# THE TORCHBEARER . Quihulph

## 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



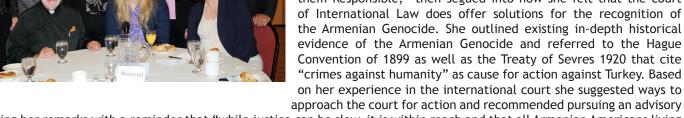
## MAKE THEM RESPONSIBLE .....

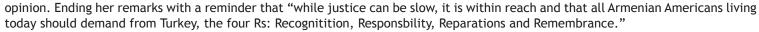
Tuesday, April 24, 2012, Dr. Sandra Bunn-Livingstone, International Lawyer and former Diplomat at the U.S. State Department, was hosted by the St. John Armenian Church to be their keynote speaker on the 97th Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide. Remembering the one and one-half million Armenians that were annihilated by the Ottoman Turks (1915-1923) and continuing the Armenian community's quest for U.S. recognition of this Genocide, the church hall was filled with local Armenian Americans including

scholars and writers, eager to hear Dr. Livingstone present a new approach for U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

Dr. Livingstone's credentials include nine years as a Professor at Cambridge University in International Law. She received a Ph.D. in Law at Cambridge University. She participated in a presentation at Pepperdine University on Genocide and Religion as part of a panel including Israel Charny and Richard Hovannisian. As a former member of the U.S. State Department she was informed on the Nagorno-Karabagh peace talks and is well versed on the history of the region.

She began her presentation with a moving comment, "Make them Responsible," then segued into how she felt that the court





Dr. Livingstone graciously stayed overnight in the metro-Detroit area to be hosted at a breakfast on April 25th to meet with local scholars and representatives from the legal community for further discussion on how action could be taken in the International Court of Law. The breakfast held at the St. John Armenian Church was put together by local Armenian activists Paul Kulhanjian and John Yavruian, included an informative question and answer session.

The Armenian diaspora has worked tirelessly for U.S. recognition but progress has been slow and Dr. Livingstone's presentation injected new hope for a resolution that could bring about recognition of the Armenian Genocide - a genocide that is not reflected in our history books and 97 years later, even though 43 states and numerous foreign governments have recognized it, remains unacknowledged by the U.S. Government and the successors to the Ottoman Turk perpetrators. Dr. Livingstone, seated center, is pictured above with Father Garabed Kochakian and the Armenian Bar Association.

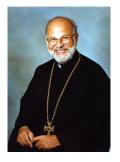
#### Dearest Father Garabed,

It was such a distinct pleasure to meet you and your Community at St. John's in Southfield last week! Thank you for your generous hospitality, the museum tour, incredibly moving service (the cloud of witnesses were with us in your stunning church!), and madagh! It was an honor to address your Community on the 97th Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide - thank you for inviting me! Thank you also for your contribution to the non-profit Jus Cogens legal fund. This will be used to aid Armenian pastors in Iran who have recently come under pressure and arrest. Hopefully, there will be Justice on this earth before the 100th Anniversary. We know God's Justice extends beyond the grave!

Many Blessings and Sola Deo Gloria,

~ Sandra Bunn-Livingstone

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



To have lost one's memory is a tragedy indeed. I cannot help but mourn that thought for people who suffer from Alzheimer's disease, for their former world has vanished from their memory. But to forget when one CAN remember is even worse. It is like death.

We remember people and events, sayings and things that, when recalled, lift our spirits. Memory saves and keeps alive what once was and gives meaningful perspective to life and what we understand by faith to be ETERNAL.

The word "Remember" is an important one in our Christian tradition, because it truly does keep alive and brings into our lives the presence of God. When Jesus preached, He told us we need to remember, especially

when we come together to celebrate the Last Supper at *Badarak*..."DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME." Such Remembrance is God's joy and love. His presence feeds us.

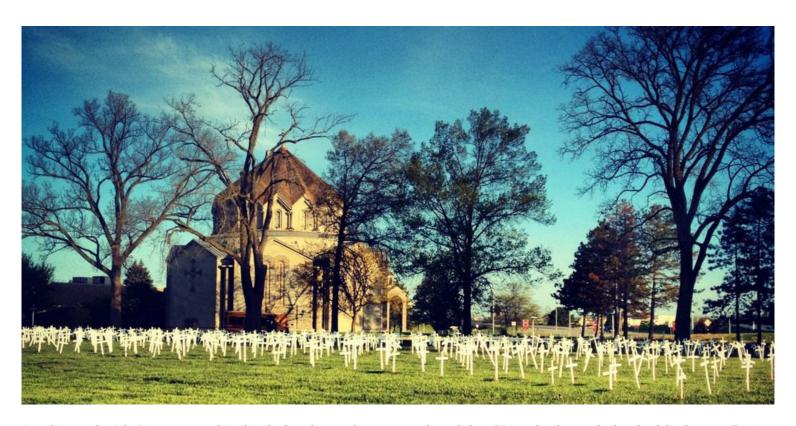
But there is the memory also of painful things, tragedies that we commemorate, as we do on April 24th, to remember a horrific time of the past. It is an occasion to remember what evil did, but more importantly, an occasion to remember what evil could not do. Death has not prevailed for the past 97 years. Even in the depths of our sorrows remembered, we can give thanks for the survivors who shared their stories and transmitted the truth of what happened and for the Martyrs who gave their lives. We still hold on with sorrow and pain but invoking gratitude, thanking with a memory of the past, that Armenia exists, Armenians help build a new world, Armenians are leaders and still tend and care for this world that God created. This is a good remembrance, a good memory that makes our hearts swell with joy, love and creative energy, not envy and anger.

We must guard ourselves against the sinful vices that infect our mind and memory, that taint, dishonor and abuse God's gift of memory. Those acts of remembrance that incite hate, anger and slander are not the legacy of our people and they are qualities in life that dishonor the memory of the Armenian Martyrs of 1915. What is important is to put aside the anger in our pain that harbors hatred, prejudice, ill intent and hardens the heart, that strangles the mind, heart and soul. Let us move out of our pain with wisdom, fair thinking and just resolve to win the justice we seek. Let our memory of the past evils help us discover the best ways to bring honor, dignity and justice to those who perished.

An honest mind, an open heart, a willing spirit gives birth to new life, eternally gracing our dignity as Christian Armenians, and that is when there is Resurrection. As we gather together in remembrance of Christ, He is with us even unto the end of our life here and at the beginning of our life in heaven. As He said, "I am with you always to the end of the age."

Amen.

~ Father Garabed



A tradition at St. John's in memory of April 24th: One thousand crosses stand - each for 1,500 souls taken at the hands of the Ottoman Empire.



On Sunday, April 22nd, the Men's Society of St. John's held a Buffet Brunch in the main hall. Chairmen Mark Mamassian and Ronald Keoleian with their committee, which included Glenn Akarakcian and Ed Baharian, both pictured left, James Berryman, Gjon Ivezaj, Robert Magee, George Saboonjian and John Yavruian prepared the food, served and cleaned up to make sure everyone enjoyed the function. Approximately 175 people attended the function and they were given the choice of scrambled eggs, basterma and eggs, pancakes, hash browns, sausage, juice, coffee and an omelet station manned by Paul Yousoufian and Dan Cristiano. Assistant omelet makers were Church School students Jordan Boyagian and Nareg Bezjian. Many of the parishioners seemed to gravitate to the omelet station where they had a choice of basterma, chicken, tomatoes, green peppers, a vegetable mixture, potatoes and onions, feta and Romano cheeses. Deacon Mihran Hoplamazian through his continuing generosity donated the breakfast sausage.

Julia Papiyants, the new Editor of *The Torchbearer*, was kind enough to take pictures and was also the guide for House Representative Gary Peters and his aide. Mr. Peters was provided *basterma* and eggs for the first time, and he thoroughly enjoyed it. Unfortunately, Senator Debbie Stabenow was unable to attend due to illness.

Funds raised by Free Will Offerings were approximately \$500 to support the Men's Society and Komitas Choir's audio/visual project for the Sanctuary. On May 6th, Chairmen Mark Mamassian and Ronald Keoleian with their committee, which included James Berryman, David Dardarian, Gjon Ivezaj, Craig Johnson, John Kalajian, Robert Magee, and John Yavruian held another buffet brunch. Approximately 125 people attended the function and enjoyed the array of food offered. Once again, Deacon Mihran Hoplamazian donated breakfast sausage, Gjon Ivezaj donated the hash browns, and Ronald Keoleian donated the juices. All future Men's Society Breakfasts for 2012 will be in support of this worthwhile project. Please come and join us and give generously!

- Dan Cristiano -



Robert Magee slices basterma for the omelet station.

### FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL.....

The Diocesan Assembly occurred at the beginning of May. As the Parish Council Chair, I attended the Assembly as a member of St John's delegation for the fourth year in a row. It is always a learning experience to be among the leaders of our Church. In today's world it is all too easy to become distracted by worldly events. We lose our sight and become blind to the Great Commission our Lord gave us. Too often we delegate our responsibilities to others because it is easier. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian challenged each of us to put Christ at the center of our lives.

As your Parish Council Chairman, I took on the responsibility of returning fiscal responsibility to our Church. The effort has met with some success due to the support of the Community and the hard work of all who have offered their time, talent and treasure. But is that the "Great Commission" our Lord entrusted with us? Is that what our Lord commissioned us to do? Is that how each of us serves Him? I think not!

While it is necessary to maintain fiscal responsibility, that is not an end in itself. We must do the work Christ asked of us. If we fail in that, fiscal responsibility is meaningless.

On May 8, 2012, the Parish Council met with the Chairs of the of each of the Church Affiliated Organizations and the Armenian Community Organizations that use our facility. We took the opportunity to introduce our new custodian, David Jones, to the community. If you haven't met him please introduce yourself to him and make him feel welcome. Parish Council Liaisons were assigned to each of the organizations. Paul Yousoufian and Tom Stamboulian distributed a folder with new policies and procedures for scheduling meetings and booking events. Again, while all that is necessary is it the end we seek? I think not!

How do we treat each other? Do we live our faith by loving God before all? Do we love our neighbors as ourselves? Do we come together and worship our Lord on Sundays or are we too busy?

On Mother's Day the Sunday School's Senior Class was invited to be a part of Father Garabed's sermon. How many heard their witnesses? The 1st and 2nd graders recited the *Hayr Mer*. Who was present to hear their prayers? Our Father has Blessed us. We need to give Him thanks. We do that as a Community on Sundays, during *Badarak*. Father Garabed asked families to come to Church and worship together. It was truly beautiful, not because of the choir, the deacons or the priest, but because of who was present. Have a wonderful summer and bring your family to *Badarak* on Sunday and let us give thanks and praise to the One we love above all.

- John Yavruian -

On Tuesday evening, April 24th parishioners gathered at St. John's to honor the memory of the one and one-half million Armenian victims of the Armenian Genocide. A procession of clergy and altar servers was accompanied by the singing of "Maherk Nahadagats" (Hymn to the Martyrs) by the Komitas Choir directed by Deacon Rubik Mailian. Church Organist Margaret Lafian accompanied the choir throughout the requiem service.

In his homily, Father Garabed cited the words of our Lord, "Do this in remembrance of Me" and spoke about how remembrance brings life. When we remember the Armenian Martyrs, he said, we "honor their sacrifice as we live for them." He noted that "if we don't remember, we are dead and the Martyrs weep with sorrow." Continuing, he said, the martyrs "are alive in us" and "we live for them and, as we do, they live with us."

Following the homily, Ms. Sevahn Merian performed a composition for violin by Edgar Elgar called "Nimrod."

At the conclusion of the very moving requiem service, the clergy led the congregation to the Martyrs Monument for the laying of wreaths as the choir sang "Hankchetsek Took Antorr" (Martyrs Rest in Peace).

The Cultural Hall program was opened by Master of Ceremonies Deacon Richard Norsigian who invited Father Garabed to offer the invocation. Deacon Rubik led the singing of the national anthems in English and Armenian. A *madagh* dinner of lamb and pilaf was served. Deacon Richard shared the story of his father, Aram, who was spared the physical horrors of the Genocide, but bore the emotional scars of losing his parents and siblings in the massacres.

Edward Korkoian, chairman of the St. John Armenian Genocide Commemoration Committee, addressed the gathering stressing the importance of commemorating the 100th anniversary as a "totally united community." Mr. Korkoian also expressed thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Manoogian and Ms. Louise Simone for underwriting the expenses for today's dinner and program in loving memory of their parents, Alex and Marie Manoogian.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Sandra Bunn-Livingstone was introduced and invited to address the community. (Coverage of her address appears on the front page.)

After her remarkable presentation, Deacon Richard acknowledged the six living Genocide survivors of the Greater Detroit area and asked the two individuals who could be present today - Ramela Carman and Simon Tashjian - to stand. Norsigian then asked the children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and relatives of Genocide survivors to stand. Amazingly, everyone in the hall was standing! It was a testament to the resilience and spirit of the Armenian people.

As the evening came to an end, thanks and appreciation were expressed by Richard Norsigian for the many hands that went into preparing today's program: Charles Sansone and his committee for preparing the lamb; Alberta Godoshian for preparing the bulghur pilaf; Anna Baylerian and her committee for dining room setup and serving food; members of the Women's Guild, ACYOA and Church School for serving; members of the Men's Society for serving and cleanup; Dr. Vincent and Anna Baylerian for donating the red roses presented to our survivors in memory of their parents Anna Chrovian and Hasampyr Baylerian.

Expressions of appreciation went to Lisa Mardigian and the ACYOA for installing the field of 1,000 white crosses on the grounds of St. John's in memory of our martyrs.

To conclude the program Father Garabed was invited to the podium. He asked Dr. Bunn-Livingstone to join him and presented her with several mementos from St. John's including a replica plaque of one of the mosaics in our Church and a copy of our Women's Guild publication, Armenian Cuisine. He then blessed the survivors present and honored the memory of the victims of the Genocide. He closed the commemoration by offering the benediction.



Genocide survivors Mrs. Ramela Carman and Mr. Simon Tashjian pictured together at the  $\it madagh$  dinner.



Father Garabed offers prayers at the Armenian Genocide Monument as the choir and parishioners watch.



Kara Carouth, inner left, and Brian Stevens, inner right, pictured with guests in attendance.



 $Parish \, Council \, Chairman \, John \, Yavruian \, and \, Father \, Garabed \, Kochakian \, discussing \, the \, Church's \, plans \, to \, help \, Habitat \, for \, Humanity.$ 

The Habitat for Humanity Community Leadership Breakfast was held at St. John Armenian Church on Thursday, April 19, 2012. Over 80 people were in attendance including Southfield area Civic, Community, Clerical, Habitat leaders and volunteers. Future volunteers from St John Armenian Church Men's Society and many media representatives were also in attendance.

Father Garabed Kochakian of St. John Armenian Church welcomed the guests, and expressed his appreciation to the Hagopian Family Foundation for making this gathering possible through their generous support. Father Garabed spoke about the history of St. John's involvement with Habitat including Church support for building homes in Armenia and the ongoing support by St. John's Women's Guild providing breakfasts for Habitat workers on projects in Pontiac.

City of Southfield Mayor Brenda Lawrence spoke about Father Garabed's commitment to his parishioners and St. John's commitment in support of the surrounding Southfield community, and its importance.

Tim Ruggles, CEO Habitat for Humanity, Oakland County spoke about the history of Habitat, internationally and locally and the achievements it has made.

Brian Stevens, Chief Financial Officer, Mercedes Benz Financial Services, USA, spoke about the financial support it has provided and the commitment from his employees to Habitat through their volunteerism. He also reminded us of the importance of the Habitat program. Kara Carouth, Habitat for Humanity homeowner recipient, noted with deep gratitude the positive changes home ownership has made in her life, in the life of her young daughter, as well as in the surrounding community.

For 2012, there are six scheduled housing rehabs in Southfield, with three of those currently having sufficient funding. Attendees at this event were urged to consider how they might help and to please contact *Habitat for Humanity*, *Southfield MI 2012*.

- Greg Baise -

#### FOR OUR SENIORS .....

One of the true treasures of our Armenian Community are our parents, grandparents and great grandparents who gave so much of their lives, and the present day seniors who continue to help build and preserve the Armenian Culture in Michigan. We believe our younger generations still have much to learn from you. But more importantly, St. John's desires to give back to all of you.

Over the next few months St. John's will be adding activities for our Seniors and soon-to-be Seniors of the Armenian Community. These programs will be open to all ages but will be designed for those over 50. This will include educational programs, entertainment, exercise programs, aerobic and Yoga classes, gardening, visiting with the children of day camp, going for walks before Senior Lunch and special outings.

If you would like to get involved with this program, please contact Linda Tiffany at <a href="mailto:anytiff@comcast.net">anytiff@comcast.net</a> or phone the church office at 248.569.3405 with your name, address and phone number so we can keep you apprised of the upcoming activities and personally invite you to join us.

#### Graduation season is almost here...

If you would like to recognize someone or be recognized for finishing school or college in 2012, please electonically send the name of the graduate, institution where he or she is graduating from, and future plans.

Information or questions should be e-mailed to May Kafafian at <a href="mailed tomassage">mkafafian@sjachurch.org</a>

Please note that deadline for submission is Saturday, July 1, 2012.

## Baptisms May 2012

12 Ashley Isabella
Daughter of Joshua & Lori Lebson
Godparents: H. Nicholas & Nancy Berberian

## Funerals May 2012

9 Mildred "Millie" Mae Jingozian, 7511 Artin Artinian, 78, Woodlawn



#### Clergy Gather for Annual Conference

In the days prior to the 110th Diocesan Assembly, 44 Diocesan Priests and Deacons gathered at the Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford, CT, for the annual Clergy Conference, held from April 30th to May 3rd. Diocesan Primate Archbishop Khajag Barsamian presided over the meeting. During the four-day gathering, clergy prayed together, discussed important issues related to the mission of the Armenian Church, strengthened their brotherly love toward each other, and gained fresh perspectives on their ministry.

### KEF KLUB'S TALENT SHOW

Friday, July 20, 2013

sponsored by St. John's Komitas Choir Special Feature: "A Children's Talent Show"

Interested participants, please contact Marianne Dardarian 248.661.0617 by June 30th

#### A BIT OF HISTORY

#### Armenian book printing in the Ottoman Empire

An interesting online exhibition from the Armenian Genocide Museum in Yerevan, Armenia has become available.

To see this piece of history, please visit:

www.genocide-museum.am/eng/online\_exhibition\_17.php

## FROM MOMS AND MANOOGS .....

Even though winter was mild, Moms and Manoogs are excited to enjoy the summer weather. We wrapped up Spring with a trip to the roller rink as well as painting pottery at The Bees Knees in Northville.

Summer will bring a host of new outings and we look forward to sharing them with some new faces. We even leave the *Manoogs* home occasionally for a girl's night out.

We meet twice a month, usually on Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays from 10 am to noon. We are flexible in our days and times in hopes to gain new members.

Please contact Kristen Gustafson 248.765.0471 or e-mail her at <a href="mailto:frissy10@hotmail.com">frissy10@hotmail.com</a> for more information.



The moms and their *manoogs* pictured at one of their activities this season, the roller rink.

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#### The Torchbearer Staff

Father 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 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 also need volunteers who would be interested in helping prepare *The Torchbearer* for mailing. This occurs around the 25<sup>th</sup> 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:

www.stjohnsarmenianchurch.org



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## PLEASE SAVE THE DATE .....

June	
3	Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
10	Feast of Holy Etchmiadzin
15	Kef Klub hosted by the Women's Guild "Open Mic Joke Night"
27	Day by Day Afternoon Bible Study
July	
4	Independence Day- Complex Closed
15	Transfiguration of our Lord - Vartavar
20	Kef Klub hosted by the Komitas Choir
25	Day by Day Afternoon Bible Study

#### August

28-Aug 4

12	Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God Annual Church Picnic
17	Kef Klub
22	Day by Day Afternoon Bible Study

Midwest Hye Camp

#### September

28-30

30

3	Labor Day - Complex Closed
8	Nativity of the Holy Mother-of-God
16	Exaltation of the Holy Cross
	Church School Opens
	Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
21	Kef Klub
26	Day by Day Afternoon Bible Study
27	Opening Night Dinner & Auction;

Fine Arts Exhibit Opening

Holy Cross of Varak

Armenia: Land of Noah's Ark Festival

IN THE COMMUNITY .....

Armenia Fest
Saturday, July 14, 2012
5:00 - 10:00 pm
Royal Oak Farmers Market
Featuring Live Armenian Music
Performance by Hamazkayin Dance Ensemble
Armenian Food and Vendors
Art Show for Armenian Emerging Artists
Open to the general public
Admission & Parking are free

College Scholarships
For Students of Armenian Heritage
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Ms. Sena Harootunian 1561 Brentwood Troy MI 48098 248.641.9476 mail: arasophia@aol.co

E-mail: arasophia@aol.com Deadline: June 30, 2012

Detroit Armenian Women's Club
Dabanian Memorial Scholarship
Contact: Carole Basmadjian 248.879.8637
E-mail: dawc07@aol.com
Deadline: June 30, 2012

A "Guide to Scholarships for Students of Armenian Ancestry" prepared by the Armenian Research Center of the University of Michigan-Dearborn is available at the Church office, and outlines other scholarship sources nationwide.

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