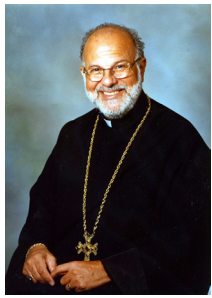
After hours in an emergency, please contact:

Pastor's Cell: 248.225.9888 ~ Administrator's Cell: 248.802.2861

The students chanted a portion of the Nicene Creed in Armenian and sang carols while tableaux of the Nativity were highlighted. A pizza lunch followed for the students.

- Children and parents enjoyed a Sunday School-sponsored Christmas luncheon on the Sunday following Armenian Christmas and the Blessing of Water.
- The offering that was collected in chapel was given to the Haitian Relief Fund.
- Middle school children sent care packages to an Armenian soldier in Iraq.
- A deposit has been made for building a home for a family in Armenia in June.
- This year, as in past years, elementary and middle school children will be chosen to participate in the Wise and Foolish Virgins and in the Washing of Feet during Holy Week.
- Following the Easter Eve service, Sunday School will sponsor an Easter Dinner and treasure hunt.
- This year's Diocesan-wide Sunday School Lenten Drive will benefit the children of Haiti and Gavar School in Armenia.
- A special effort was made to reach non-registered students by mail and by phone.

~Elizabeth and Heidi Aprahamian



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

***Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me. Don't keep them away. The kingdom of heaven belongs to people like them." (Matthew 19:14)***

When Jesus welcomed the little children, He was making a major statement to everyone standing by about the value and significance of children.

Perhaps the disciples, who rebuked the mothers who brought their babies and children to Our Lord and had adopted the prevailing view of the time, believed that childhood was an insignificant phase of life. To be sure, children were necessary for a family's survival, but they were not valued for their own sake.

Jesus broke with this attitude placing children at the center of life, giving his time, his blessing to them ahead of those who were standing by, mothers, fathers, relatives, strangers and even the disciples.

*Consider this...*

In Jesus' day it was common for mothers to ask famous rabbis to bless their children. With Jesus, however, they sought more than just a blessing. They wanted the world to value the little ones who would *inherit the kingdom of God* and to know that the assurance of their place in the family was of equal, valued stature as adults. The way Christ spoke to them and embraced them must have shocked many, because such public tenderness and respect was rarely shown to the young.

We so often say, about youth, children and even little babes, that they are the future world, the future church and inheritors of the all that God has made. So certainly our blessing them from the cradle, guiding them, teaching them and loving them is as natural as the breath we all breathe because as Jesus says,

***...do not forbid them, for such is the Kingdom of Heaven.***

*~ Father Garabed*

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### **2009 Stewardship Tea: A Thanks to All!**

In celebration, acknowledgement and honor of the 2009 Stewards' commitment to St. John's Armenian Church, the Membership and Stewardship Advisory Board held a Tea for the 2009 Stewards after Church on Sunday, December 6, 2009. The Tea, which was funded by generous contributions to the *Tomorrow STARTS TODAY* Expense Fund, started with a group photograph in the Church Lobby. After a collective effort at coordinating over 40 people to pose for a picture, the Stewards came together for a fabulous group shot. Thanks to Harry Carmen for his willingness to take on this effort!

After the photograph, the Stewards moved to the Vartan Room for a short program, which began with a prayer by Father Garabed. Gary Gumushian then introduced the Membership and Stewardship Advisory Board and outlined some membership thoughts for 2010. Jim Stambouljian concluded by formally thanking the Stewards for their faithful contributions to the Church, both financially and spiritually, and leading the Stewards in the Stewardship Society's Mission Statement.

The Stewards then mixed and mingled, enjoying fellowship, food and drink. Chuck Sansone from Continental Catering and Mark Mamassian put together a fantastic array of mezza and desserts, which highlighted tasty pomegranate mimosas, delicious *basterma* quiche, and delectable treats made by the Women's Guild, featuring recipes from a cookbook the Women's Guild expects to publish this year.

While the Stewards were socializing and appreciating the food and drink, some Stewards participated in what perhaps was the most moving part of the event: the videotaping. In particular, some Stewards took the opportunity to speak, on videotape, about why they are Members and Stewards of the Church, the types of events they enjoy at St. John's, and what they would like to see at St. John's in 2010. Listening to Stewards speak from their heart on issues they are passionate about was both heartwarming and inspiring. Thanks to the Stewards who shared their thoughts with us and to Hrayr Toukhanian for his outstanding videotaping!

The Membership & Stewardship Advisory Board would again like to thank the Stewards for their commitment to the Church, and all those who contributed to the success of the 2009 Stewardship Tea, both up front and behind the scenes. We look forward to seeing everyone next year!







### ***"Living the Divine Liturgy Program"***

**The week before Thanksgiving, 2009, the Church School students took part in the Divine Liturgy, assisting Father Garabed in dressing the Altar Table and presenting various vessels to decorate Christ's Thanksgiving Table. Following are the edited, written impressions of the youngsters who participated in the program.**

#### ***Gasia Oknayan***

- I believe that you should (have) love all around you
- I believe that there is ONE God. Just one who sent Jesus down to Earth.
- I believe that one should have a happy life.
- I believe that there is heaven. A wonderful place where all is right.

#### ***Steven Hagopian***

- I felt helpful for carrying the heavy candle
- I brought a candle. I felt important.
- It meant that I did something maybe once in a lifetime.

#### ***Samantha Patterson***

- When I was at the Holy Altar Table I felt excited and special.
- When Father Garabed invited me to go to Jesus' table I felt like I was with Jesus right there.
- When Father Garabed called my name to come to the Holy Table, I brought to him a cross and a jug of water. This made me feel like I was floating on air.

#### ***David Ameriguian***

- At first when I stepped into the church I felt kind of scared, but when the Deacon told us everywhere to go, and what we needed to do, I felt like I could do it. After it was done I felt very special. I felt very important when I gave the candle to Father Garabed. I felt important, and special because I got to (do) a service for the church.
- I brought a candle to Father Garabed
- After it ended I felt important and special, I might never do it again so I (am) going to have memories of this experience.

### ***"The Wedding Party"*** presented by

*The Women's Guild of St. John's  
Armenian Church*

The Women's Guild of St. John's Armenian Church is proud to present "The Wedding Party", a luncheon and fashion show of vintage wedding attire. This event, to honor mothers, will be held at twelve o'clock on Saturday, May 8, 2010 at the St. John's Cultural Hall in Southfield, Michigan.

The afternoon will commence with a cocktail reception, highlighting a vintage wedding photo display with music by a string quartet. A lavish luncheon will then be served in the style of a wedding banquet. The fashion show will follow with live narration and a collection of vintage wedding attire in a unique sequence of small vignettes.

A raffle with many exciting prizes and a booklet which honors and remembers the special women in our lives will also be a part of this extraordinary afternoon.

Join us for this memorable event. For further information and reservations, please contact Marilyn Sarkesian at 248.332.6570.

~Paulette Apkarian, Event Chair



Who are these beautiful brides of our parish?  
If you can identify them, email  
SarksArk@comcast.net  
with your guesses.





Families and friends shared an evening of food and fellowship on Friday, February 12 at the Recreation Center. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Kef Klub served pizza and salad with an ice cream bar for dessert. Lillian Marinelli was on hand for face painting. Sue Baylerian and Kim Kalajian offered crafts for the children. For Valentines Day, they decorated heart shaped sugar cookies. Armenian music permeated the room. Michael Kazarian prepared a Kef Klub CD of Armenian dance tunes. An Armenian dance lesson was given to the children while the adults engaged in conversation, cards and *tavloo*.

A highlight of the evening was celebrating Der Diran Papazian's birthday. All the attendees sang "Happy Birthday" and enjoyed birthday cake. Other celebrations that night were Andrew Shoushanian's birthday and Suzanne and Levon Nazoyan's 33<sup>rd</sup> Wedding Anniversary.

Special thanks to Co-Chairs Anna Baylerian & Yvonne Korkoian and Committee member, Cindy Amboian, Dr. Vincent Baylerian, Marianne Dardarian (Kef Klub Coordinator), Edward Korkoian and Mary Negosian.

If you missed this fun-filled evening, plan on attending Kef Klub March 19th.  
**Save the date and mark your calendars: Kef Klub 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month.**

~Yvonne Korkoian

## Moms and Manoogs

With the help and guidance of the Women's Guild and their Chairman, Linda Tiffany, a new fellowship group has been formed. This group is special because half of its participants are under the age of 4. Our past two play dates included Patricia Magee and Becky, Maral Edwards and Zachary, Margaret Ann Yessaian, Lula and Felix; Margaret Mason and Gage, Kristen Gustafson and Niklas.

Moms and Manoogs will meet regularly on the *first and third Tuesday each month at 10:00 am*. It gives the moms a chance to meet new people within the St. John's family while their children interact and play.

Currently, the group meets in the nursery which is filled with a wonderful array of toys, but as the weather clears, we will plan outings, such as the zoo, parks, etc.

Belonging to this group is a wonderful introduction to Church life for both the moms and the children. Please contact Kristen Gustafson 248.765.0471 for more information and to sign up for our next play date.

We hope to see you there!



## Women's Guild Baking Continues

The ladies and their 'helpers' continue to gather and prepare all those baked goods we treasure and to learn the time-honored techniques. Under the direction of Marianne Dardarian, these bakers came together for an 'evening bake' which has increased in popularity. Call the Church Office for dates and times and check the Sunday Bulletins for more information.

**SAVE THE DATE!!**

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GUEST SPEAKER:

**V. REV FR. DANIEL FINDIKYAN**  
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**SATURDAY, MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup>**  
**9 AM – 3:30 PM IN THE CULTURAL HALL**

CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE TO REGISTER BY MARCH 12

***U.S. Postage Stamp to Honor Arshile Gorky***

On March 11, 2010 the U. S. Postal Service will begin selling a regular stamp featuring the painting "The Liver in a Cock's Comb" of Arshile Gorky. It is the first in a series of ten commemorative U.S. stamps honoring the contributions of Abstract Expressionists including Gorky's contemporaries Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock. Arshile Gorky, was born Vostanik Manoog Adoyan, (a *Vanetzi*) April 15, 1904 and died July 21, 1948. He was an Armenian-born American painter who had an influence on Abstract Expressionism. It is a great honor to be featured in a commemorative series so let's get behind this to maximize exposure for this stamp, use the stamp and spread the word to all our non-Armenian friends about its significance.

**A Piano Recital featuring Natalia Kazaryan**

Friday, March 12, 2010 at 8:00 pm  
St. John Armenian Church Cultural Hall  
**Admission: Free Will Offering**  
Afterglow to follow

*Prize winner of numerous competitions,  
including the Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Competition,  
the Eastman Young Artists International Piano Competition  
and the Second New York Piano Competition.*

**Natalia Kazaryan** emigrated from Georgia in 2002 with her family who live in Detroit. She presently attends Julliard School of Music. She has performed here at St. John's and has been assisted by the Komitas Choir in pursuit of her musical career and has desired to offer this concert for our community as an expression of gratitude to her parish home. Come and enjoy her musical gifts.

**KOMITAS CHOIR PLANS OCTOBER CONCERT**

Our Komitas Choir is planning  
a major concert in October 2010.  
We have designated this concert as a fundraiser for St. John's.  
We are in need of additional voices.  
Rehearsals are planned for Thursday evenings.  
Interested individuals should contact Deacon Rubik  
at 248.569.3405 or: [rubik@sjchurch.org](mailto:rubik@sjchurch.org).

**ARTS OF ARMENIA**

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For registration information contact Nicole Matoian at:  
NMatoian@comcast.net or 248.562.7553



***The 95<sup>th</sup> commemoration of  
Armenian Martyrs' Day  
will be Sunday, April 25, 2010,  
immediately following  
the Divine Liturgy.***

***Our guest and main speaker  
will be  
the former  
Ambassador to Armenia,  
Mr. John Evans.  
There will be more details  
to follow.***

***St. John's Response to  
Haitian Earthquake Relief***

We thank our faithful for the overwhelming positive response to the appeal by our Diocesan FAR to help the suffering people of Haiti following the devastation from the earthquake which shook their small nation. The total amount received from your charitable hearts reached \$3,543.00 and was forwarded to the Diocese in the name of St. John Armenian Church. Of the \$30,000.00 that was donated in the name of the Armenian Diocese, our donation constitutes 10%.



### **Fuller Center- Build Armenia Team 2010 Lenten Buffet February 21<sup>st</sup>**



### **St. John's Annual Parish Assembly February 21<sup>st</sup>**

After a sumptuous Lenten buffet prepared by, and for the benefit of, the Fuller Center Build Armenia Team 2010 led by Jackie ElChemmas, members of St. John's gathered for the Annual Parish Assembly. The meeting was very productive as the St. John family gathered to chart the course for the future of our parish.

### **Funerals**

#### **February, 2010**

11 Anya Melkumyan, 59, Roseland Park

18 Lucy Fundukian, 67, Evergreen

*Remember  
St. John Armenian Church  
in your will.*

CHOOSE A MINISTRY TO SUPPORT,  
ESTABLISH AN ENDOWMENT,  
SUPPLEMENT THE GENERAL FUND.  
CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE,  
YOUR PASTOR OR A PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER  
FOR WAYS TO LEAVE A LEGACY TO YOUR CHURCH.

### **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 Best-man (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 at least two months in advance. Pre-baptismal preparation for the parents and godparents is required. At least one of the godparents must be a member of the Armenian Orthodox Faith.

### **Regulation of Sacramental Services**

In accordance with Diocesan discipline mandated by the Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, all sacraments, e.g. funerals, weddings, baptisms and rites of Christian burial, can only be administered in the church sanctuary, which has been consecrated for the celebrations of these sacred rites.

### **The Torchbearer Staff**

Fr. Garabed Kochakian, *Editor-in-chief* • Anna Sarkisian, *Managing Editor, Copy & Layout*  
Harry Avagian, Diane Ekizian, May Kafatian, 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 Kafatian at the Church Office for further information.

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.com](http://stjohnsarmenianchurch.com)**

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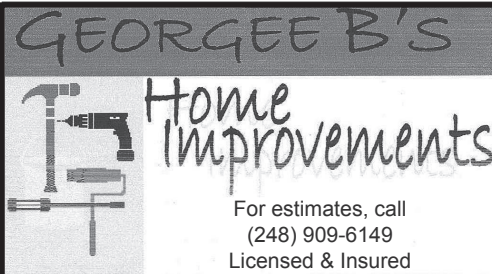
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*You can help bring the  
Light of Christ!!*

The youth of our parish returned from the St. Nersess Summer Conferences with a special hand-painted donation box for the ongoing work at the Seminary where the future priests and Christian educators for the Armenian Church in America are trained. This colorful box now is placed on the candle table in our church lobby as a reminder that your donations, no matter how great or humble, can make a difference. Every week when you purchase a candle or two, don't forget St. Nersess Seminary in your spiritual prayers and with your donations as well. Make a gift that will keep alive and bright the light of Christ in our Church, in our parishes, and in our homes.

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<b>March</b>		<b>April</b>	
7	Men's Society Pancake Breakfast	24	Armenian Martyrs Day
10 & 17	ACYOA Fish Dinner and Lenten Vigil	25	Armenian Martyrs Day - Divine Liturgy, Requiem Service, Madagh Dinner & Program
12	Komitas Choir Concert featuring pianist Natalia Kazaryan	26-28	Annual Clergy Conference (Chicago, IL)
19	"Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center	29-May 2	Annual Diocesan Assembly (Chicago, IL)
20	14 <sup>th</sup> Annual Lenten Retreat - <i>"The Faith That Survives: Through the Lens of the Nicene Creed"</i> - V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan, Dean, St. Nersess Seminary	May	
24	ACYOA Fish & Lobster Dinner and Lenten Vigil	2	Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
28	Palm Sunday & ACYOA Day Brunch immediately following the Divine Liturgy	8	"The Wedding Party" - a luncheon and fashion show of vintage wedding attire presented by the Women's Guild <i>See page 3 for further details</i>
HOLY WEEK March 29 – April 2		9	Church School Graduation & Tea
<b>April</b>		19	"Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center
3	Easter Eve Worship & Liturgy followed by Church School Family Dinner	22	Camp Kef: An Evening of Memories <i>Dancing and mezza to remember Camp Ararat. Proceeds to establish a scholarship fund to attend Hye Camp in Illinois. Details to follow.</i>
4	Easter	31	Memorial Day <i>Details for cemetery services to follow</i>
9	A Khapert Kufteh Family Dinner sponsored by the Women's Guild	<b>June</b>	
16	"Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center	6	Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
18	Town Hall Meeting	11	Men's Society Wine Tasting
		18	"Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center

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