THE TORCHBEARER . Dwhwyhp

St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit

22001 Northwestern Highway • Southfield, MI 48075 248.569.3405 (phone) • 248.569.0716 (fax) • stjohnsarmenianchurch.com

The Reverend Father Garabed Kochakian ~ Pastor
The Reverend Father Diran Papazian ~ Pastor Emeritus
Deacon Rubik Mailian ~ Director of Sacred Music and Pastoral Assistant



AMBASSADOR EVANS ADDRESSES LARGE GATHERING AT ST. JOHN'S MARTYRS' DAY COMMEMORATION

As we approach the 100 year mark of the Armenian Genocide, Armenians in the Diaspora continue their quest to have the government of Turkey take ownership for the killing of 1.5 million Armenians during the first genocide of the 20th century. The year was 1915, an historical event of world history which through ethnic cleansing nearly wiped out the presence of Armenians in their ancestral and present homeland.

Each year Armenian communities throughout the Diaspora acknowledge this historical fact by creating symbolic events of remembrance. This year was no exception as the St. John Armenian Community with great care in planning created appropriate commemorative activities which attracted huge crowds to church services, the memorial dinner and program on Sunday, April 25, 2010 to mark the 95th Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

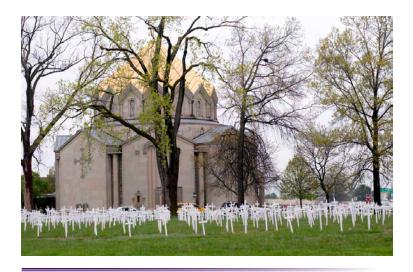
Earlier in the day members of St. John's Church School participated in various portions of the Divine Liturgy. One week earlier, the senior chapter of the local youth group, Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA), spearheaded the "Project White Cross," now in its third year, by placing 1,500 crosses on the church lawn to reflect the 1.5 million Armenians who perished in 1915. The crosses were placed in the ground with the assistance of ACYOA and Church School families. The sea of crosses and large banner announcing the 1915 atrocities attracted the attention of motorists as they drove by the church grounds.

After the Divine Liturgy, the congregation joined the clergy as the youth placed a floral wreath at the *Khachkar* Martyrs Monument opposite the church under cloudy skies and a steady drizzle. The large throng of about 500 made their way quickly into the Cultural Hall to share the memorial dinner consisting of baked lamb and wheat (*bulghur*) pilaf. The preparation and serving of the meal was a group effort engaging volunteers from St. John's ACYOA, Church School, Men Society, and Women's Guild.

The program planned for this day of remembrance was one of the most notable as the Mayor of Southfield, Brenda Lawrence, along with United States House members Gary Peters and Thaddeus McCotte, and Vincent Gregory of the Michigan State Legislature were called upon to speak. Deacon Rubik Mailian sang the national anthems of both the United States and Armenia. (Continued on page 3)

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



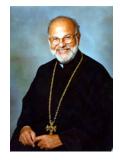
"THE WEDDING PARTY" --A HUGE SUCCESS!!

Saturday, May 08, 2010...the weather outside was not so wonderful, but in our cultural hall, it was all sunshine and roses as the Women's Guild of St. John's presented "The Wedding Party". The event, dedicated to our mothers on the day before Mothers' Day, was a piece of our own history, as vintage wedding attire served to tell the stories of some of our own members.

Paulette Apkarian and her talented committee had planned a day to remember. Attended by over four hundred guests, the wedding day began in our welcoming lobby, which was filled with beautiful music by a string quartet and collages of bridal portraits of our members through the years.

The doors opened into our elegant hall, and what a beautiful sight it was! Tables with arrangements of roses and orchids, formal damask tablecloths and satin chair covers transformed this Saturday luncheon into a wedding celebration. As the guests greeted friends and headed to their tables, they were greeted by wait staff in formal attire serving wine and cheese *beoreg*. And when all were seated, the wedding luncheon was served, a beautifully presented and delectable chicken *piccata*, followed by a lovely dessert of sorbet and pastries. (*Continued on page 3*)

Full color photographs of both the commemoration of the 95th Armenian Martyrs' Day and "The Wedding Party" can be found on pages 4 and 5 of this *Torchbearer*.



Convenience isn't always the best way. Convenience makes for odd choices.

Consider this

Faced with difficulty, most of us tend to choose convenience and expediency over sacrifice and integrity. Regrettably this is becoming more and more standard in the world today. We choose the easy way, particularly when the personal costs are likely to be high. Our desire to avoid negative outcomes can stir up odd reactions in us and cause us sometimes to do things that are totally out of character.

Our Lord Jesus triggered some odd choices of convenience and expediency in the political system of Jerusalem. In St. Luke's *Gospel*, he recounts occasions when convenience wins out, for example, when two leaders who had been longtime enemies suddenly became allies and friends. Or when Pontius Pilate, in order to maintain peace and appease an angry crowd, chose to free Barabbas, a murderer and troublemaker and allow the execution of Jesus, the innocent one.

These kinds of sinful tendencies are part of the reason Christ came to die. He wants to save us from opportunistic, self-serving ways of life because ultimately they lead to death. Evil alliances for convenience sake, political manipulation, rigged votes, injustice in politics. Sound familiar? These are all a stench in the nostrils of God, as Isaiah the Prophet writes, "...Sever yourselves from such a man, whose breath is in his nostrils."

As people of faith who believe in the image of God, alive in our souls to do the moral good, we may have to make odd choices that are sometimes not so easy but are the right choices. Our choices should be rooted in Christ-like values of love, truth, and humility, rather than expedience, popularity, selfishness and those comforts that seemingly make things easy. We pray that you make your choices not for convenience but for Christ's sake - that is always the best way.

~Father Garabed



The participants of the Annual Clergy Conference held in Chicago, IL prior to the Diocesan Assembly earlier this month.

Correction: Inadvertently, a photo was omitted on the cover of the May *Torchbearer*. Please refer to the parish website to see the photo of the group of girls who participated in the Tuesday evening Great & Holy Week services remembering the Wise and Foolish Virgins. We apologize for the mistake.

Looking for our 2010 Graduates!

Please submit information for high school and college graduates to the Church Office by June 15th so that we may recognize and honor them in an upcoming issue of the *Torchbearer*. Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate photographs.

MICHAEL ARAM TRUNK SHOW BENEFITS ST. JOHN'S





Through the generous and thoughtful collaboration of Solange Messelian of Lee's Specialty in Bloomfield Hills, Rita Vanerian Jury and Anita Arslanian, a Trunk Show of the work of acclaimed metal artist, Michael Aram, was brought to our church complex as a benefit for St. John's. The pre-sale was held Friday, May 21 in the Vartan Room and the Trunk Show continued at Lee's Specialty the following day. The sale of Michael Aram's beautiful metal work objects was a great success and a check for \$3000 was presented by Rita and Anita to the Parish Council at a recent meeting. A repeat of this highly anticipated event is expected.

Pictured above left: Michelle Doroslovac and Solange Messelian of Lee's Specialty, Sherri Lisagor representing Michael Aram and Rita Vanerian Jury.

Martyrs' Day Commemoration - continued from page 1

A letter of appreciation received from the Honorable, John Evans former U.S. Ambassador to Armenia following has visit to St.John's for the 95th Commemmoration of Martyrs' Day

April 29, 2010

The Reverend Father Garabed Kochakian Pastor, St. John Armenian Church 22001 Northwestern Highway Southfield, MI 48075

Dear Father Garabed:

What can I say? It was a wonderful event last weekend, from our point of view at least. You and your parishioners and friends are the most engaging, intelligent and interesting group we could imagine. The various events in the program catered to all aspects of our humanity.

In particular, the relaxed dinner on Friday evening was a great way to break the ice, if there was any. The Museum fully met our expectations. We enjoyed being a part of your surprise birthday party (and compliments to the ladies who prepared the excellent meal!). It was an extraordinary audience that the Michigan students attracted in Ann Arbor, and the course the questions took — with the unprecedented apology and response — was remarkable, as was the mood at the Italian dinner following the solemn commemoration in the Diag, with bells and rain.

The high point of the weekend had to be the Badarak that you and your Church celebrated. Though we obviously did not grow up in the Armenian Church, we can now follow along quite well, with the help of the bilingual liturgy. What a wonderful choir! We enjoyed the lunch and program afterwards, and hope that it met your expectations.

I had no idea (or had forgotten) that there was any question of an honorarium, so that came as a surprise. It was very hard to say good-bye!

Donna and I hope you had a good trip to Chicago, and she joins me in wishing you and your flock every happiness and success.

With deep respect,

Sincerely yours,

As part of the commemoration, awards were presented to the winners of the Armenian Genocide Essay Competition, an initiative of the Edgar Hagopian Foundation, now in its third successful year.

A musical interlude was presented by a vocal ensemble composed of St. John's Church School students from the middle school. Led by Deacon Rubik Mailian, they offered two songs, *The Promise of America* by Jill Gallina, and *Hyer Miatsek* (*Armenians Unite!*) by Kousan Haigazoun.

The keynote address was presented by Hon. John Evans, former United States Ambassador to the Republic of Armenia. During his remarks his respect and admiration for Armenia became vividly evident. In his address Amb. Evans stressed three points which signaled change: 1. United Voice and Witness, Celebrating the Memory of the Victims, and Hope for the Future.

He focused his comments upon the global community's recognition of the Armenian Genocide and stated that gradually Turkey will hear the voice of its own people to admit this heinous atrocity. Amb. Evans noted three events that were taking place in Turkey during April this year. Two were gatherings of Turkish youth protesting the Genocide denials of the present Turkish government, and pressing it to acknowledge the Genocide in order to build better relations with the world of nations. And the third event, occurring for the first time ever, was a conference on the Armenian Genocide held in Ankara. Together, he said, these were signs of hope that the waves of a new generation were openly defying the platform of denial. He stressed that hope can transform a wounded nation to accept its part, be honest with its own citizens and heal itself, as well as honoring the memory of the victims.

An astounding applause to his work, witness and comments concluded the day's program with expressions of gratitude to Amb. Evans and the other speakers of the day, and ending with words of prayer and benediction.

~Harry Avagian

"The Wedding Party" - continued from page 1

Then the guests went back in time. Beginning with the 1920s, each exquisite vintage bridal gown was the center of a vignette including many mother-of-the-bride gowns, flower girl dresses, ring bearer attire, and of course, grooms. Most of the treasured garments were worn by daughters, granddaughters, or other family members of the original bride. As the models showed off the elegant clothing, a story unfolded about the Women's Guild or Ladies' Auxiliary member who wore the bridal gown on her wedding day many years ago.

As the program moved through the decades from 1920 to the 1980s, the guests observed how the styles changed through the years finding new elegance in each era's fashion trends. As the styles changed, the stories changed as well. In the early years, families visited to introduce prospective couples to see if they liked each other. As the years passed, brides met their future husbands at church or AGBU events, or at college or university. One bride in the WWII era married her U.S. Navy groom in uniform. In each story we were reminded of the Armenian traditions that were handed down, and from each vignette emerged the precious love story of one of our members.

After this fabulous performance, a highly successful raffle was conducted, and over thirty lucky people won prizes including jewelry, baskets of Armenian delicacies, gift certificates to restaurants and movies, china, and much more.

Thank you so much to Paulette Apkarian and her committee. Paulette's vision of our Women's Guild "The Wedding Party" and her committee's hard work provided a sold-out crowd the chance to go back in time, to get a glimpse of the touching stories of some of our members' weddings, and to see the elegant styles of weddings as they changed through the years. It was an outstanding performance and an unforgettable afternoon.

DAYS TO REMEMBER: APRIL 23 - 25 AT ST. JOHNS



the campus April 24 after a presentation by Amb. Evans.
Photography courtesy of Ara Howrani, as well as *Daniel Cristiano and **Edward H.Korkoian.

"THE WEDDING PARTY" - A DAY TO SHARE WITH OUR MOTHERS.....

























Beautiful brides, lovely attendants, handsome escorts, vintage gowns, an elegant atmosphere and sumptuous luncheon all to remember our happiest moments and honor our mothers. In attendance as well were our most beloved centenarians, Armenouhi Gopigian and Araxsie Andonian, pictured with Fr. Garabed above.

Among others, photography courtesy of Adam Krikorian.

Baptisms

May

15 Sona Nigosian

Daughter of Clarke & Taleen Baldwin Godparents: Greg & Laura Nigoghosian

23 Liana Eva

Daughter of Gelu & Miranda Szasz Godparents: Nurhan & Matilda Garakyan

Weddinas

May 22

Kari Elizabeth Johnson & James Matthew Skubik

Bestman: Patrick Politano Khachyeghpayr: Craig Johnson Matron of Honor: Julie Winand Maid of Honor: Lindsay Spoerl

Funerals

May

Rose Malkasian, 82, Woodlawn

12 Anna Karibian, 99, Woodlawn

14 Norman Nurhan Akarakcian, 84, Woodlawn

25 Doris Moushegian, 95, Woodlawn

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.

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.

Below is the Men Society Web Directory Contact form. The form is also available for your convenience on the St. John's web site.

Web Directory **Contact information**

Your Name:

Contact phone number:

Are you a member of St. John Armenian Church?

Information for listing

Company name:

Contact name if applicable:

Category best describing your business:

Your title or position in the business:

Service providing:

Company Phone:

Company fax:

Email:

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Web site:

Company address:

The Men Society is preparing a Web Directory for Armenian Business Owners and Armenians in Business. This Directory will be linked to St. John's web site this year and the following year will be printed. As we are finishing the layout of the site we are asking anyone who would like to promote his or her business or the business they are working for to fill out the above information and send it to:

St. John Armenian Church - 22001 Northwestern Hwy - Southfield, MI 48075 Att. Men Society

Before any information is put on the site you will have the opportunity to approve the listing. There is no cost for this for dues paying members of St. John Armenian Church. Armenians that are not dues paying members will be charged \$25.00 per year.

If you have any questions please contact:

Glenn Akarakcian <u>platinumdevelopmentcorp@comcast.net</u> Jim Berryman jberryman@wideopenwest.com Craig Johnson cjohns06@sbcglobal.net

Paul Yousoufian pramy1@gmail.com or 313-310-3508

Mezza & Wine Tasting Sponsored by the Men Society

Friday, June 11, 2010 at 6:30 pm St. John Armenian Church Grand Ballroom \$35.00 per person

(Children's area available by reservation)

Included will be the booklet "Six Armenian Regions of Historic Western Armenia"

Tickets available by contacting Paul Yousoufian 313-310-3508 or pramy1@gmail.com

The goal of this event is to raise money to improve our Internet service within the church complex. This will help our parishioners with wireless internet, teleconferencing and additional Armenian educational programs.

We look forward to seeing you there.

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St. John's Armenian Church School

June 5, 2010 Bike & Walk-a-thon

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The Torchbearer Staff

Fr. Garabed Kochakian Editor-in-chief Anna Sarkisian 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 readersdhip 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

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For additional information, please contact: Audrey Markarian, Manager

Anna Svirid Sarkisian **Event Publications**

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> St. John's Bookstore Open Sundays after Church. Books can also be purchased during office hours or by mail.

NEW AT THE PARISH BOOKSTORE

A variety of Artie Barsamian CDs \$15

Arshille Gorky: A Retrospective \$65 hardcover Published by Philadelphia Museum of Art

New Faith to the New World - Stories of the Armenian Church by Hagop Nersoyan Illustrations by parishioner Kyle Harabedian Consultant: Fr. Garabed Kochakian \$20 softcover

Special: Skylark Farm by Antonia Arslan \$5 softcover

14k gold crosses \$75 - \$150

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE

June

5 Church School Bike & Walk-a-thon, (rescheduled) 8:30 am at Hines Park

For information, contact Lisa Mardigian at 248.569.3405/lmardigian@sjachurch.org

6 Men Society Pancake Breakfast

All the plain & blueberry pancakes you can eat, fresh fruit, sausage, juice & coffee or milk. This breakfast is funded by your donations. All proceeds go to the Hye Camp fund. Town Hall Meeting immediately following the Breakfast in the Vartan Room.

11 Men's Society Wine Tasting

See page 6 for more information

18 "Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center, 6:00 pm

July

Church Complex Closed for Independence Day

11 Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord - Vartavar

16 "Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center, 6:00 pm

August

15 Feast of the Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God - Asdvadzadzin

Annual Church Picnic

20 "Kef Klub" at St. John's Recreation Center, 6:00 pm

26 "River Kef" - Detroit River Cruise

aboard the 138 foot Ovation cruise ship with strolling supper, premium bar and live Armenian music.

Board from 6-7 pm and cruise from 7-9 pm. Donation: \$150 per person; \$250 per couple; to benefit St. John Armenian Church.

For information and reservations,

contact Bernie Akkashian at ashcan3@att.net.

See enclosed flyer for more information.

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.

2010 St. John Armenian Church Summer Day Camp

St. John Armenian Church is pleased to again offer a Summer Day Camp for children ages 5 to 12. St. John's Armenian Day Camp is a wonderful opportunity for our children to get acquainted with other Armenian children, to learn about their heritage and to share in the exciting experience of summer day camp. If you require further information or have any questions contact Lisa Mardigian at: (248) 569-3405 or lmardigian@sjachurch.org

DAYCAMP SESSION THEMES & FIELD TRIPS
SESSION 1: June 14 – 18 Sports & Fitness
Swim day ~ Tiger Game ~ Kensington Park
SESSION 2: June 21 – 25 Green Week
Swim day ~ Nature Centers

MINI SESSION 3: June 28 – 30 Scavenger Hunt Swim day ~ paddleboating

MINI SESSION 4: July 6 – 9 Food Network

Swim day ~ California Pizza Kitchen
SESSION 5: July 12 – 16 Art & Creativity

Swim day ~ Tiger Baseball Game ~ DIA

SESSION 6: July 19 – 23 Christmas in July Swim day ~ Movies ~ Surprise field trip

SESSION 7: July 26 – 30 Talent Show/Karaoke Swim day ~ Bowling ~ Hard Rock Café

SESSION 8: August 2 - 6 Cultural Week

Swim day ~ Manoogian Museum ~ Arab Museum ~ Holocaust Museum

NO CAMP August 7-14 due to HYE CAMP 2010

SESSION 9: August 16 – 20 Hawaiian Luau Beach Party ~ Lucky Strike

SCHEDULE MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE!

TIME: Check-in 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. • Dismissal 4:00 p.m.

FEE: *\$125.00 per week (Discount for second child)

*Fee includes: Supplies, Refreshments, Camp T-Shirt, Picnics, Field Trips and Transportation for Field Trips. Parents must provide a sack lunch!

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

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