

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*



CELEBRATING THE ACYOA AT ST. JOHN'S

Twenty-one teens from St. John's gathered for a weekend-long ACYOA Juniors regional retreat at Camp Ohiyesa in Holly, MI, February 27 to March 1. Participants had a chance to escape the struggles and challenges of teenage life and focus on spiritual renewal and peer fellowship. "Life is fragile, handle with prayer" is the overarching focus of this year's retreat series, organized by the Diocese's Youth Outreach program. The weekend was filled with interactive sessions and engaging presentations led by Youth Outreach coordinator Jennifer Morris. The group was blessed to have their pastor, Rev. Fr. Garabed Kochakian, join them on Saturday afternoon before participants headed outside for a nature walk led by the camp staff. The Youth Outreach program hopes that weekends like this will help teens strengthen their prayer life and be better equipped for the temptations of the world.



ACYOA Day at St. John's will be celebrated again this year with a Palm Sunday Brunch, Sunday, April 5, immediately following the Divine Liturgy in the church hall. The program will be presented by Detroit's own **Armen Keteyian of CBS News**. To make a reservation for this special event please call 248.661.0617 or email ddardarian21@yahoo.com. The donation for adults is \$15; ages 6 – 13, \$5; and children under 5 are free.

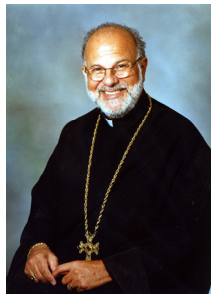
Church Office Hours

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

Members of St. John's ACYOA, Karen Dardarian, Harry Kezelian III, Jeff Movsesian and Raffi and Johnny ElChemmas, were among the seventy-eight participants representing twenty-eight parishes at the 10th Anniversary of the **ACYOA Leadership Conference** held March 6 - 8 in Stony Point, NY. The theme was "From Fellowship - Discipleship". Our Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, reminded the participants that "It's not enough to come together and enjoy each other's fellowship as brothers and sisters in Christ. It's also important to be disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ." Our parish should be proud and celebrate the continuing participation of our youth in the ACYOA locally and nationally.



FROM FATHER GARABED'S DESK.....

Fear not for He is Risen!

The Resurrection of Our Lord is the most amazing news the world has ever heard.

But there are skeptics; people who say dead people don't ordinarily rise again because death is inevitable, as history says, and no human can avoid it. But Jesus, Our Lord, broke that cycle. He conquered death by rising from the grave. He who IS GOD made what seemed impossible to become possible.

He took death and gave life. He conquered Hell and opened to us Heaven. He took the fallen nature and decaying flesh of humanity called death, and by and in His Resurrection, restored us all to a NEW life with God forever. He took Hades and gave us Hope. He crushed the Serpent and gave us Salvation.

And that is why at Easter we need to re-hear this *Good News*, so we don't forget that life does not stop at the grave, that death is a passage and not an ending. Christ's Godly power transformed what is earthly into heavenly... *with Him, in Him and through Him to New Life with God forever.*

Some may come to Easter with fear in their hearts and thoughts like the skeptics who preach there is no Resurrection, there is God. After two thousand years, the story of Jesus' Resurrection is still as puzzling, terrifying and seemingly irrational to us as it was to those early disciples.

The Resurrection doesn't call us to understanding because, in truth, we can never fully understand the wonder and mystery of God. But it does call us to believe and have faith and hope. Having heard the *Good News*, the *Avedis*, once again we can only be amazed at what God offers to those who have chosen to believe and follow Jesus through death to *NEW LIFE*.

Krisdos Haryav ee Merelotz

Christ is Risen from the Dead!

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Father Garabed

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Please check all that apply for your family in the form below and return to the Church Office. Thank you!

Name _____
Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Cell phone _____
E-mail _____ (Will not be shared)

- ☐ I would like to be included in an e-mail system that will bring me timely parish and community news and be notified when the *Torchbearer* or other documents can be accessed on line. My e-mail address will be shielded from view as part of a group and not shared with anyone.
- ☐ I would like to receive the *Torchbearer* online as part of an effort to reduce printing and postage cost to the parish. (There will be a special code available only to members of the parish to have such access.)
- ☐ As a non-member of the parish, I would like to subscribe to the *Torchbearer* at a cost of \$30 year. I have included a check made payable to "St. John Armenian Church - *Torchbearer*."
- ☐ I would like to be a professional or business sponsor of the *Torchbearer* or I have been an advertiser in the past. Please contact me with information. (The *Torchbearer* will be in the homes of our community eleven times a year and is a valuable promotional tool.)
- ☐ I would like to receive information on becoming a member of St. John's and/or becoming a Steward.
- ☐ I would like to make a donation to the success of the *Torchbearer*. I have enclosed a check.

NEWS FROM THE WOMEN'S GUILD

The Women's Guild has been very busy this winter baking items for our annual Lenten Season Bake Sale which will culminate on Palm Sunday.

New this year is an Armenian Delicacies Basket raffle. Good luck to the winners!

Our knitting group, which meets once a month, has made baby blankets and caps which were then donated to Botsford Hospital for new-born babies of needy mothers. We commend these ladies for giving of their time and talents for such a worthy cause.

Potential members were invited to join us on Saturday, February 21st to make fleece blankets for the Methodist Children's Village of Redford. This was a wonderful and productive activity to introduce prospective members to the Women's Guild as we strive to fulfill the spiritual and social needs of the women of our parish.



Helen Olson, Carol Ohanesian, Linda Assarian, Elizabeth Mamassian, Anna Sarkisian and Cathy Zwinck, members of the monthly knitting group with the hats and blankets made for Botsford Hospital.

ARMENIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE LYCEUM NEWS

The Lyceum program is continuing to take shape with its excellent staff, instructors and enthusiastic students. At each session the Lyceum begins with the entire group congregating to sing the *Hayr Mer* (The Lord's Prayer) and *Mer Hayrenik* (Our Fatherland), the Armenian national anthem. Following this group, meeting the young people break into ability/experience levels to engage in classes related to Armenian language study, where emphasis is placed on conversation, vocabulary, reading skills and interaction.

The students also have "hands on" experiences in Armenian history, Armenian music, Armenian art, craft

projects, Armenian cooking and Armenian folk dance. An example of the inter-disciplinary nature of the program occurred during the cooking project as students learned the Armenian words of the foods they made.

The Lyceum classes meet on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Registration for fall 2009 will begin on Saturday, May 9th. The space is limited because of the number of staff members. Please reserve your space in advance by sending an e-mail to Deacon Rubik Mailian at rubik@sjachurch.org or calling 248.569.3405.



Instructor Dr. Joyce Yeghissian is teaching dance



The final product of the cooking class

BAPTISMS & CHRISMATIONS

January 2009

- 23 Denise McCarthy - Chrismation
- 24 Alexandra Victoria
Daughter of Artur & Yelena Gaziyan
Godparents: Sergey Morozova
& Tatiana Choulga
- Anjelika
Daughter of Artur & Yelena Gaziyan
Godparents: Michail & Tatiana Choulga

February 2009

- 13 Ava Rebecca
Daughter of Martin & Jennifer Altounian
Godparents: Robert Bonnell & Nicole Lee
- 17 Sarah Emily Jane Escheder - Chrismation
- 22 Gabriela Meryem
Daughter of Raffi & Jovann Mihalian
Godparents: Garo Boyajian
& Monique Dawood

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 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.

FUNERALS

January 2009

- 3 Edward K. Torossian, 85
- 5 Avedis Vayvalako, 52
- 28 Paul Tootikian, 85, Great Lakes National

February 2009

- 9 Kathleen Deann Codd, 53, Glen Eden
- 13 Margaret Dakessian, 82, Woodlawn
- 26 Mary Semeroff, 102, Evergreen

March 2009

- 4 Lucy Torigian, 82, White Chapel
- 9 Sooran Yavruian, 87, Oakview
- 12 Dr. Sarkis Derderian, 90, White Chapel
- 13 Dr. Hamazasp B. Darian, 89, White Chapel
- 19 Lucy G. Aram, 84, Evergreen
- 20 John Kazarian, 77, White Chapel
- 24 Robert S. Ajemian, 81, Evergreen

KOMITAS CHOIR NOTES

The St. John Armenian Church *Komitas* choir will present "**Crucifixion and Resurrection**," a Lenten concert of meditation and reflection, Wednesday April 1, 7:00 pm in the St. John Sanctuary.

Under the direction of Deacon Rubik Mailian the ensemble will present a selection of sacred music by Armenian and international composers. The repertoire will include "*Sanctus*" by Faure; "Thou Art Great" by Josquin Des Pres; "Father Greatly-Merciful" attributed to Mesrob Mashdoots; "Were you There?" by Burleigh; "Protector of All" by Alan Hovhanness; "Seven Last Words of Christ" by Theodore Dubois featuring Annette Mamassian and Deacon Rubik Mailian as soloists; and "*Oor es Mayr Im?*", (Where Are You, Oh Mother?)

Join the Komitas Choir!!

The Komitas Choir welcomes and wants new members. Come and join the Choir and be a part of a wonderful group of people who add to the beauty of our service by their angelic voices.

For more information, please contact Deacon Rubik at 248.569.3405 or e-mail: rubik@sjachurch.org

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.....

Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter Schedule

Please refer to the recent mailing and our web site for services, events and times.

Armenian Heritage and Culture Lyceum continues

- April 1 ACYOA Juniors Lenten Lobster Dinner followed by
Lenten Vigil Service
Komitas Choir Lenten Concert
- April 5 ACYOA Day Palm Sunday Brunch and Program
- April 21 - 23 Lady Caroline Cox visits Metro Detroit
Please refer to mailings and Sunday bulletin for details or call
Dr. Robert Kachadourian: 248.310.7307
- April 24 Commemoration of Armenian Martyrs
7:00 p.m. - Requiem Service, wreath placement
at the Martyr's monument, followed by *Madagh* Dinner
8:30 p.m. - Presentation by Antonia Arslan
acclaimed author of *Skylark Farm*
- May 9 Bike-A-Thon for Armenia, sponsored by the Church School
- May 15 The Women's Guild is sponsoring a *Kharpert Kufteh Family Dinner*
Watch for details

Please visit the St. John web site for up-to-date calendar information, the Sunday Bulletin,
The Torchbearer and links to internet sites of interest to our parishioners:
stjohnsarmenianchurch.org

St. John Armenian Church
22001 Northwestern Highway
Southfield, MI 48075

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As soon as the budget allows and advertising/sponsorships are secured,
The Torchbearer will be printed and mailed.

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and save St. John's the printing and postage costs, or if you would like to subscribe,
or contribute to its continued success, please complete the form on page two
and return it to the Church Office as soon as possible.

Enjoy the new format!