

**Vartanantz**

**Battle of Avarayr**



Battle of Avarayr (Armenian: Ավարայրի ճակատամարտ, May 26, 451, also known as Battle of Vartanantz) is remembered by Armenians as probably the greatest battle in their history. It was fought on the Avarayr Field in Vaspurakan between the Armenian rebels under Saint Vartan and their Sassanid overlords. It was a Persian victory.

Before the Sassanid conquest of Armenia, Armenia had been the first nation to accept Christianity as their religion (301 AD). The Armenians accepted the Persian mandate in all respects providing that their freedom to practice Christianity remained intact. Some of the Sassanid kings refused this idea including Yazdegerd II due to its contradiction to the fundamental idea behind the dynasty itself which (first introduced by founder of Empire Ardashir I) was the central authority enforced by the state religion, Zoroastrianism and also pressure from Zoroastrian Magi. Yazdegerd II then tried to tie Armenia more closely to its empire, by rooting out Christian faith and replacing it with Zoroastrianism, following the policy, he summoned leading Armenian nobles to Ctesiphon and forced them to convert to Zoroastrianism.

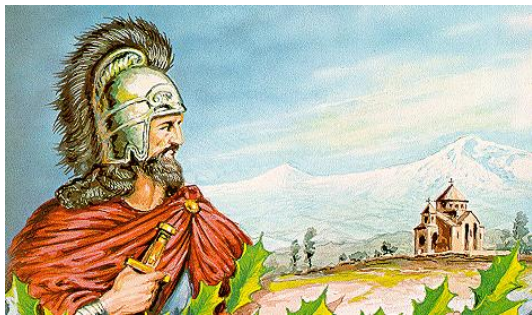
When the news about the nobles renouncing Christianity reached Armenia, a mass revolt broke out. On their return home, the nobles, led by Vartan Mamikonian, joined the rebels. Upon hearing the news of rebellion Yazgerd gathered a massive army and attacked Armenian rebels. Armenians asked the Christian Byzantine Empire for support, as Vartan had good relations with Theodosius II who had given him the rank of general. He sent a delegation to Constantinople for help but help never arrived in time because the war effort against Attila the Hun had drained the treasury and his earlier defeat and subsequent peace treaty with Yazdegerd.

The 66,000-strong Armenian army took the Holy Communion before the battle. The Persian army, said to be four times larger, featured war elephants. A terrible bloodshed ensued, and Vartan along with eight of his generals perished in the battle. During the battle a number of Armenian generals and nobility including Vasag Suni defected to the Persians.

Following the victory, Yazdegerd jailed some Armenian priests and nobles and appointed a new governor for Armenia. Although the Persians eventually subdued the rebellion, they had to revise their plans for persecution of Christians, and Yazdegerd finally granted general amnesty and allowed construction of new churches. Consequently, the battle has been viewed by the

Armenians as their moral victory. This day is considered Holy Day by Armenians and is one of the most important national and religious days in Armenia. Another important consequence of the battle was that the Armenian Church was unable to send a delegation to the Council of Chalcedon as they were very involved in the war effort.

Vartanantz is one of the most popular feast days for Armenians. It is filled with both religious and nationalistic symbolisms of conscience, faith, and resolve to preserve identity and freedom of religion. It is commemorated each year on the Thursday prior to Poon Paregentan and the beginning of Lent.



Vartan Mamikonian Commander-in-chief of the Armenian forces, 451 AD.

**Friends and Family News – Mary Negosian**

Birthdays:

- |                                     |                                    |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| George Balakian (95 <sup>th</sup> ) | Alma Krikorian (90 <sup>th</sup> ) |
| Kay Vartanian (103 <sup>rd</sup> )  | Mary Negosian (84 <sup>th</sup> )  |

## **Don't Forget ... - Judy Cristiano**

.... Monday, February 6 & 20, 7-8:30pm Bible  
Study

.... Thursday, February 16, 7-8:30pm Catechism

.... Thursday, February 23, Vartanantz



15775 Middlebelt Rd,  
Livonia Michigan 48154  
Phone: 1-734-522-5780  
Manoogianmanor.com

There will be no presentations during January and  
February.

UPTOWN  
CATERING  
2038 Cass Lake Road  
Keego Harbor, Mi 48320  
Phone: 248.681.9092  
Cater here at St. John's  
Or at your place

### *Thought for the month*

*The first ever cordless phone  
was created by God.*

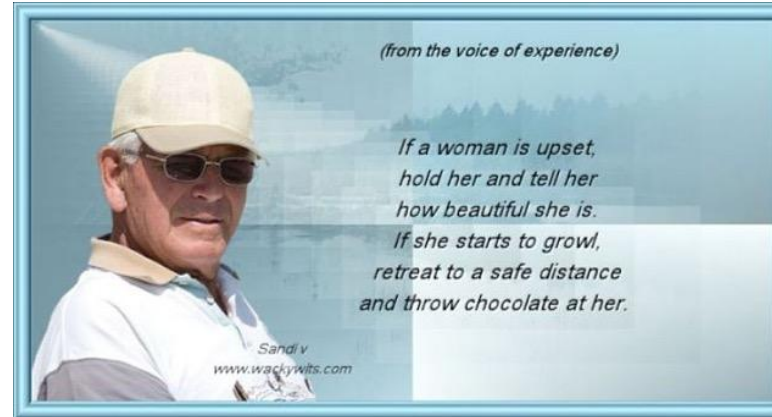
*He named it "Prayer".*

*It never loses its signal  
and you never have to recharge it.*

*Use it anywhere.*

*And let us not forget the generosity of the Mardigian family  
in subsidizing our luncheons.*

### **"Monthly Humor" – Dan Cristiano**

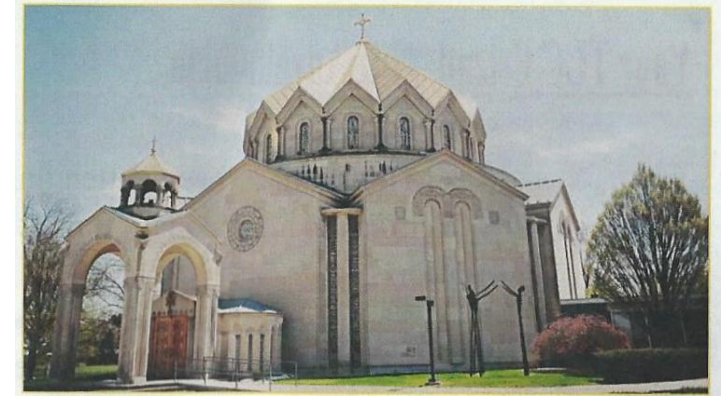


This morning I was sitting on a park bench next to  
a homeless man. I started a conversation by asking  
him how he ended up this way.

He said, "Up until last week, I still had it all. I had  
plenty to eat, my clothes were washed and  
pressed, I had a roof over my head, I had TV and  
Internet, and I went to the gym, the pool, and the  
library. I was working on my MBA on-line. I had  
no bills and no debt. I even had full medical  
coverage."

I felt sorry for him, so I asked, "What happened?  
Drugs? Alcohol? Divorce?"

"Oh no, nothing like that," he said. "No, no. I just  
got out of prison."



*St. John Armenian Church*

## *Tuesday Lunch Club*



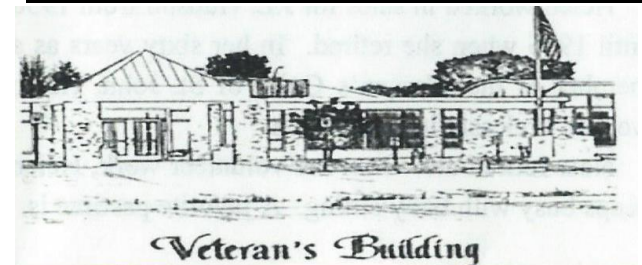
***News***

February 2017

### **Join us for lunch on Tuesdays**

We always have a great meal and a good time  
with old friends. Come as you are and enjoy the  
camaraderie with old friends and new acquaintances.

### **Every Tuesday in the Veterans Building**



*Veteran's Building*