

THE TORCHBEARER • Ջահակի

St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit

22001 Northwestern Highway • Southfield, MI 48075

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The Reverend Father Garabed Kochakian, *Pastor*

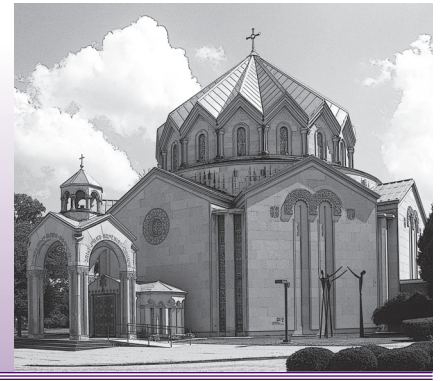
Clergy residing within the St. John parish and community:

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



A NOTE OF APPRECIATION.....

The time I spent in St. John Armenian Church was a blessing for me in so many ways. I got to spend time with the faithful in the community. I was able to ask questions, listen to pious peoples' faith journeys, pray with the kids from day camp and spend time in prayer, which helped me learn that becoming a priest is my calling from God.

I was greeted by Der Garabed and Lisa Mardigian at the airport, and it was there I had a good feeling about how the summer would retire. I had only a little idea of all the surprises that would lay ahead in the upcoming days and weeks, and I am surprised until today of the blessing that was bestowed upon me to have an internship before being ordained.

My first stop was to the Callan's home where I met Dikran, Kelly and Sose, who would provide me with everything a loving family provides; and these great people didn't even know who I was until the moment I set foot in their home. My time with them was incredible; I learned what love is in that house. The second day Lisa took me to pick up the transportation that I would use for the next two months. I was taken aback by the generosity of Ms. Carolyn Dembeck from Dorian Ford. She made it possible for me to travel around from church and home and wherever I needed to be. The whole community was very warm and hospitable. I often heard of the nice folks in the Midwest and thought: "Could it be that people are actually nice to each other and talk to one another?" Yes, it's true. People in general were a whole lot friendlier.

Busy is not an understatement when you're talking about the daily life of St. John Armenian Church. During my first week there were five sacraments that I would have to take part in. I observed Fr. Garabed and his peaceful and caring personality in different situations and learned that a pastor's responsibility is his flock at all times. I had so many opportunities to be with the parishioners of St. John's. Tuesday was a special day for me because I would have the chance to converse with the dedicated, faith-filled ladies of the Women's Guild. They would make my day by greeting me and allowing me to roll up my sleeves and dive into whatever was being made that specific Tuesday. The best part is they never let me walk away empty-handed or with an empty stomach; they are great cooks! I would go from the kitchen straight across the parking lot and have a great lunch and laughs with the seniors of the church, which was every Tuesday. I also had the blessing and privilege to spend moments with the kids from day camp. I was able to take them to church every morning or afternoon, light candles, recite the Lord's Prayer, talk to them and teach them. I spent one week in Midwest Hye Camp where I was leading the Armenian language classes and also praying with the participants. The daily routine was very uplifting because of working in a warm environment.

I was inspired from each conversation I had. I can't forget all the people I got to spend time with and talk with, which helped my faith. I said it on my last Sunday at church: St. John's Parish revived me and made me realize the path that I was on was exactly where I had to be and what I wanted. I have so many more words to say but not enough space in this short letter. I want to thank all the members of the Parish Council for accepting the request for a seminarian to come and learn from a wonderful, dedicated Armenian Community. I pray for the St. John's Church and all its members always.

With love and prayers, Semper Fidelis,

- Your Diratzou Levon Asdourian -

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

SEPTEMBER 2014

RECORD TURNOUT FOR FESTIVAL TOUR OF SANCTUARY AND MUSEUM.....



On Wednesday, September 24th St. John Armenian Church held its 5th Annual Sanctuary Tour, Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum Tour, and Armenian-inspired Luncheon under the Chairmanship of Linda Tiffany.

Two hundred fifty guests sat in awe as Fr. Garabed Kochakian led a mesmerizing presentation in the sanctuary explaining the significance of the icons, the side altars, the baptismal font, and Armenian traditions. Deacon Rubik Mailian sang two beautiful Armenian hymns accompanied by organist Margaret Lafian. Following Father Garabed's presentation, our guests were led to the Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum where they were met by Museum Director Lucy Ardash. Ms. Ardash gave a brief introduction, and then our guests enjoyed a self-guided tour. Docents were available to answer questions.

A delicious lunch consisting of marinated chicken breast sliced over rice pilaf, green salad, and *tepsi* cheese *beoreg* was served. The perfect ending to lunch was freshly made *bourma* by Yeretzgin Roberta Kochakian and her committee.

We offered a pre-Festival bake sale consisting of *cheoreg*, *khalkha*, *katah* and *bourma*. Our guests couldn't get to the bake sale table fast enough. The women of St. John, under the direct

leadership of Dolly Matoian, have been cooking and baking every Monday and Tuesday since June in preparation for the 45th annual Festival, **Armenia-Land of Noah's Ark**, which took place Friday, September 26th through Sunday the 28th.

Our guests, Armenian and non-Armenian, left feeling strengthened, uplifted, renewed and educated about the Armenian Church.

- Linda Tiffany -



A THANK YOU FROM ST. NERSESS.....

We wish to thank the Men's Society and Women's Guild for their collaborative efforts in organizing the St. Nersess Fundraiser that took place on the Feast of *Khachveratz*, Sunday, September 14th. Immediately after the *Badarak* and the special service of the *Antasdan*, everyone was invited to the Church Hall for a sumptuous brunch and fellowship. Under the leadership of John and Kim Kalajian and their wonderful team, the event took off to great heights. Father Garabed addressed the gathering, thanked the co-chairs, and spoke briefly about student life at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary and its move from New Rochelle, New York to a new facility of dorms, classrooms and a beautiful Armenian style chapel in Armonk, New York. He also announced that this year the student body has grown, and includes one of St. John's own son's studying for the priesthood in the Armenian Church, Harry Kezelian III. He is well known by most of our parishioners and many of our diocesan youth who have attended ACYOA Youth Leadership programs and St. Nersess Summer Conferences. Harry is the son of Dr. and Mrs. Harry Kezelian.

With a move to take place to the new property in 2015, history had been made for the Armenian Church not only in the U.S. but globally with the first physical structures for our students, faculty, married students, classrooms, a library and a campus that will continue to provide the location of the most successful St. Nersess Summer Conferences and Deacons Training programs that for decades has drawn our diocesan youth into the service of our Church.

Both Father Garabed and Deacon Rubik are graduates of this wonderful institution. During the past two decades, over 100 of our youth have attended the many educational retreats and programs held by St. Nersess. We are pleased to donate to St. Nersess the amount of \$2,075.00 raised at this fundraiser and forwarded to the Dean, Reverend Father Mardiros Chevian to be used for the educational and living needs of the students.

The Parish Council and Pastor extend much appreciation to event organizers John and Kim, as well as workers and supporters of this fundraising initiative. We all continue to pray for the ongoing success of our beloved theological seminary where the future leaders of our church in America will learn and bring the Light of Christ to our faithful.

2014 FESTIVAL IN PHOTOS.....



SACRAMENTS

Baptisms & Chrismations

September 2014

- 7 Anthony Adees
Son of Adees & Jennifer Atamian
Godparents: Armenen Atamian & Heather Abdo
- 20 Robert
Son of Steve & Maral Ghazarian
Godparents: Ariss & Rasha Minas
- 20 Luke Andrew
Son of Andrew & Danielle Woodring
Godparents: Jacob Woodring & Katie Kalajian

Weddings

September 2014

- 6 Michael Williams Perales & Shirah Ann Metzgian
Best Man: Kenneth Tarazoff
Maid of Honor: Karen Tarazoff

Funerals

September 2014

- 13 Carl Malakhanian, 87, Woodlawn
- 16 Mary Kaloustian, 96, Woodlawn
- 22 Alice Malakhanian, 89, Woodlawn
- 25 Antonio lafrate, 76, Oakland Hills

NEWS OF A CLERGY ASSIGNMENT.....

We have been informed of a new clergy assignment in our Diocese. The Rev. Father Mesrob Hovsepyan has been assigned as the pastor of the St. Gregory the Enlightener Church of White Plains, NY. The assignment went into effect on October 1st and Fr. Mesrob celebrated his first *badarak* as the pastor on Sunday, October 5th.

Fr. Hovsepyan will inherit the pastorate from Rev. Father Karekin Kasparian, who served the St. Gregory parish for over forty years. Der Karekin, along with seminarians from St. Nersess Seminary, was the catalyst in forming the White Plains parish in the 1970s. It was first known as St. James Armenian Church, until the new church building was erected and renamed in 1998, and consecrated by His Holiness Karekin I of blessed memory. We wish both Der Mesrob and Der Karekin good health and prosperity as the new new pastor and pastor emeritus, respectively.

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 two months prior to the sacrament's celebration. Rescheduling of a date will be allowed only once, if necessary. Pre-baptismal preparation for the godparents will take place one half hour prior to the baptism service. We ask that godparents please be on time. One of the two godparents must be a member of the Armenian Orthodox Faith. Unlike the Sacrament of Holy Crowning/ Marriage that is not celebrated during the Great Lenten period of the Armenian Church, baptisms may take place throughout the year on Sundays after the Divine Liturgy at 1:30 pm. They may also take place on Saturdays or by exception on any weekday. Chrismations are generally offered on weekdays or prior to the Sunday Divine Liturgy.

Regulations for Sacramental Services

The rule of order with regard to worship and sacraments requires that all services be celebrated in the Church Sanctuary that has been consecrated for such sacred celebrations. Weddings, baptisms and funerals cannot be celebrated outside of the Church building proper.

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER.....

We wanted to give you abundant notice that the 2014 annual Parish Assembly will occur on Sunday, February 1, 2015, in the main ballroom immediately following the Divine Liturgy.

This is the occasion when we review the accomplishments of the previous year, discuss finances, approve the annual budget, elect members to the Parish Council, Auditing Committee, Nominating Committee, Diocesan Delegates and so much more. We will also be discussing some important events such as the 100th Genocide commemoration.

We want to hear your ideas about how we can continue to strengthen our Parish. The annual meeting is one of the most important events of the year, so please mark your calendar for **February 1, 2015**.

On behalf of the Parish Council,
Karmen A. Santourian
Parish Council Chairman

FROM THE MEN'S SOCIETY.....

On Sunday, September 7, 2014, the Men's Society held a pancake breakfast.

The following Men's Society members helped make this delicious breakfast: Ed Baharian, Dan Cristiano, David Dardarian, Ara Hachigian, Gary Hachigian, Steve Hagopian, Craig Johnson, John Kalajian, Robert Magee, Mark Mamassian, George Saboonjian and Peter Toukhanian.

Over 160 people attended the breakfast and enjoyed the menu consisting of eggs, basterma and eggs, sausage, hash browns, pancakes, mostaccioli, steamed vegetables, chicken, dinner rolls, fresh fruit, khadayif, juices and coffee.

Funds raised will go to support multiple projects of the Men's Society. Please come and join us next time.

The members of the Men's Society thank you for your continued support of these functions.

- Daniel Cristiano -

ST. JOHN ARMENIAN CHURCH PARISH CHRISTMAS CARD

A Holiday Tradition to support St. John's Social Concerns Fund

Once again, parishioners may share their Christmas and New Year greetings with their fellow St. John's members in our Parish Christmas Card, and in so doing support the Social Concerns Fund of our church. Your gift is a testimony of your love in Christian stewardship for the works of Christ in our spiritual home. Please complete the form below and forward to the church office by November 24th with a minimum donation of \$50.00 payable to:

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

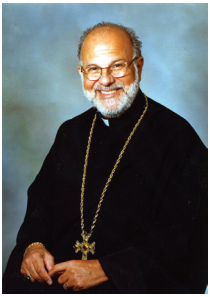
If you wish to charge your gift, please phone the Church Office 248.569.3405.

Thank you for your generosity.

.....

Enclosed is my gift for the Social Concerns Fund.
Please include the following name(s) in the 2014 Parish Christmas Card as written below.

If you would like us to confirm receipt of your gift, please provide us with an email address or daytime phone number.



FROM FATHER GARABED'S DESK.....

Security and Safety for our Holy House

During this past year, thanks to the efforts of Ms. Cathy Zwinck and Ms. Patricia Fantazian Poeszat working in cooperation with the Parish Council, St. John's instituted a more focused security and safety program for our parish. We have already engaged our faithful worshippers on Sunday mornings in two practice fire drills, and are improving the evacuation process. Plans have been spelled out and instruction given to our staff for any weekday or Sunday exercise for taking safe cover for a tornado. The final piece of this overall plan for a lockdown of the facility is almost in place. Special safety measures, locks on doors and tools for better communication with staff are currently being acquired. The Parish Council and Church School staff have been instructed in guiding and monitoring people in our complex to safe haven should the need arise.

Beyond these areas of major concerns for safety, closer vigilance will be taken on Sunday mornings during the hours of worship and Church School by the Parish Council members and those on duty in the lobby area and north entrances from the parking lot. In recent times, parishioners who enter the sanctuary as well as our High School students who walk across the parking lot from the Manoogian School to come to church for worship have been approached by persons seeking money who are not from our community, thus being placed in harm's way. We cannot disregard the fact that St. John's is a target for this type of possible danger or a much greater breach of safety.

Much to our dismay, it is a fact that many parents do not attend worship while their children are attending Sunday school classes, thus leaving the teachers and officers on duty totally liable for their safety. Though this is NOT an ideal situation, for years we parish leaders have willingly placed ourselves liable for their good and welfare, assuming that the children walking around unattended are being guided and monitored by an adult teacher. This is not always the case. Hereafter, students unattended by their Church School class teacher who are walking through the building complex on Sunday mornings will be monitored by the Parish Council and guided to their respective classrooms or to the sanctuary, if they are going to worship.

Religious institutions, like other public places, are susceptible to any and all potential acts of violence. Therefore, we are resolved to marshal our best possible efforts to keep safe from harm all who enter our holy house of worship and complex at all times.

~ Father Garabed

ARMENIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES FOR CHILDREN

Beginner's Armenian language classes for children will begin SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH, 9:30-10:30 AM IN CONFERENCE ROOM 107 (opposite the Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum). Materials will be supplied. If you have a desire for your child to learn their heritage through our *Mayreni Lezoo* (Mother Tongue), please contact Mrs. Alberta Godoshian at 248.476.4638.

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MICHAEL ARAM PERSONAL APPEARANCE SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22ND

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*One per customer while supplies last. Event subject to change or cancellation.

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

REMEMBER ST. JOHN ARMENIAN CHURCH IN YOUR WILL



Choose a ministry to support, establish an endowment, or supplement the General Fund.

Contact the Church Office, your Pastor or a Parish Council member for ways to leave a legacy to your Church.

SEPTEMBER 2014

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.....

November

- 2 Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
- 9 Veterans Remembrance
- 16 Church School Thanksgiving Dinner
- 21 Presentation of the Holy Mother-of-God
- 27 Thanksgiving - Complex Closed
- 29 ACYOA November Dance

December

- 9 Conception of the Holy Mother-of-God
- 24 Western Christmas Eve Service
- 25 Western Christmas-Complex Closed

January 2015

- 1 Happy New Year! Divine Liturgy, 11:00 am
- 5 Armenian Christmas Eve
Reading of Prophesies, 6:00 pm
Divine Liturgy, 7:00 pm
- 6 **Armenian Christmas Day-Theophany & Epiphany
Festal Divine Liturgy, 10:30 am**
- 11 Church School Christmas Program & Family Lunch
- 18 Meet the Candidates Tea

- February 1 Annual Parish Assembly
- March 21 Annual Spiritual Retreat

IN THE COMMUNITY.....

Sunday, November 2, 2014, 4:00 pm

"In Search of Western Armenia"

Lecture by Richard G. Hovannisian

Cosponsored by the Armenian Research Center, U-M-Dearborn
and AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School

Sunday, November 16, 2014, 5:00 pm

Hamazkayin Arax Dance Ensemble

10th Annual Performance

Seaholm High School, Birmingham

Sunday, December 7, 2014, 12:30 pm

Children's Christmas Party

St. John's Rec Center

Sponsored by the Evereg Fenesse Educational Society

Sunday, December 21, 2014, 12:30 pm

Children's Christmas Party

St. John's Rec Center

Sponsored by the Knights & Daughters of Vartan

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