



Inside this Issue

Primate's Easter
Message (English) 1

Easter Message (Arm.) 3

Community Events 5

Armenian School Update 6

Arch. Yeghishe Gizirian 12

Past Events 14

Parish Directory 15

Upcoming Events 16

FEAST OF THE GLORIOUS RESURRECTION
OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Ordinary Saints

Peter was sitting in the outdoor courtyard when a maid came up to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before everyone, saying, "I don't know what you mean." ... After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them: your accent betrays you." Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man!" Immediately the cock crowed—and Peter remembered the saying of Jesus: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." He went outside, and wept bitterly. (MATTHEW 26:69-75)



promised to share in that victory. But to read the gospels, one is struck by the aura of failure that overhangs the figures in the resurrection story. Consider the situation of the disciple Peter. In a supreme moment of decision, he denies even knowing Jesus, the teacher he has followed for three years. It's a failure of discipleship—and worse, of friendship. Yet Peter is clearly not a venal or evil man; in many ways he merely does what anyone else would do in the same situation. Peter's failure merely proves how ordinary he is.

EASTER IS OUR GREAT STORY OF VICTORY, our assurance of triumph. In the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's love for mankind won the contest against man's age-old enemies, Sin and Death. The faithful are

The all-too-ordinary disciple has plenty of company in the Easter story. Along with Peter's denial, we witness the tearful despair of Mary Magdalene outside the tomb; the discouragement of the disciples on the road to Emmaus; the skepticism of Thomas; the terror of the main body of disciples hiding out in the upper room. We are tempted to ask: *What*

Feast of the Glorious Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ

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The all-too-ordinary disciple has plenty of company in the Easter story. Along with Peter's denial, we witness the tearful despair of Mary Magdalene outside the tomb; the discouragement of the disciples on the road to Emmaus; the skepticism of Thomas; the terror of the main body of disciples hiding out in the upper room. We are tempted to ask: *What are these stories doing in the Gospel at all?*

Scripture offers no direct answer to this question; but it does lead us to an observation. The great Easter message of hope, redemption, and new life was Christ's gift to the world. But to carry it forward *into* the world, Jesus entrusted his gift to messengers like these: the flawed and fearful, the discouraged and doubtful. Ordinary people, whose only distinction was that they had borne witness to something beyond understanding.

How remarkable it is to realize that these were the earliest Christian saints! For eventually, Peter and the rest became martyrs for Christ. They were individuals of no special distinction. But in light of our Lord's resurrection they found the inner strength to stand with him, and not to deny him, in the end. "Saint" is the name we give to such people.

Sainthood has been a subject of renewed interest in the Armenian Church lately. In the month following Easter, we will mark the anniversary of the canonization of the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide: the first Armenian saints to have been acknowledged in hundreds of years. The canonization was a great milestone for our nation; but like all weighty moral undertakings, it did not occur

without questions. Good and serious people questioned whether it was possible to acknowledge such a large company of people as saints of the church. Indeed, one can say with certainty that the vast majority of Genocide martyrs—people we now regard as saints—were flawed or otherwise unremarkable in their lives, apart from the circumstances of their sainthood.

But now, after a year of living in the consciousness of these "new" saints, and with Easter again before us, perhaps we can find guidance in the Gospel account of those who witnessed the resurrection.

The saints are indeed ordinary people. But far from being an obstacle to our understanding, the very ordinariness of the saints is what makes them examples—permits them to be *aspirational figures* for us. If they were superhuman beings with seamlessly virtuous lives, we might admire them; but we would have a ready excuse, an alibi, for failing to live up to their example. Realizing that they were ordinary people—*men and women just like us*—places the responsibility to live saintly lives directly on our shoulders.

This is surely one of the great moral revolutions Christianity brought into the world. To the imperial pagan world of Christ's time, heroes were the offspring of gods—an unattainable distinction. The spectacle of heroic suffering—tragedy—was meant to make men tremble, while encouraging them to rest satisfied that, as mortals, they were beneath the notice of the careless pagan divinities.

Contrast this with the Christian saints, who have arisen from every station of life, and often are not even recognized as special until some moment of crisis. Their stories are meant to expose the deceit and injustice underlying the world around them—and to disrupt *our own* self-satisfied appraisal of the world around *us*. Their suffering is heroic not because it defies unfeeling gods, but because it imitates the experience of God's Son—who lived, felt and suffered alongside his children, out of love for them.

The miracle of Easter is the gift that all the saints embraced. However ordinary their lives may have been, carrying Christ's resurrection in their hearts



The Feast of Holy Nativity and Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Blessing of Water Service

The Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ was celebrated on January 6th. The morning service began with Matins – singing of Armenian Christmas Hymns followed by Christmas Badarak. The Blessing of Water Service was held with Nicholas Cehreci serving as the “Godfather of the Cross.” A Christmas lunch “Agape Meal” was held in the hall after the services.



traditional hymns were followed by Holy Badarak. The Blessing of Water Service was held with Sunday School student Armen Wood serving as “Godfather of the Cross.” The Divine Liturgy was followed by the annual Christmas Communion Brunch prepared by the Women’s Guild. This year the brunch was sponsored by the Wood and Devejian families, in honor of Armen Wood. An informative video was shown about the process of how Holy Water is consecrated and shared throughout the world.



LENTEN FRIDAY SERIES

Dn. Narek Garabedian

“Clinical Pastoral Education & Hospital Chaplaincy”

On Friday 12, 2016, on the first Lenten Friday dinner following the evening prayer service, Dn. Narek Garabedian, St. Nersess Armenian Seminary graduate student, gave a lecture on “Clinical Pastoral Education & Hospital Chaplaincy”. He shared the valuable experience he gained working with hospital patients, learning how to listen and attend to patients more effectively, how to engage patients and their loved ones and how to pay attention and respond to both verbal and non-verbal communications. His personal examples enhanced the presentation.

Our appreciation to the St. Gregory’s Choir members for hosting and sponsoring the Lenten Dinner.

Diron Jebejian & Andrea Montalbano

“The girls of Armenia Leadership Soccer (GOALS)”



On February 26, during the second Lenten Friday dinner following the evening prayer service, St. Gregory Armenian Church community hosted Diron Jebejian (a board member of Children of Armenia Fund (COAF)) and his wife Andrea Montalbano (journalist, coach, author and member of the Harvard University Varsity Club Hall of Fame). The couple delivered a PowerPoint presentation on “The girls of Armenia Leadership Soccer (GOALS)”. In the partnership with COAF and the U.S. Embassy of Armenia they have launched a new project aimed at empowering young women across Armenia by promoting health, life and leadership skills through their participation in an all-female soccer league. Diron and Andrea shared their experience working in Armenia

with young female soccer players and future projects that create a physical and psychological space in which young Armenian generation can act as the vehicles of positive change in their communities. Meanwhile, St. Gregory Armenian Community members decided to join Andrea's initiative to prepare 40 backpacks for the young female soccer players as a sign of encouragement.

We thank the Armenian and Sunday Schools students, parents and teachers for all their help in preparation for Friday Lenten dinner and for the support they showed to GOALS.





Dear Father Mesrob and your constituents at St. Gregory the Enlightener Armenian Apostolic Church of White Plains, NY.

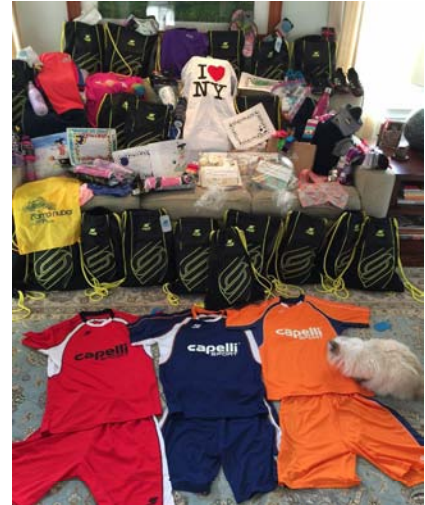
We, at GOALS, would like to say thank you so much for your kind donations of care packages. The thoughtfulness that went into creating all of the packages and your eagerness to help our project here in Armenia means so much to us and our girls.

Many of the girls who participate in our leagues and who will participate in the first ever GOALS summer camps are from rural villages in Armenia with few resources available to them. Our project and your donations will allow them to more comfortably participate in our camp, not only due to the gifts inside the packages but because of the support you are giving them in their endeavor as a soccer player here in Armenia.

We cannot wait to distribute all the packages this summer at our camps! Thank you so much for everything.

Sincerely,

Victoria Dokken & Zach Theiler, GOALS Founders



Rev. Fr. Arshen Ayvazian “Confession and Penance”

On March 11, Rev. Fr. Arshen Ayvazian gave an informative and inspiring lecture entitled “Confession and Penance” during the Third Lenten Friday, generously hosted by the Women’s Guild.

Fr. Arshen conducted an interactive and dynamic lecture concentrating on the original historical format of the confession, the changes it underwent in the course of history and how today it applies to our lives. The evening came to end with candid thoughts and comments by Fr. Ayvazian and attendees.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER

The Great Lenten season ended with the culmination of Palm Sunday followed by the Holy Week, during which the community of St. Gregory participated in an inspiring journey, telling the story of the Holy Week through scripture readings, hymns and prayers.

The celebration of our Lord’s glorious resurrection started on Easter eve with a solemn Candlelight Liturgy (Jrakalouytzee Badarak). Following the Divine Liturgy the assembled faithful greeted each other with the good news of Christ’s resurrection and performed the Home Blessing service in the atrium and took lit candles to their homes, symbolizing the Light that Christ brought into the world. On Sunday, March 27, the St. Gregory community along with all Armenians celebrated the joy of the Resurrection and the promise of salvation of Christ brought to humanity. Armenian Christians around the world exchange the Easter greeting: “*Krisdos haryav ee merelotz! Orhnyal eh harootiunun Krisdosee!* Christ is risen from the dead! Blessed is the resurrection of Christ!”

COMMUNITY EVENTS



PALM SUNDAY



Maundy Thursday



Syrian-Armenian Relief Fundraiser

During the months of December-February St. Gregory the Enlightener Armenian Church has been actively involved in saving Armenian lives by standing with our Armenian brothers and sisters in Syria and supporting the Syrian Armenian Relief Fund. Within this framework on Sunday, February 14, 2016 Mary Yaralian delivered a PowerPoint presentation on the plight of the Armenians in Syria. Ms. Mary Yaralian touched upon the past and present of the Syrian-Armenians, particularly the Armenian community of Aleppo and the importance of supporting Armenian families in Syria. Members and supporters of St. Gregory Armenian Community stressed the importance of this appeal and made donations in support of humanitarian assistance in Syria.

During these three months we have collected about \$12,000 which will be directed to Holy Etchmiadzin to benefit Syrian-Armenians who still live in Syria (Aleppo, Damascus) and those who moved to Armenia. We express our heartfelt gratefulness for all generous contributions.

Presentation of Our Lord to the temple - Blessing of the Children

On Sunday, February 14, 2016, in Commemoration of Christ's first solemn presentation in the House of God, special Blessing of the Children service took place by Der Mesrob at the end of Badarak. It was a beautiful celebration and a moment filled with love and deep meaning, encouraging and inspiring children toward future success.

43rd Annual Parish Assembly

43rd Annual Parish Assembly was held on February 28, 2016. During the assembly, all the organizations of St. Gregory gave their reports on the accomplishments of the preceding year. The nomination committee presented the candidates to be elected for the Parish Council, after which the elections took place. As a result Ann Daw, Christ Bonfiglio, and Ellie Krolian were reelected and Gayane Hambartsumian, Gayane Manukian, and Fram Cehreti were elected as new members of the Parish Council.

We "bid farewell" to Greg Sahagian, Sylvia Kruizenga, and Hagop Meneshian who have completed their terms on Parish Council

The Cultural Committee hosted Lucine Amara



On Sunday, March 13, 2016, the Cultural Committee of St. Gregory Armenian Church hosted Lucine Amara, 90 year-old, extraordinarily talented, world renowned soprano of Armenian descent. In a talk facilitated by John Wolohojian, the singer shared her life and career experiences with attendees. Everybody greatly enjoyed her presence.

Amara appeared on the stage of globally acclaimed Metropolitan Opera in 882 productions, depicting 56 roles in choice repertoire of international art of opera, which have often been broadcasted by radio and television. Amara is the only singer in the world who has sang at the same opera house for over 40 years, not to count her performances for the television and radio, recordings and participation in films.



ARMENIAN SCHOOL UPDATE

The Armenian Saturday School of St. Gregory the Enlightener started its 2015 academic year with the participation of our teachers at the Armenian Teachers' Symposium hosted by the Diocese's Armenian Studies Department on Saturday, September 12 at the Diocesan Center in New York.



Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian and Armenian Studies coordinator Gilda Kupelian awarded six educators with certificates of

appreciation and sculpture busts of Armenain writer and poet Khachadour Apovian for their 10 years of service. One of our teachers, Yeva Kochyan, was honored amongst them. Yeva was recognized for teaching at St. Gregory the Enlightener Armenian School of White Plains and for her valuable contributions to Armenian



education and culture.

The following months were very busy and productive for the students, teachers and parents at school. Along with its regular Armenian language, conversation, history, music, dance and art classes, the school curriculum was eriched with various events and activities, which once again came to prove the devotion and commitment of our school family.

On October 24, the students celebrated Holy Translators Day (Targmanchats Don), which is dedicated to the creators of the Armenian alphabet Mesrob Mashdots and Sahag Bartev along with the translators and interpreters of the Bible. Through their songs and recitations, the students

paid tribute to Mesrob Mashdots, to the Armenian heritage, alphabet, language and culture.



In the past five months, the school organized a variety of exciting activities and events, including a Thanksgiving lunch with the students and teachers in costumes featuring various heros, animals and fairies; a Christmas party which has always been the most anticipated celebration for the students; and the celebration of the Feast of St. Vartan the Warrior and His Companions. With their recitations, talks and songs the students showed how the Battle of Vardanants became one of the Armenia's first cries of spirit against injustice, danger and evil.

One of the highlights of the year was the Manti Night, an annual fundraising event organized by St. Gregory Armenian School, which took place on Saturday, December 5, 2015. The teachers, students, their families and the whole community enjoyed the night in a very warm and happy environment. Everyone enjoyed the nice music by DJ Robby Stepanian, games, activities and raffles. All the proceeds of the event went to support Syrian-Armenians residing in Armenia.

We are looking forward to a successful spring season, which will culminate in a special graduation ceremony on June 5, 2016 at 1:00 pm.

ՀՈԳԵԼՈՅՍ ԳԵՐՇ. Տ. ԵՂԻՉԷ ՍՐԲ. ԱՐՔ. ԿԻՋԻՐԵԱՆԻ
ՔԱՌԱՍՍՈՒՆՔԻՆ ԱՌԻԹՈՎ

Բազմաթիւ Հայեր, որոնք անձնապէս կը ճանչնային Գերշ. Տ. Եղիշէ Արքեպիսկոպոս Կիզիրեանը, Ամերիկայի մէջ և այլուր, զարմանքով և վրդովմունքով լսեցին անակնկալ վախճանումին լուրը բոլորին կողմէ սիրուած և յարգուած Եղիշէ Արքեպիսկոպոսին: Շատեր, տակաւին երկու ամիս առաջ տեսած և խօսած էին հետը, երբ ամէն ինչ սովորական կը թուէր Արքեպիսկոպոսին հետ և յանկարծ իմացան իր թաղման ցնցիչ լուրը:

Ինչ պատահեցաւ: Մարտ 18-ին, Արքեպիսկոպոսին վախճանումէն հազիւ հինգ շաբաթ առաջ, պէտք ունեցած էր տեսնելու իր բժիշկը, որ զինքը քննելէ յետոյ որոշ տատամսումով յայտնած էր, թէ Արքեպիսկոպոսին մարմնին մէջ տարածուած էր այդ վրդովիչ և չարագուշակ ախտը - «քաղցկեղ» - և թէ բժիշկին գուշակութեամբ հազիւ երկու-երեք ամիս միայն կեանք ունէր: Երբ դարձեալ այցելեցինք իրեն նկատեցինք, որ զարմանալիօրէն կը պահէր իր ստոյիկեան անողորութիւնն ու հանդարտութիւնը:

Միջանկեալ ըսեմ, որ Արքեպիսկոպոս մի քանի տարի Ս. Ներսէս Ընծայարանը բնակեցաւ իբրև հոգեւոր հայր ճեմարանի սաներուն, որոնք խոր յարգանքով և ջերմ սիրով ընդունած էին զինքը:

Առաջնորդ Արքեպիսկոպոսին Հօր յանձնարարութեամբ և ճեմարանի տեսչին ու իր օգնականի կարգադրութեամբ Եղիշէ Արքեպիսկոպոսը շուտով փոխադրուեցաւ Նիւ Ճըրզիի Էմերսըն քաղաքի Տարեցներու Տունը, ուր Առաջնորդ Արքեպիսկոպոսը և շրջանի հոգեւորական հայրեր այցելեցին իրեն, որ սկսած էր ֆիզիքապէս տկարանալ և արդէն նաև ուտելու ախորժակն ալ տակաւ կը նուազէր: Վախճանումէն երկու շաբաթ առաջ իր հոգեկան կորովն ու կենսունակութիւնը բարձր պահելով խօսեցաւ իր անցեալ կեանքի մասին, թուականներու ճշգրիտ յիշողութեամբ և բաւական զուարթութեամբ:

Յաջորդ շաբաթն իսկ արդէն սկսած էր հիւծիլ, նոյնիսկ առանց օգնութեան անկարող դարձած քալելու և շարժելու: Այդ օրը ըսաւ «Այս հիւանդութիւնը զիս պիտի տանի» և ձեռքը դէպի երկինք բարձրացնելով, կարծես կը ցուցնէր թէ ուր պիտի երթայ:

Քանի մը օր ետք Տարեցներու Տան բուժքոյրը հեռախօսեց յայտնելու, թէ Արքեպիսկոպոս կը թուէր «մեկնելու» և «օրն էր ուրբաթ»: Այդ երեկոյ իր մօտ մնացին Ս. Ներսէս ճեմարանի սաները աղօթալից խնամքով մինչև առաւօտեան ժամը երկուքը, երբ իր հոգին աւանդեց:

Աւագ Երեքշաբթի երեկոյ Տան Կարգին հոգեւոր Սրբազանին դագաղին քով կանգնած Աստուածաշունչի ընթերցում ըրին Ս. Ներսէսի ճեմարանականները: Իսկ յաջորդ օր, Աւագ Չորեքշաբթի առաւօտ Պատարագի ընթացքին ննջեցեալ Արքեպիսկոպոսի դպրեվանքի դպրոցակիցներէն զոյգ մը քահանաներ ուրիշ երկու քահանաներու հետ միասին դագաղին կողքին աղօթք մատուցին:

Գերշ. Տ. Խաժակ Արքեպիսկոպոսին նախագահեց յուղարկւորութեան արարողութեան և պերճախօս դամբանականով մը դրուատեց ննջեցեալ Արքեպիսկոպոսը: Արարողութեան իրենց մասնակցութիւնը բերին Գերշ. Տ. Օշական Ս. Արք. Չոլոյեան և մօտաւորապէս քսան թեմական հոգեւորականներ: Պատարագիչն էր Գանատայի Թեմի Առաջնորդ Գերշ. Տ. Արք. Եպիսկոպոս Յովակիմեան, ներկայացուցիչ Ամենայն Հայոց Կաթողիկոսի: Սուրբ Պատարագի երգեցողութիւնը ձեռնհասօրէն ղեկավարեց Մայեստրօ Խորէն Մեքանեճեան: Յուզիչ էր պահը, երբ Առաջնորդ Արքեպիսկոպոսը Հայրը օժելէն յետոյ Արքեպիսկոպոսին աջն ու ճակատը ծնրադիր համբուրեց և ապա աւանդական սովորութեան համաձայն ներկայ հոգեւորականները ևս նոյն կերպ ողջոյն առին ննջեցեալ Արքեպիսկոպոսին:

Գերշ. Տ. Եղիշէ Արք. Կիզիրեան Մայր Աթոռ Ս. Էջմիածնի երիցագոյն միաբաններէն մին էր, որ իր

անսակարկ և որակաւոր ծառայութիւնը բերած էր 70 տարիներու ընթացքին Ամերիկայի Արեւելեան Թեմէն ներս, 7 եկեղեցիներու իբրև հովիւ, ինչպէս նաև Գանատայի մէջ, ապա ծառայած էր Անգլիոյ Թեմին իբրև Առաջնորդ և Հայրապետական Պատուիրակ մօտ 20 տարի: Սրբազանը ամենքէն սիրուած և յարգուած էր իր բարեհամբոյր և հեզ բնաւորութեամբ, եռանդուն և կայտառ տրամադրութեամբ, իր ոգեշնչիչ քարոզներով ու պատգամներով, պարտականութեան խոր գիտակցութեամբ իր գոռ ձայնով, մտերիմ բարեկամութեամբ և հայրական ջերմ գուրգուրանքով հանդէպ բոլորին: Տիպար հոգեւորական մը, որուն կեանքը դարձաւ աղբիւր՝ օրինակի և ներշնչումի հոգեւորականաց և ընծայացուներու:

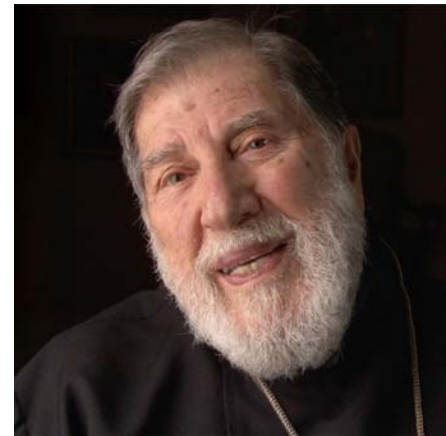
«Յիշատակն արդարոց օրհնութեամբ եղիցի»:

Գ. Ք. ԳԱՍՊԱՐԵԱՆ

ARCHBISHOP YEGHISHE GIZIRIAN OF BLESSED MEMORY 1926-2016

"Behold a man in whom there is no guile."

The unexpected passing of **His Eminence Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian** just before the Holy Week of 2016, despite his advanced and highly accomplished age, was truly shocking to so many souls, especially to those who knew him for decades. The Archbishop was 90. Born in Damascus, studied at the Seminary of the Cilician Catholicosate in Antelias, and upon graduation, ordained a celibate priest in 1947 by the Dean of the Seminary Bishop Terenig Poladian. As a student and an ordained deacon in 1944, the late Archbishop Yeghishe was blessed by the **Eminent Catholicos Karekin I Hovsepian of the Geat House of Cilicia**, when attending the Pontifical Consecration of the Catholicos in 1945.



We realize that Jesus recognized his disciples' identity before calling them, as he obviously did in the case with Nathanael (Bartholomew) who preached Christ in Armenia. When Nathanael was approaching Jesus, Jesus said, *"behold a man in whom is no guile."* Nathanael said to him, *"how do you know me?"* Jesus answered him *"before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you"* (John 1:45-



50). I will not hesitate to borrow this dominical identification and apply to our beloved Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian, whose service to the Armenian Church was pure and sincere, a man in whom there was no guile. I called Archbishop Gizirian one week before his untimely passing, while recuperating at the Emerson Armenian Home for the Aged in New Jersey. He responded at once on his cellphone, sounding no different than usual, to tell me that he was previously hospitalized, and was expecting to recover and leave Emerson. Unfortunately, just before Palm Sunday, he entered his eternal rest peacefully in his sleep, leaving behind grief and sorrow, after offering gracefully and abundantly all of his spiritual and most honorable and joyful gifts to so many for so many decades since 1951, both in America and the Great Britain. He was admitted to join the clergy of the Eastern Diocese the same year under Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan, Primate.

In 1982, His Eminence was invited by **His Holiness Vasken I, Catholicos of All Armenians**, to assume the office of the Primate of Great Britain, following his episcopal ordination in Holy Etchmiadzin on February 14. He served the Diocese in London for 18 years and, upon retirement, returned to New York and helped the seminarians at St. Nersess Theological Seminary as their Spiritual Father for the next 15 years.

My acquaintance with the late Archbishop Gizirian goes back 66 years, when in 1949 I entered the Seminary in Antelias and was admitted as a third year seminarian. The newly ordained Very Reverend Father Yeghishe Gizirian was among our teachers, as he taught us history of the Armenian Church and Liturgy. Later, in 1962, I also arrived in the United States to serve in the Eastern Diocese, and Father Gizirian was the caring priest who welcomed me in his Worcester parish where he was serving at the time.

Modesty and sincerity were the highlights of His Eminence, along with his penetrating sermons that he delivered eloquently. He was an avid reader of books and appreciating those who provided them on Armenian Christianity, religion and culture. The last time I met Yeghishe Srpazan was at the St. Nersess Seminary in New York where I was invited to lecture. He was there, my teacher, to hear the presentation of his junior brother. On my return, as always, he sent me a brief letter of praise and appreciation. He praised others from the height of his noble and sincere person, without expecting any such praise in return.

His service in the Eastern Diocese as a pastor has proven phenomenal, reaching parishes far and near, small and large, wherever his service was needed. Upon his recommendation I succeeded him to serve at St. Sahag and St. Mesrob parish in Pennsylvania, before leaving for England, during which Archbishop Gizirian paid visits to our home to see my elderly father and be the guest of Diramyre. Years later, when my parents passed away, he was there to preside over their funerals.

The longest living member among the former members of the Catholicosate of Cilicia, Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian, silently and yet with firm conviction, stood in defense of the supremacy of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, preaching and advocating unequivocally the true and administrative unity of the Armenian Church under one supreme leadership in the person of the Catholicos of All Armenians. Above all, the late Archbishop committed himself to the Lord Jesus Christ for all the gifts he had received from above that enriched his ministry on earth. Seldom, if ever, we could hear complaint or anger for any reason uttered by this good shepherd, since everything was a challenge for him. This was recently verified by the personal video interview that we watched full of genuine and most satisfying experience administered to the Armenian Church and our Diocese.

The tribute given during the Archbishop's funeral was most deserving. The last rites of Holy Unction, special for the clergy, took place following the Divine Liturgy at St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral in New York, offered by Bishop Apkhar Hovagimian, Primate of the Armenian Diocese of Canada. The presiding Archbishop was His Eminence Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Eastern Diocese who delivered a moving eulogy. It was during the Holy Week, on Wednesday, and the Primate expressed the wish of the late Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian to be present at the celebration on Easter Sunday at the Cathedral. Unfortunately Wednesday preceded Easter Sunday and, as the Primate put it, "if not here, we are confident the late Archbishop will celebrate the Holy Resurrection with Our Father in heaven".

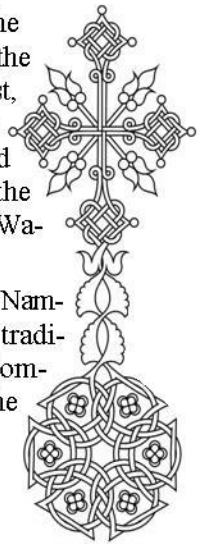
There is no doubt that the annals of the Eastern Diocese of North America will perpetuate the good memory of our beloved Archbishop of the Blessed Memory as lasting reminder, a voice and a presence to our future clergy generation.

Fr. Zaven Arzoumanian, Printed in St. Nersess newsletter

January

January 5, Saturday-January 6, Sunday - St. Gregory Armenian Church celebrated the Holy Birth (*Sourp Dznount*) of Jesus Christ on January 6. On the eve of the Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the *Jrakalouyts* Divine Liturgy (the lighting of the candles service) was celebrated in honor of the manifestation of Jesus as the Son of God (theophany). On the following day, the mystery of our Lord's baptism in the River of Jordan was remembered during the ceremony of the "Blessing of Water" (*Jurorhnek*).

January 10, Sunday - Christmas Brunch - Hosted by Women's Guild - The Feast of the Naming of Our Lord Jesus Christ was held on January 10th. Matins singing of traditional hymns were followed by Holy Badarak. Afterward, ST. Gregory Community enjoyed the annual Christmas Communion Brunch prepared by the Women's Guild and an informative video on Holy Water history.



February

February 5, Friday - Men's Club Dinner

February 12, Friday - During the First Lenten Friday evening the St. Gregory Armenian Community enjoyed a lecture on "Clinical Pastoral Education & Hospital Chaplaincy" delivered by Dn. Narek Garabedian, a student at the St. Nerses Armenian Seminary.

February 14, Sunday - Urgent Appeal for Syrian-Armenian, Mary Yaralian delivered a Power Point presentation on the plight of the Armenians in Syria. In Commemoration of Christ's first solemn presentation in the House of God, special Blessing of the Children service took place by Der Mesrob at the end of Badarak.

February 26, Friday - During the Second Lenten Friday evening the St. Gregory Armenian Church hosted Diron Jebejian and his wife, Andrea Montalbano. The couple presented recently launched project aimed at empowering young women across Armenia by promoting health, life and leadership skills through their participation in an all-female soccer league.

February 28, Sunday - 43rd Annual Parish Assembly was held after Soorp Badarak. St. Gregory dues-paying members voted for those candidates who were running for Parish Council. Members reviewed the Assembly reports and participated in a question and answer session.

March

March 11, Friday - Guest speaker, Rev. Fr. Arshen Ayvazian delivered a lecture on "Confession and Penance" during the Third Lenten Friday evening. The Lenten dinner was organized and sponsored by the Women's Guild.

March 13, Sunday - The Cultural Committee of the St. Gregory Armenian Church organized an enjoyable afternoon with Lucine Amara, extraordinarily talented, world renowned soprano of Armenian descent. She shared her life and career experiences with attendees.

March 21-26, Holy week and March 27, Easter Sunday - St. Gregory Enlightener Armenian Church observed Holy Week, March 20 through March 26, with a series of special services, culminating in the Easter Sunday celebration on March 27, 2016.

Parish Council

President	Rev. Fr. Mesrob Hovsepyan (804) 405-9399
Chairman	Ann Daw (914) 528-7845
Vice Chairman	Eleanor Krolian (914) 428-7037
Treasurer	Chris Bonfiglio (914) 741-6220
Asst. Treasurer	Arman Bedonian (914) 747-2521
Recording Secretary	Gayane Hamparsoumian (914) 686-0840
Corresponding Secretary	Maria Stepanian (203) 340-9312
Members:	Mike Pisani (914) 793-4007 Lauren Kayaian (914) 723-7159 Anna Bruno Loshigian (914) 773-5557 Gayane Manoukyan (347) 465-8503 Fram Cehreci (201) 917-3495

Diocesan Delegates

Lisa Kouzoujian
(203) 967-8206
Van Krikorian
(914) 835-5080
Zaven Tachdjian
(914) 934-1551

Parish Organizations

Choir Director	Dn. Mirijohn Givelekian (203) 321-8642
Choir Chairperson	Anoush Givelekian (203) 321-8642
Arm. School Principals	Margrit Hamparsoumian (914) 686-0840 Maria Bedonian (914) 747-2521

Sunday School Superintendents	Tom Daw (914) 528-7845 Alice Leylegian (203) 461-8343
ACYOA Jrs. Chair	Sarah Kayaian (914) 723-7159
ACYOA Srs. Chair	Michael Givelekian (203) 565-9880
Hye Steppers Chair	Avadis Sakalian (914) 737-9129
Women's Guild Chair	Sylvia Kruiuzenga (203) 637-3638
Thrift Shop (a division of Women's Guild)	Annette Bashian (914) 381-4080 Sybil Postian (914) 273-6738
Men's Club Co-Chairs	Chris Bonfiglio (914) 741-6220 Vrej Markarian

Other Church Contacts

Church Secretaries	Zepure Madjarian-Scalise (914) 725-2573 Elise Meneshian-Hingson (203) 249-3339
Librarian	Aida Pisani (914) 793-4007
Culture Committee Chair	John Wolohojian (212) 724-2575
Outreach Committee	Gail Keyishian (845) 855-1484
Stewardship/Membership	Paul Keyishian (845) 855-1484
Property Manager	Hagop Meneshian (203) 637-5361
Facilities Rental	Yn. Dawn Kasparian (914) 632-3024

Sunday Worship Schedule

Matins (Morning Service)	9:45 a.m.
Divine Liturgy	10:15 a.m.
Sunday School	10:30 a.m.

Pastoral Care, home and hospital clergy visits: The pastor is always available and would like to visit homebound and hospitalized parishioners. If you or someone you know is ill or hospitalized and would like to be visited, please call the Church Office at (914) 428-2595. Please note: when asked about your religion at a hospital, patients should list themselves as "Armenian Orthodox" or "Armenian" not "other".

Funerals: Families should make arrangements with the funeral director of their choice, who will contact the Church Office to arrange the funeral service. Generally, St. Gregory coordinates funerals with Ballard-Durand Funeral Home in White Plains, who is familiar with our church traditions. Funerals may not be performed on religious holidays, major feast days, Saturdays after 3:00 p.m., or Sundays.

For Baptism, Weddings and other services: please call the Pastor as soon as possible to set up an appointment to discuss arrangements. *Hokehankisd* services (Requiem services) are held on the first Sunday of the month. Arrangements for the donation of altar flowers and altar candles should be made through the Church office by Wednesday. Please send all pictures, articles and correspondence to: saintgretorychurchwp@gmail.com



UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY

May 22, Sunday - Lecture by Ashley Bozian-Murtha on "Komitas and his impact on the legacy of Armenian music" following the Divine Liturgy.

JUNE

June 5, Sunday - Armenian School End-of-Year program, 1:00 pm.

June 12, Sunday - Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian will celebrate the Divine Liturgy.
Sunday School Graduation following the service.

June 19, Sunday - Guest celebrant: Very Rev. Fr. Simeon Odabashian will celebrate the Divine Liturgy.

June 26, Sunday - Dance Recital by the St. Gregory's dance group following the Divine Liturgy. *Details to follow.*

June 27—July 1 - MER DOON Summer Camp.

JULY

July 3, Sunday - Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord (Vartavar).

AUGUST

August 14, Sunday - Feast of the Assumption of the Holy Mother of God.
Blessing of the Grapes service.