

THE TORCHBEARER • Ջահակիր

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*



SEPTEMBER IS MEMBERSHIP & STEWARDSHIP MONTH AT ST. JOHN'S!!!

CONSIDER YOUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR CHURCH AS WE CELEBRATE OUR 80 YEARS!

St. John's sends another team to Armenia to build a home!

St. John Armenian Church Team #4 with Fuller Center for Housing left for Armenia June 17. Team Leader Jackie ElChemmas along with Faith Boucher, Dikran and Kelly Callan, Dawn and Andrea Karagosian, Denise Karakashian and Levon Nazoyan, had a mission ahead of them. We would be working alongside a family whose house was being built.

After many months of planning, meetings and fundraisers we finally arrived in Armenia. The first day we attended church services in Holy Etchmiadzin and were able to take communion. This was the beginning of an exciting and wonderful trip in our Motherland. The following afternoon we left Yerevan for the village of Yeghegnadzor, a trip of about three hours, stopping at Khor Virab, climbing down into the pit of St. Gregory and singing *Hayr Mer*. It was a very emotional day.

We stayed in "Gohar's Bed and Breakfast" in Yeghegnadzor. We woke each morning, had breakfast together as a family and then went to our work site and worked alongside our homeowner, Maghak Simonian, his wife, Tamara, children Maksim, 15, Artour and Armenuhi both 12. We were able to lay the floor of the three bedrooms, kitchen and bathroom of the home in our short time. We also worked on the roof doing insulation. *(The Simonian Family and Team #4 are pictured above.)*

The homeowners were so hard working and had smiles for us each day. It was such a rewarding experience for each of us. The Simonians had become family to us. This family who had lived in a *domik* (metal boxcar) for about 15 years, will be able to sleep in a warm stone house, with indoor plumbing. *(Fuller Team #4 continued on page 3)*



Annual Church Picnic a Huge Success. Feast of the Transfiguration (Vartavar) marked with water-themed activities for children.



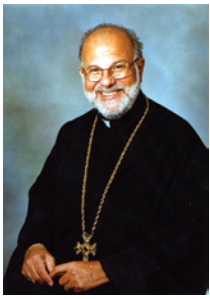
The date for this year's annual church picnic may have changed, but that is about all that had changed on Sunday, July 31. The weather was warm, the sun was shining, and children were enjoying the water slide, a new attraction this year. Some children had formed a line to enter the dunk tank for an opportunity to cool off. For those young guests eager to try their hand as an equestrian, there were ponies that welcomed young riders. As has been traditional at our church picnics, the Armenian food was plentiful and seemed to entice some guests to go back for seconds.

(Annual Picnic continued on page 4)

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 2011



FROM FATHER GARABED'S DESK.....

"Let God, the God of the spirits of everyone living, set a man over this community to lead them, to show the way ahead and bring them back home so God's community will not be like sheep without a shepherd."
(Numbers 27:15)

This reminder from Moses reminds us that we, as a community, need to regroup and come back to our spiritual home from the far away places we may have wandered. The summer has taken us all in many directions for respite and, with the approach of fall, many of our sheep grazing in other pastures will be returning to the field that fully feeds us ... our spiritual home and our parish.

As the shepherd, it is my duty to gather you in once again, remind you that God's sanctuary and house opens its arms to welcome you back to pray as a community, grow more in faith, come to understand our identity and, in Christ, how we together as family praise the Lord our Savior.

Prayer, our link to God our Father, is the way to fortify our relationship with Him and likewise our 'unity' as a 'community', but it can also be awkward, especially when we have been away from a daily life of prayer. The simple effort to give thanks to God for all our blessings can be so easily forgotten with the busy lives we lead and in the daily pleasures that bury prayer as a "when I need to" spiritual exercise of faith.

We are always in need of someone to call us back home, where the presence of Christ breathes, lives, grows and impacts us all individually and in the context of fellowship and community. As good stewards of our spiritual home, St. John's, we are able to rediscover in our HOME the prayerful ways we may have forgotten and celebrate our faith at the Liturgy, receiving our Lord's Body and Blood in order to lift each other up, support one another when needed, and be ready, however necessary, to work together for the glory of God, finding the joys that come from Christ the Lord **when we come back home.**

So welcome back where Christ our God is ready to hear our collective words in prayer, our wants, needs, appeals and even frustrations. Come home where there always has been a place for you ready to be filled again.

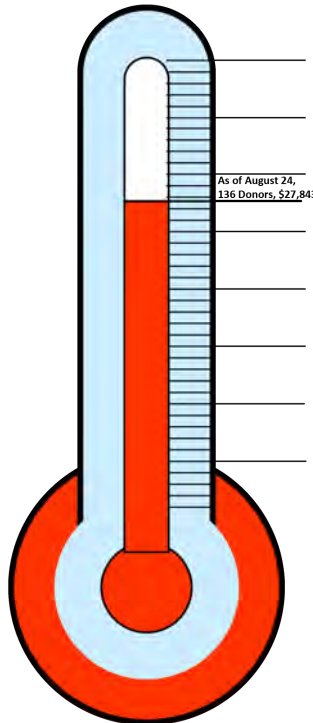
~Father Garabed

2011 Summer Fundraising Campaign Let's Go Over the Top!

Many thanks to everyone who has participated to date in this campaign! You still can be part of the effort - no donation is too small. This year our Church will celebrate its 80th Birthday. It is a time to appreciate our history and anticipate our destiny. This year also marks the 4th and final year of our \$50,000 annual payments to the Apostolic Society for the \$200,000 interest free loan they provided the Church for the kitchen and hall renovations.

We established a "Summer Fundraising Campaign" this year to assist us in completing these obligations and to meet our 2011 Budget. **To date we have received \$27,843 from 136 contributors.** We are humbly grateful for those who have stepped up to contribute so quickly. We appreciate the generosity of spirit and treasure of all those who will make this endeavor successful. Look to the "Thermometer" in the Church Lobby on Sundays when you come to worship our Lord and experience His Spirit in the acts of love and kindness of our community members.

-Your Parish Council



St. John Sanctuary and Museum Tour

The "Church with the Golden Dome" will again be showcased for the St. John and Greater Detroit community audience on Wednesday, September 21, 2011 at 10 am. Father Garabed Kochakian, Master of Armenian Art and Architecture, will guide a mesmerizing tour of the sanctuary, musically accompanied by Sacred Music Director, Dn. Rubik Mailian. Following will be a tour of the Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum, the largest Armenian museum in North America, directed by Lucy Ardash. An Armenian inspired buffet luncheon will be served at noon. The donation is \$20 per person. For further information and registration forms, please see the website: stjohnsarmenianchurch.org, or call Diane Ekizian: 248.851.4069.



This is a rendering of artist Arthur Lazaryan's future Memorial to the Victims of the Pogroms against Armenians in Azerbaijan by the Azeris, 1988-1991. Many of the survivors of these atrocities have become part of our St. John's community and will be at the Kef Club September 16 and the Celebratory Tea September 18 to apprise us all of their progress to raise the necessary funds and erect this monument here at St. John's. Join us to learn more!



Pictured above is Denise Karakashian with the Fuller Center coordinator Armine Sargisyan presenting the choir robes to the Khor Virab Church caretaker.

Khor Virab Monastery Church receives the Komitas Choir robes

In August 2007 during the Komitas Choir visit to Khor Virab Monastery Church in Armenia, members of the Komitas Choir promised Very Rev. Fr. Nareg Avakian, the abbot of Khor Virab Monastery, to donate their robes to the Khor Virab Choir and altar servers upon their return to Michigan.

By the end of that year the Komitas Choir was able to purchase new robes for its members and altar servers through a generous donation of a parishioner and hard work of the late choir member Varsenick Apkarian. In April 2008 the old choir robes were cleaned and repaired waiting to be delivered to churches in need. Many of the robes were sent to Fr. Tateos Abdalian, the director of Mission Parishes at the Diocese, to distribute among mission parishes in need and the rest were kept to be sent to Khor Virab.

Last month the Khor Virab Monastery Choir finally received the robes through Denise Karakashian and Kelly Callan, two of the Komitas Choir members who went to Armenia to help Fuller Center build a house.

-Kelly Karakashian Callan

A Word of Thanks

***From the Holy Monastery of Khor Virab
we express our sincere thanks for the beautiful choir robes.
And, we offer our prayers to God
for your continued good health and success.***

***Hayr Nareg Abegha Avakian
Abbott***

***(Khor Virab, which means "the deep pit" is where
St. Gregory the Illuminator was imprisoned for 13 years.)***

Fuller Team #4, continued from page 1

Our teams always know we are going to help a family in Armenia, but we never realize how attached we might become to the family. How emotional it is to leave and know you may never see them again, but knowing they will be in much better living conditions.

Our family now has their first washing machine and oven, a gift for them from the members of the St. John Team #4. (See photo below left)

After leaving the village our team was able to visit many sites, such as Jermuk, Lake Sevan, Yerevan, Sardarapat, Geghard Monastery and Garni, the Genocide Memorial and Museum.

Our sincere thanks to:

- Ms. Marie Vanerian, who generously underwrote the cost of the home in Armenia.
- The Mardigian Foundation which made a very generous donation to Fuller Center for Housing to underwrite the cost for the team members.
- Dolly Matoian for her five years of dedication toward our fundraising efforts.
- Fr. Garabed Kochakian and our entire community for supporting our efforts.

-by Jackie ElChemmas



In addition to the main entrees, the Women's Guild, under the chairmanship of Lisa Boyadjian and Terry Palaian, offered an amazing variety of baked goods for sale in the Vartan Room, where guests could sample the sweets while cooling off.

As in earlier picnics on the church grounds, there was an interesting display of classic cars. Somehow these cars seemed to bring back memories for many of our senior citizens of much earlier events in their lifestyles as teenagers.

Successful events like our annual church picnics require the planning and physical involvement of many individuals and this year was not an exception. Eric and Noel Slowik co-chaired this year's event and were significantly assisted by the efforts of Sara Andonian, Charlene Apigian, George Boyagian, David Dardarian, Evie Ezmerlian, Joyce Obenhoff, and many other volunteers.

The maintenance staff led by Ron Ware, along with his staff of Jeff Perna and Knut Shattuck, did an extraordinary job meeting the needs of the picnic committee.

This year's picnic turned out to be a huge success financially, thanks to everyone who attended.

- Harry Avagian



**Winners of the 50/50 Raffle
at the Annual Picnic
July 31, 2011**

Helen Olson • Agnes Thompson
Steven Assarian • Baidzar Nersessian
Jilbar Altanook • Karen Dardarian • Harry Avagian

**Winner of the Potato Salad
Competition**

Armen Mary Negosian

WOMEN'S GUILD NEWS.....

The Women's Guild of St. John's has enjoyed a productive summer. Every Monday and Tuesday since June we have been preparing Armenian delicacies for the Annual Festival. Our dedicated group has prepared 5000 *Kharpert Kuftehs*, many trays of *Sou beoreg*, *Cheoreg*, *Yahlanchi Sarma*, *Katah* and many more traditional favorites.

Kef Klub was hosted by the Women's Guild on Friday, June 17. A wonderful meal was prepared by Charlene Apigian and her committee.

Once again our members donated breakfast for Habitat workers at the Pontiac site. We continue to support this noble cause at home and in Armenia to provide housing for those in need. (See the photos at right. For the first time a two-story house is under construction in Pontiac.)

On July 13, our traditional Summer Outing took place at the Edsel and Eleanor Ford Estate. Twenty of our members enjoyed an informative tour of the grand home and gardens followed by a lunch on the terrace. It was a picture perfect day.

At the weekly baking day August 16 Rev. Fr. Hrach Sargsyan, our former intern priest, surprised and bestowed a special blessing upon the women making *Katah* in the kitchen for the upcoming Festival. Der Hrach has been assigned as pastor of the St. Gregory of Narek Church in Cleveland, OH as of September 1. (See the photo below)



WE HONOR OUR GRADUATES.....

Adam Gumushian graduated from the Cranbrook-Kingswood upper school in Bloomfield Hills. He was on the Dean's List for four years, and a leader in many school organizations including the Student Ambassador Program, the World Affairs Seminars, the Armenian Club as co-President, and Gallimaufry, the Upper School Literary Arts Magazine. As a four year Varsity tennis player, Adam was a two-time State Tennis Team Champion, an individual State Tennis Champion, MVP, and captained the team to State victory his senior year. He was awarded the 2010 Optimist International Award for his creation of a tennis and mentoring program to help economically disadvantaged students which has now become a permanent curriculum within the Horizons-Upward Bound educational system. He is an ordained altar server at St. John's and actively involved in the ACYOA. Adam is the son of Barbara and Gary Gumushian and will be attending Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island this fall.



FESTIVAL APPEALS.....

Items Needed for "Grandma's Attic"!!

We need new or gently used clothing, toys and household items to be sold at the Annual Festival. Drop off your donations at the Maintenance Office in a box or bag clearly labeled "GRANDMA'S ATTIC" by September 20. It is not possible to have anything picked up from your home. A letter for tax deduction purposes is available from the church office.

WANTED: Used Armenian books

The Parish Bookstore is accepting donations of gently used books on Armenian subject for its Used Book Sale at this year's FESTIVAL. Kindly drop books off at the Church Office during business hours or on Sundays.

Blood Donors needed at Festival

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Saturday, September 24, 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

Register now by phoning 313.310.3508

Traffic flow in the parking lot

In cooperation with the A.G.B.U. Alex and Marie Manoo-gian School, the traffic pattern has been revised to ensure the safety of everyone who visits the complex. Signs will be installed to make **the narrow drive along the south side of the Church building leading from Winora into the parking lot "one-way."** Please exit the parking lot by driving in front of the Church and Cultural Hall. Thank you for your cooperation.

Donate your car to Charity Motors - and benefit St. John's

Our Church received \$475 as a result of a parishioner's donation of a car to Charity Motors. Members and friends are urged to participate in this program. Check their web site:

<http://www.charitymotors.org/>

or contact Charity Motors at 888.908.CARS

to see how you can participate and see the proceeds donated to St. John's!

Your computer and internet connection has a wealth of information from St. John's. Become a friend with your Facebook account, access the St. John's web site as well as the Armenian Church Eastern Diocese site for all manner of information and insight for your daily life. There is a new APP for your iPhone or iTouch called "Vemkar" updated daily by the Diocese featuring activities throughout the U.S., blogs, inspirational readings and more. Make the internet work for you in your daily spiritual life!

Are you trained or talented in graphic design, desktop publishing, photography or other computer work? Would you like to share your skills with St. John's? Keep your skills sharp and help with projects as they come up. Contact the Church Office!

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.

Baptisms

July

- 9** Ava Arlene
Daughter of Darrel & Alis Meece
Godparents: Joseph Calmeyn & Arlet Tabakciyan
- 9** Gavin Robert
Son of Darrel & Alis Meece
Godparents: Garo Boyajian & Christine Lavigne
- 10** Bentley Charles
Son of Bradley & Julie Neher
Godparents: Brian Neher & Lisa Palaian

August

- 6** Alexis
Daughter of Steven & Kelly Frost
Godparents: Dale B. Goodson & Erica Vandenberg
- 6** Steven John Frost – Adult
Son of Garry & Perri Frost
Godparents: Dale L. Goodson & Susan Goodson
- 6** Gregory Sarkis Krikorian
Son of Sarkis & Hiba Krikor
Godparents: Avak & Eda Habring
- 7** Cameron Aris Anton Michael
Son of Michael & Maureen Yessian
Godparents: Jason Fisher & Margaret Yessian
- 7** Trinity Aznif Marie
Daughter of Edward & Shannon Altounian
Godparents: Raymond Bidini & Linda Laney
- 11** Grace Ann
Daughter of Thomas & Karyl Smith
Godparents: John & Laura Shakarjian Jr.
- 13** Inna Mirzoyan - Adult
Daughter of Garry & Larysa Mirzoyan
Godparents: Dickran & Anahit Toumajan

Weddings

July

- 25** Steven Charles Frassetto & Rachel Rose Dakhlian
Khachyeghpayr: Steve Dakhlian
Bestman: James Frassetto
Maid of Honor: Nicole Dakhlian

August

- 19** David Solomon Posigian & Anna Taleen Merigian
Bestman: Charles Alexander Posigian
Maid of Honor: Kathryn Sparks
- 20** Shant Misak Atikian & Talar Elizabeth Sagherian
Bestman: Stan Patterson
Maid of Honor: Sevan Sagherian
- 27** James Andrew Hutter & Nora Mely Sanjian
Bestman: Kevin Kojian
Maid of Honor: Deborah Moore

Funerals

July

- 7** Helen Sahakian, 85, Woodlawn
- 8** Anna Kurjian, 90, Sherman Cemetery
- 14** Michael M. Kaysserian, 83, Woodlawn
- 20** Anne Tarpinian, 81, Woodlawn

August

- 18** Mary Ann Nersessian, 71, Woodlawn



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**Kroger Community Rewards Program:
An Update**

During the last quarter,
16 participants donated
\$135.81
to St. John's, and it is much appreciated!
For information about how to participate
and benefit St. John's got to:
krogercommunityrewards.com

*You too can be a
Torchbearer Sponsor!*

CONTACT MAY KAFAFIAN
AT THE CHURCH OFFICE
248.569.3405

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 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.com

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.....

September

- 5 Labor Day – Complex closed
8 Feast of the Nativity of the Holy Mother-of-God
11 **Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**
Church School Opens
Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
16 Kef Klub Dinner & Presentation, Recreation Center
Traditional Armenian Dinner prepared
by Garri Mazmanian of Allegro Restaurant, 6:00 pm
Presentation by Michael Guglielmo, Executive Director
of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America
(Eastern)
"From Baku/Sumgait to Detroit and America -
Renewed in Spirit and building a New Life," 7:30 pm
Please phone Church Office, 248.569.3405
for dinner reservations by September 14. (See page 2)

FESTIVAL CALENDAR

- 17 Health Fair, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm
18 Celebratory Tea, following Divine Liturgy
(Details coming soon to your home in the mail)
Get Your Family Portrait!
21 Museum, Sanctuary Tour & Lunch, 10:00 am-2:00 pm
22 Opening Night Dinner/Fine Arts Preview, 5:30-10:00 pm
23 Festival General Festivities Open, 5:30 pm
24 Festival General Festivities, 5:30 pm
Kids Apple Fest Lunch & Games; Casino Night
25 Festival General Festivities, 12:30 - 6:00 pm
Petting Zoo & Horseback Rides, 1:00-4:00 pm
(Detailed schedule coming in the mail!)

- 25 Feast of the Holy Cross of Varak
28 Afternoon Bible Study, 12:00-2:00 pm

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

Dates in bold are Tabernacle Feasts.

Moms and Manooogs

- play group meets once or twice a month. For dates,
contact Kristen Gustafson: 248.765.0471

October

- 2 Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
21 Kef Klub, 6:00 pm
22 "Detroit Kef Time!" - A Musical Celebration of
the 80th Anniversary of St. John Armenian Church
sponsored by the Men's Society & Women's Guild
Featuring Hachig Kazarian & Richard Hagopian,
7:30 pm-1:00 am (See enclosed flyer)
For tickets/info, contact Isabelle Vahratian, 248.890.2185
23 Feast of the Discovery of the Holy Cross
26 Afternoon Bible Study, 12:00-2:00 pm

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION.....

Haiganoush Mengushian/ Gloria and Robert Ajemian Foundation St. John Armenian Church School Scholarship Established

We are pleased to announce that beginning with the 2011-12 academic year, the Church School of St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit will annually offer a scholarship to a college bound senior who successfully completes and graduates from the St. John's Church School Christian education program. The award will be announced on the day of graduation.

Robert Ajemian, a pious servant of the Lord and faithful parishioner of St. John Armenian Church, was passionate about Christian education during his lifetime, and saw the need to foster and support the education of our Armenian youth. Following his death we were informed that he had named the St. John Armenian Church School for a bequest to establish a scholarship. It is to be awarded annually to a graduating student from the Church School for college expenses. In accord with the wishes of his will, a seven-member scholarship selection committee comprised of St. John's parish members was organized by the Pastor, Fr. Garabed Kochakian, in order to construct the process of application and eligibility requirements for students. For more details about eligibility and requirements, please contact the Church School Superintendent Mrs. Alberta Godoshian at (248) 476-4638.

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