

THE TORCHBEARER • Չահակիր

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*



GREAT AND HOLY WEEK OBSERVANCES AT ST. JOHN'S



Church Office Hours

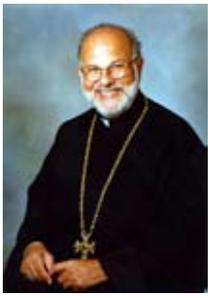
Monday - Friday: 9 AM - 5 PM

After hours in an emergency, please contact:

Pastor's Cell: 248.225.9888 ~ Administrator's Cell: 248.880.8391

1. Church School students' procession Palm Sunday. 2. *Trnpatsek* - Opening of the Doors. 3. The blessing of the new chancel tables, donated in part by Dn. Mihran and Gayle Sarkisian, at right. 4. Judge Lisa L. Asadoorian, a donor of the tables with Fr. Garabed and family members. (Additional donors not pictured, Lisa and Stephen Derderian) 5. Great and Holy Tuesday service remembering the Wise and Foolish Virgins. 6. Great and Holy Thursday service, *Vodnluva*, Washing of the Feet.

MAY 2010



FROM FATHER GARABED'S DESK.....

Women Again!

Consider this ~

In the Gospels we read that it was women who first brought the good news of our Risen Lord. Yes, women again. Mary Magdalene ran from the empty tomb as Jesus commanded her. He entrusted her with the message of His Resurrection.

St. Luke writes that, "It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary 'the mother of James', and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles. And they did not believe them."

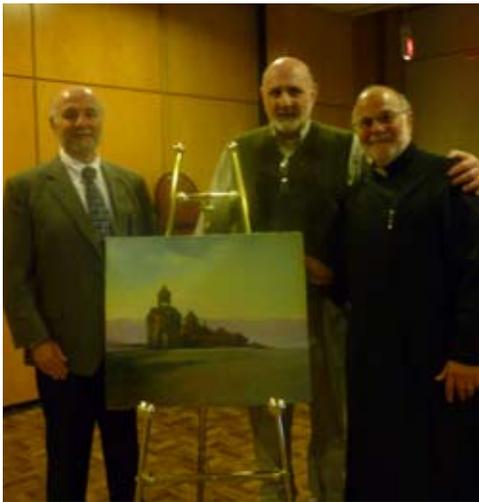
This discounting of women by men is a pattern that has persisted throughout history. Jesus' male disciples found it easy to dismiss Mary Magdalene with her retinue when they reported the empty tomb and a conversation with the risen Lord. The news should have been encouraging, given the confusion that dominated these men's thinking and faith after their Master's cruel death. But the men rejected the words of these women. It didn't seem to matter that these women had followed Jesus just as closely and, in fact, had *stood by Him* through His ordeal rather than betray Him (as Judas Iscariot did), or deny Him (as Peter did) or run away in fear (as all the men did).

Doesn't this raise questions about man's skepticisms and also raise questions still to be considered in other cultures of the eastern world? Christ as Lord raised the stature and importance of women as equal to men. Though we each have roles and responsibilities that are unique, God in Christ sees the whole of humanity as necessary for life here on earth. Today more than ever we value the gifts of each individual regardless of gender. We should ask ourselves, "Are we growing in our appreciation of a woman as God's Creation? Do we esteem the women that God brings into our lives? Are we learning to listen to them, partner with them and even follow their lead toward godliness?"

In May, we honor mothers, motherhood and women because we see in them ourselves; we see in them strength, fidelity, endurance, a never-ending love, like the women who stood by Jesus at the Cross, when the rest of his followers ran. Women are always and forever foundations to the greatest things that can happen in life. God chose a woman in the person of the Holy Mother to come to us. He chose a woman to announce the Good News that He had risen, and He placed his mother in the midst of His Church when His Holy Spirit came on the day His earthly church was born. What does this tell us? We are all one in Christ.

Let our prayers of honor and thanks be an expression of our love for all women and, especially within our Christian tradition, an acknowledgment that we are blessed for their place in our lives.

~Father Garabed



David Dardarian, Parish Administrator, was honored on the occasion of his retirement at a luncheon given by the Parish Council, Friday, March 26. He was presented with a gift on behalf of the parish by Council Chair John Yavruian, shown above with David and Father Garabed Kochakian. David also presented his keys to new Administrator, Thomas Stambouljian, Jr., pictured at right.

Seeking volunteers for the Torchbearer.

If you would be available to help prepare the Torchbearer for mailing around the 25th of the month, please contact May Kafafian at the Church Office.

Wanted: Used Armenian Books

The Parish Bookstore is accepting donations of gently used books on Armenian subjects in English for its **Used Book Sale** at the 2010 Festival. Drop books off at the Church Office during business hours or on Sundays.

Photographs provided in part for this issue by Harry Carman, Judge Lisa Assadoorian, Sdn. Aram Sarkisian, Linda Tiffany and Tom Stambouljian.

The Faith that Survives: Through the Lens of the Nicene Creed

15th Annual Lenten Retreat ~ March 20, 2010

For the third time in fifteen years, St. John's parish was blessed to welcome the Very Reverend Daniel Findikyan, Dean of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, as our retreat speaker. Over sixty participants enjoyed the day of inspiration and fellowship. Before his presentation, Fr. Daniel warmly recalled his relationship with Yn. Rosalie Papazian and how her ministry blessed him.

Participants were actively engaged throughout the day. Fr. Daniel led the group with a recitation of the *Creed* and a *Faith Barometer* where we were asked to gauge the strength of our personal beliefs. After some group input about how well we knew Jesus, how well we know Fr. Garabed, and even the strength of our conviction about the setting of the sun, Fr. Daniel pointed out that certain beliefs can be proven scientifically, while others cannot. "Much of life," according to Fr. Daniel, "is an act of faith." Moreover, faith goes beyond what we think to how we live our lives.

Fr. Daniel put the *Nicene Creed* in an historical context for the participants, and he did this in his inspirational way. He told us that the *Creed* has a purpose, which is not just "repetitions of traditions; it's intended not just to help us survive, but to help us grow." We also learned about how the *Creed* has historically fit into the *Badarak*. It wasn't always recited, since the *Badarak* is a creed. The *Creed* was added later during a season of religious tolerance when it was safe to recite a creed openly. The *Creed* has always been a vital part of the sacrament of baptism.

First time participant, Anoosh Ivezaj, described the retreat as "eye opening in the way the *Creed* was simplified and amplified." Linda Jevahirian had never heard Fr. Daniel speak and was so impressed she listened to two of his online lectures about the *Badarak*. She appreciated that he spoke in a modern language she could understand; she felt he brought a sense of 'humanness' to the clergy and to the concepts of the church, and realized how important it is for lay people to understand the church service.

The distinction between "I believe" and "We believe" was discussed in depth. In a baptismal context, it is important for the new Christian to own his or her faith; however, in a church setting it is different. Christian faith is not only a personal journey; it's about community, being a people of God. In fact, when we come together and declare "We believe," those who are strong can bless those whose faith may be weak. We were assured that no one has perfect faith, yet we are all believing, or seeking to believe.

Another key phrase "one God" was discussed. Within a historical context of paganism, everyone had a different God. As Christians we believe in only one God. Fr. Daniel described modern gods as those daily distractions that attract our time and interest such as TV, Internet, politics, and even financial security.

One highlight of the day was a group activity rewording the *Creed*. We were instructed to not use any religious words such as: "almighty, believe, Christ, Gospel, heaven, light or Lord." One group rewrote "For us men and our salvation, Jesus came down from Heaven, took body, became man, was born perfectly of the holy virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, by whom he took body, soul and mind and everything that is in man, truly and not in semblance." Their revision which they recited together was: "Because Jesus wants us to live happily ever after, he came down from up above to become like you and me and took on the DNA of Mary by a miraculous birth via the third person of the Trinity. This is the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God."

The day concluded in the sanctuary with the evening service. Chairwomen Lisa Mangigian and Charlene Goshgarian wish to extend warm thanks to the retreat committee and all the generous parishioners who shared their time, talents and treasure.

~ Lisa Mangigian

The vintage photos of St. John's brides published in the last two issues of the *Torchbearer* as a prelude to the Women's Guild event "The Wedding Party" on May 8, captured the interest of our readers. The bridal couple pictured in the April *Torchbearer* was Harry and Mary Kezelian, 1947.

**The Nicene Creed
in the Words of St. John's
Third Grade
Church School Class**

A classroom exercise inspired by
the Lenten Retreat.

We know about one God who is
very strong and powerful,
maker of the land and sky
of things we see and not see.

We know about one Lord,
Jesus Christ, the son of God,
come from God, the Father,
the only one who is just
as the Father.

We know that Jesus is God,
brightness from brightness,
God from true God, born and not
made of the same body of the
Father by whom all things came
into being in the sky or on land,
the things we can see and not see.
Jesus came down to earth to save
our sins. Mary was Jesus' mother.
Jesus was a real man and real God.

Jesus was tortured and forced to
die on a cross. Then, he was buried
in a cave and a stone covered
the opening. Three days later, he
rose from the dead and went to
Paradise to see his Father. Jesus
will return to tell people to follow
God and make good decisions.

We also know the Holy Spirit,
the unmade and the great who
spoke through rules and through
the future tellers and the four
books who came down upon
the river, talked about Jesus
through the people and dwelled
in the priests.

We know also only one helpful holy
church; In one baptism without
holding anger for our sins and
giving us new life.

We know the raising of the dead
in the everlasting decisions of
souls and bodies, in the kingdom
of the world of glory and in the
life forever.



The St. John's Church School Teachers' Workshop was held March 14, and was led by Elise Antreassian, Diocesan Christian Education Coordinator (pictured behind Fr. Garabed Kochakian). It was attended by St. John's staff as well as invited staff members from St. Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church in Dearborn.



The Women's Guild members are on hiatus until baking days begin again in preparation for *Festival 2010*. At one of their last baking efforts, photos of the product, *Katah*, were taken for the cookbook of primarily "Detroit" Armenian recipes that is currently in production. As a result of the Guild's efforts thus far in 2010, Women's Guild Chairman Linda Tifany presented a check for \$10,000 to Parish Council Chairman John Yavruian at the Town Hall meeting April 18.

The Sts. Tarkmanchatz (Holy Translators) School is the Armenian Pre-K through 12th grade school in the heart of the Armenian Quarter (1/4 square mile) in the Old City (1 square mile) of Jerusalem. It serves the Armenian community in the area. Students are given a rigorous curriculum of academic subjects suited for university preparation. The school teaches four languages (Armenian, Arabic, Hebrew and English). Books in English are needed so that the students can become proficient for the widely recognized British Comprehensive Evaluation exams taken for graduation and college admission.

Thousands of graduates, since its beginnings in 1929, have become physicians, scientists, lawyers, politicians, engineers, architects, historians and educators. Our own Arsen Sanjian and David Terzibashian are graduates of the school. There are many successful Armenians in the U.S. who are products of Sts. Tarkmanchatz.

Barbara Haroutunian and Diane Ekizian spent three weeks in February volunteering in the school in Jerusalem. This was Barbara's seventh trip as administrator and teacher at Archbishop Khajag Barsamian's request. Diane, a former elementary school teacher, has joined Barbara to gather an abundance of appropriate books for the school's library, classrooms and community.

English books in Israel are very expensive and not easily available. Gently used books (not customs taxable) would be most welcome and there are many sources in our community. Local libraries and book stores frequently clear shelves to make way for more current books. Financial help is also needed to pay for the shipping.

Please support this very worthwhile cause for Jerusalem by contributing to the book drive or by your financial support. This school needs to be a strong and viable part of the Armenian Quarter in order to sustain the community struggling to maintain its presence in the Old City. Armenians have been in the Old City since the first century, and the Armenian Quarter flourished and grew stronger during and after the Crusades in the 11th century. Any weakness would result in a permanent loss of that valuable presence.

Contributions may be made payable to:

St. John Armenian Church MEMO: Jerusalem BOOKS
For further information, please call: Diane Ekizian 248.851.4069



Fr. Garabed and Sdn. Aram Sarkisian administering Holy Communion to Armenouhi Gopigian at **Manoogian Manor** during an April 14 visit for the traditional House Blessing Service.

The "New" Men's Society

The Men's Society's first fundraiser is a unique event to provide the funds necessary to improve the quality of St. John Armenian Church's Internet service, with the introduction of WIFI to the Church complex. The Men's Society is committed to taking on the financial burden of these services, and that now leads us to the planning of a **"New Armenian Experience from Old Armenian Traditions."**

Please join us on **Friday, June 11, 2010** for a wine tasting event that features wines from around the world. It will include *mezza* prepared by the families of The Men's Society. The cost of **\$35.00 per person** includes a newly written booklet (one per family) highlighting the six Armenian regions of historic Western Armenia. This is an open seating walk-around event featuring food stations and wine-tasting stations.

An additional feature for parents will be a complementary, supervised play area for the young children of those attending the event.

The Men's Society is preparing an *Armenian Web Directory* which will then be published for Armenian business owners and Armenians in business. Please refer to the Church web site for the application. There is no charge for St. John members and \$25 for others in the community. For more information, please contact Paul Yousoufian at 313.310.3508 or at pramy1@gmail.com.



ACYOA Day was observed on Palm Sunday, March 28 with a brunch and a short program following the Divine Liturgy. Fr. Garabed Kochakian installed the new Board, Dan Dardarian, Margeaux Reizian, Taline Kalandjian, Harry Kezelian III, Karen Dardarian and Kelly Callan (above). Subdeacon Aram Sarkisian (left, with Karen Dardarian and Harry Kezelian III) presented a slideshow program, "Prayers Shall be Offered in Jerusalem: The Armenian Church in the Holy Land," an account of his trip to the Holy Land with the Eastern Diocese Christmas pilgrimage.



Moms and Manoogs, a new initiative of the Women's Guild, recently had their best turnout to date. With six moms and seven *manoogs*, the playroom enjoyed a good workout.

As the weather warms, we plan to play outside on the Church grounds and are open to play dates at the zoo and area parks.

We always welcome new moms and their *manoogs*, so grab your diaper bag and we'll see you on the first and third Tuesdays of the month from 10 am - Noon.

For more information, please call Kristen Gustafson at 248.765.0471.

KOMITAS CHOIR NEWS...

ARTS OF ARMENIA

The premier summer fine arts program for aspiring artists and dancers returns.

Two sessions from July 5 - 30, 2010

Sponsored by the Komitas Choir

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

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@sjachurch.org.

School Bag Project



Give to Armenia's Children
Help Armenia's Future

The School Bag Project provides school supplies for needy children in Armenia. Since classroom materials are costly and sparse, your donation to this project will equip these children with essential school items. Join The Women's Guild in encouraging and empowering the youth of Armenia by making your donation today.

* Your minimum donation of \$20.00 can provide a bag filled with the following: *6 pencils *200 sheets lined notebook paper *eraser *12 inch ruler *7 inch scissors *composition book *box of crayons *9x12 inch blackboard *box of chalk *box of colored pencils *pencil sharpener *25 pages of varied colored construction paper!

Mrs. Violet Kasparian founded the School Bag Project in 1992. Since then, over 10,000 children in several villages including Yerevan, Gyumri, Stepanavan and Arnavir Marz have received much needed school supplies.



PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY

Make checks payable to St. John's Women's Guild (memo: School Bag Project)

Mail checks to: St. John's Armenian Church Women's Guild
22001 Northwestern Highway
Southfield, MI 48075

For more information contact Laurie Kezian (248) 348-1928
lkezian@yahoo.com

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms

April

10 Andreas Ramiro
Son of Bedros & Amanda Kudanian
Godparents: Joe & Sophie Scotto

Madison Marie
Daughter of Kevin & Lisa Rushlow II
Godparents: Andrew Kasper & Amber Fleury

11 Armen William
Son of Robert & Lindsay Lehrer
Godparents: William & Jennifer Lehrer II

18 Olivia Gabrielle
Daughter of Karina & Warren Young
Godparents: Emmett & Armina Yaksich

Eric William
Son of Karina & Warren Young
Godparents: Emmett & Armina Yaksich

Sophie Elise
Daughter of Karina & Warren Young
Godparents: Emmett & Armina Yaksich

Funerals

March

18 Beatrice June Pelgian, 85, White Chapel

19 Mary Douroujalian, 81, Woodlawn

24 Stacey L. Feller, 43, Evergreen

29 Michelle Kathleen Danielian, 37

31 Jack (Mickey) M. Amboyan, 83, Woodlawn

April

20 Rose Hazergian, 88, White Chapel

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St. John's Armenian Church School

May 8, 2010

Bike & Walk-a-thon



Hines Park 10 or 20K Event

Starting 9:00am at Nankin Mills Picnic Area at Hines Drive & Ann Arbor Trail Roads

To benefit Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) Homeless Children's Center (HCC)

For more information, contact

or contact Roseann Attar at 248-980-3221 / email - vart@comcast.net or
Lisa Mardigian at 248-569-3405 / email - lmardigian@sjachurch.org

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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 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.

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Anna Svirid Sarkisian

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For additional information, please contact:
Audrey Markarian, Manager

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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 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

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.....

- | | | | |
|------------|--|---------------|---|
| May | | June | |
| 2 | Men's Society Blueberry Pancake Breakfast | 6 | Men's Society Pancake Breakfast |
| 8 | St. John's Church School Bike-a-thon/Walk-a-thon, 8:30 am at Hines Park | 11 | Men's Society Wine Tasting
<i>See page 5 for more details</i> |
| 8 | "The Wedding Party" - a luncheon and fashion show of vintage wedding attire presented by the Women's Guild | 18 | "Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center, 6:00 pm |
| 9 | Church School Graduation & Tea | July | |
| 13 | Holy Ascension - <i>Hampartsoom</i> Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am | 5 | Church Complex Closed for Independence Day |
| 21 | "Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center, 6:00 pm | 11 | Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord - <i>Vartavar</i> |
| 22 | Camp Kef: An Evening of Memories
<i>Dancing and mezza to remember your camping days. Proceeds to establish a scholarship fund to attend Hye Camp in Illinois. Details enclosed.</i> | 16 | "Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center, 6:00 pm |
| 23 | Pentecost - <i>Hokekalousd</i> | August | |
| 31 | Memorial Day - Church Complex Closed
<i>General Requiem, Martyrs Monument, Woodlawn Cemetery: 12:00 pm</i>
<i>Grave Blessings at Woodlawn Cemetery: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm</i>
<i>Grave Blessings at Evergreen Cemetery: 1:00 - 3:00 pm</i>
<i>Call the Church Office for additional information</i> | 15 | Feast of the Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God - <i>Asdvadzadzin</i> Annual Church Picnic |
| | | 20 | "Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center, 6:00 pm |
- Moms and *Manoogs* play group sponsored by the Women's Guild
First and third Tuesdays in the Nursery at 10 am**

Note: All events at St. John's Church and Cultural Hall unless specified.

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