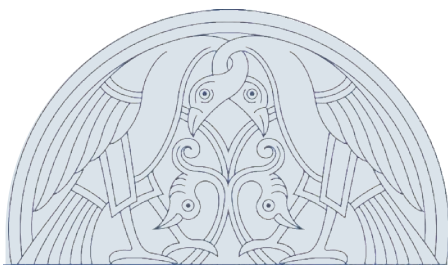


ST. GREGORY THE ENLIGHTENER ARMENIAN CHURCH | 1131 NORTH STREET, WHITE PLAINS, NY 10605 | WWW.STGREGORYWP.COM  
REV. FR. MESROB HOVSEPYAN, PASTOR | Տէր Մեսրոպ Քհնյ. Յովսէփեան, Զոգեւոր Զովի



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## The Message of His Holiness Karekin II Catholicos of All Armenians on the Occasion of the Feast of the Holy Nativity and Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ



*Glory to Your Glorious Nativity and Revelation, O Lord.*

**D**ear faithful,  
Today we perceive the good news of Christ’s Holy Nativity and joyfully give praise to God for his grace of salvation. “We praise Him,” says the Apostle, “who is able to keep us without blemish and blameless and present us before His glory in pure rejoicing” (Jude 1:24).

The angel conveys the good tidings of the Child who was born in the

manger and has come into the world, saying, “to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2.11). Christ was born from the Holy Virgin, filled with the awe of God, adorned with heavenly virtues. The Son of God grew up under the pious familial care of the faithful Holy Mother of the Lord and Saint Joseph, who enduring difficulty and persecution, cared for Infant Jesus, becoming themselves participants in His divine mission through their faithful life.

In the miracle-laden scene of the Holy Nativity, dearly beloved, we see that the path of salvation began with the family. It is from the family that the illumined road — which gives people the ability to become heirs of the Heavenly Kingdom — was borne

## The Message of His Holiness

out of. Indeed, through Christ, we are those adopted by God. Through Christ, God the Creator is our Father, who loves us and renews our life through the hopeful and blessed joy of the Holy Nativity. The proclamation of the Savior's Birth engulfs our souls, fulfils our spiritual life and feelings, and bestows strength and power to remain in God's will, to strengthen the paths of peace, justice, love and solidarity in our life and deeds, as well as to unceasingly praise God and say, "Glory to Your Glorious Birth and Revelation, O Lord."

Beloved faithful, in soul-stirring excitement of the Holy Nativity our prayerful thoughts are also with our faithful brothers and sisters of the great world family, who mark this sacred day in affliction and suffering. Our thoughts are directed toward those places, where human life is continuously troubled by injustice, unquenchable desire for unmitigated power, and greed; where people continue to bear the pain and suffering brought about by poverty, the violation of rights and warfare; where violence often begets violence, hatred begets hatred, and where deception and lies are multiplied by new falsifications.

Emphasizing the importance of the value and fundamental mission of the God-blessed family in our national, state and public life, we proclaim 2019 to be the Year of the Family. We encourage our ecclesiastical and diocesan bodies and clergymen to initiate family centered

assistance projects and events, undertake pilgrimages to the Fatherland and Holy Etchmiadzin, to the dominical and national sacred sites, in order to strengthen in faith, warmly kindle the flame of love toward the homeland and the sacred realization of being a son and a daughter of the nation and the Fatherland.

On this soul-reviving day of the Holy Nativity, we pray and beseech that heavenly graces might multiply upon the earth, and that people might abundantly bear good fruits, love, justice, peace, compassion and mercy, which withstand evil and make path towards the luminous future of humanity.

With prayer to God, we implore that He may keep our people in His all-caring protection and love, and so that He may grant strength and power to build up the new day of their

life and to remain a blessed, dedicated family of Christ, to unceasingly praise with loyal heart and say. "Glory to Your Glorious Birth and Revelation, O Lord."

With such feelings of thanksgiving we joyfully bring the good news to our faithful people around the world and proclaim:

Christ is born and revealed,

To you and us the Good News.

*Excerpt from the sermon of His Holiness on the Feast of the Nativity*

**WE ARE STEWARDS OF ST. GREGORY THE ARMENIAN CHURCH FAMILY**

**We, who are many, are one body in Christ,  
And individually we are members of another. (Rom. 12:5)**



## THE FEAST OF THE NAMING OF OUR LORD

One of the most difficult and important decisions we make when a child is born is choosing a name for her or him. We all have our own principles about how we name our children. Whether we follow a family tradition or fashion, it is neither a simple nor a casual decision: some children are named after famous people or beloved family member. In our culture, very often, children are named after their parents, grandparents, or great grandparents.

In most of the cases our names don't carry much meaning as to who we are, or what we shall become when we grow up. However, the simple truth is names are important to us.

If names are important in today's culture, they were even more so in biblical times. Names used to have meanings. For instance: Adam means earth or from the dust; Abraham means the father of many nations; Isaac means laughter; Rachel named her son Benoni which means son of my sorrow; Jacob changed his name to Benjamin, son of my right hand.

The importance of choosing a name that conveys a certain meaning becomes even more evident when we examine the names that were given to our Lord at different times. There are more than 250 names given to Jesus Christ. In our own Armenian alphabet there is a name for Christ for each letter of the alphabet. All those names and titles for Christ are dual revelations to us. They reveal what Jesus Christ is in himself, and also

what He is to us.

On the eighth day after the Nativity, our church celebrates the feast of the naming of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a day when the name of God was revealed to everybody.

This feast of the Naming of our Lord invites us to share mystically a very special moment from the life of our Lord. On the eighth day of his life, Jesus, like all other little baby boys born to Jewish parents, was circumcised. He was made a child of the covenant, the covenant between the Lord and the Hebrew people, a covenant going back to Abraham. On that occasion, he was formally given a name, as Joseph fulfilled the instruction he received from the angel Gabriel who said: "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

In this sermon I would like to mention only the official names given to our Lord - Jesus and Christ.

### Jesus

Jesus is the very first name we learn from in the New Testament in Matthew 1:1 and is the Lord's God-given name: "And she will bear a son, and **you shall call His name Jesus**, for it is He who will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21)

Actually, to be quite literal, he was named Yeshua in Hebrew, which was, in fact, a rather common Jewish name at the time. There are two ways that the name Yeshua

## The Feast of the Naming of our Lord

has been taken into the English language. One of them ended up in English as 'Jesus.' And the other way the name Yeshua ended up in English as Joshua.

As we know before Jesus there was another person who carried the name Yeshua or Joshua in the Old Testament. He was one of the heroes of Israel, who succeeded Moses. The one who, after the death of Moses, led the people in completing the journey they had begun with Moses, finally entering the Promised Land some forty years after escaping from Egypt. Yeshua means "the Lord saves." Joshua in the Old Testament was a savior. He led his people into the fulfillment of what had been promised to them when they followed Moses out of slavery. When the angel told Joseph what to name that child, he gave the reason that "this child will save his people ..." - but this time not from a tyrant king, but—"from their sins."

### Christ

The name Christ, first mentioned in Matthew 1:1, is the Greek word for *Messiah*. *Christ* means the *anointed One*, the One appointed by God to carry out His eternal purpose. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the One uniquely commissioned

by God to accomplish His will through His crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and second coming. He was the One the prophets prophesied about and whom God's people looked for.

With the feast of the naming of our Lord we learn that the God in whom we place our trust, the God upon whom we set our hope—our hope for a better year this year than the last year; our hope for world peace - the God on whom we set our hope in many other areas is not just any God. He is "the Lord"; we can love Him as **Jesus**—God who came to be our Savior, and as **Emmanuel**—God with us. We can praise Him as **Christ**, God's anointed One who carries out God's purpose, and as **the Word**, the One who perfectly expressed God in everything.

Let us remember that in the Name of Jesus, the Apostles gave strength to the lame and even life to the dead. In the Name of Jesus we obtain every blessing and grace for eternity, for Our Lord said: "Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name He will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete." (John 16:23-24)



### CHRISTMAS HOME BLESSING

**F**rom the earliest times, the home was a sacred place, the center of family and ritual life. It is the most basic of all social structures, where we are born and live many years, a place where great family events transpire. Here we break bread, share joys and sorrows, pray, celebrate, worship. Here God is present in the loving relationships that transcend fragile human existence. Every family is a miniature of a "Little Church—Ecclesia" and in this "Little Church" the inexhaustible love and the very generous blessing of God permeate. According to the sacred traditions of the Armenian Church, God's blessing is asked for homes on different occasions, like on the Nativity and the Resurrection of Christ, as well as on the joyous occasion of moving into a new home.

During the Home Blessing the priest blesses the bread (which symbolically represents the Word of God), the water (which is the most essential element of life and figuratively represents cleanness) and the salt (which seasons and purifies). These three fundamental elements are essential life-giving gifts for human life. In the prayer the priest asks for purity and abundance of the three gifts, blesses the home and all its dwellers, and asks God to keep them away from visible and invisible enemies, and protect them under His powerful right hand, granting them health of soul and body.

Today, more than ever, we need the presence and blessing of the Lord in our homes and lives. The revival of this centuries old custom will certainly bring us close to our Lord.

Schedule your Home Blessing with Der Hayr: direct (804) 405-9399 or email: [fr.mesrob@yahoo.com](mailto:fr.mesrob@yahoo.com).

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Հայ Առաքելական Եկեղեցին Յիսուս Քրիստոսի Ս. Ծննդեան տօնը կը նշէ 6 Յունուարին:

Մինչեւ Դ. դար, բոլոր քրիստոնէաները Ս. Ծնունդը նշած են 6 Յունուարին: Մակայն քրիստոնէութեան ընդունումէն անմիջապէս ետք, հռովմէացիները կը շարունակէին հեթանոսական տօներ նշել: Բանն այն է, որ 25 Դեկտեմբերին մեծ շուքով կը նշուէր արեւի դից Միհրի (Միթրա, Մհեր) պաշտամունքին նուիրուած տօնը: Հեթանոսական աստուծոց յիշատակները խափանելու համար, 336-ին Հռոմի եկեղեցին 25 Դեկտեմբերը պաշտօնապէս կը հռչակէ Յիսուս Քրիստոսի ծննդեան օրը: Հետագային Ասորիքի եւ գրեթէ ամբողջ արեւելքի մէջ Քրիստոսի Ծննդեան տօնի օրը կը փոխադրուի 25 Դեկտեմբերին, իսկ 6 Յունուարը կը մնայ որպէս Տիրոջ Աստուածայայտնութեան եւ Մկրտութեան օրը:

Հնագոյն աստուծութեան եւ աստարանական հաշուարկներուն հաւատարիմ կը մնայ միայն Հայ Առաքելական Ս.Եկեղեցին՝ 6 Յունուարին միասնաբար նշելով Քրիստոսի Ծննդեան եւ Աստուածայայտնութեան տօները:

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Ըստ Հայ եկեղեցւոյ՝ Ս. Ծննդեան նախորդող մէկ շաբաթը պահոց շրջան է: 30 Դեկտեմբերէն մինչեւ 5 Յունուարի գիշերը մարդիկ պահք կը պահեն: Այդ ընթացքին կ'օգտագործուի բացառապէս բուսական ծագում ունեցող սնունդ:

Հայոց հին տոմարին համաձայն՝ Նոր տարին կը նշուէր 1 Նաւասարդին, այսինքն 11 Օգոստոսին, որ չէր զուգադիպէր պահքին: Հետագային՝ տոմարական նոր հաշուարկի ներմուծմամբ, Նոր տարին կը սկսին տօնել 31 Դեկտեմբերին, որ կը զուգադիպի քրիստոնէական մեծագոյն տօնի՝ Ս. Ծննդեան նախընթաց պահքին: Պահեցողները պահոց շրջանէն դուրս կու գան 5 Յունուարի երեկոյեան, երբ եկեղեցւոյ մէջ կը մատուցուի Ս.

Ծննդեան Ճրագալոյցի Ս. Պատարագ եւ կը տրուի Ս. Ծննդեան աստիք: Մարդիկ միմեանց կ'ողջունեն «Քրիստոս Ծնաւ եւ Յայտնեցաւ, ձեզի մեզի մեծ Աւետիս» ըսելով:

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Յատկանշական է, որ Յիսուս Քրիստոսի Ս. Ծննդեան տօնը կը սկսի 5 Յունուարի երեկոյեան, որովհետեւ եկեղեցական օրը կը փոխուի երեկոյեան ժամերգութենէն ետք ժամը 17:00-ին: Ս. Ծնունդը կը սկսինք տօնել 5 Յունուարի երեկոյեան եւ 6 Յունուարին: 5 Յունուարի երեկոյեան բոլոր եկեղեցիներուն մէջ կը մատուցուի Ճրագալոյցի Ս. Պատարագը: Հետաքրքրական է, որ Ճրագալոյցի Ս. Պատարագ տարին ընդամենը երկու անգամ կը մատուցուի՝ Ս. Ծննդեան եւ Ս. Յարութեան տօներուն: Ճրագալոյց կը նշանակէ ճրագ (մոմ) լուցանել, այսինքն՝ վառել: Այդ օրը երեկոյեան մարդիկ եկեղեցւոյ մէջ վառած ճրագները իրենց հետ տուն կը տանին, որ կը խորհրդանշէ աստուածային լոյս, եկեղեցւոյ օրհնութիւն: Ճրագալոյցը կը խորհրդանշէ բերդեղեմեան աստղի լոյսը, որ առաջնորդեց մոզերը դէպի Յիսուս Մանուկը:

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Ս. Ծննդեան տօնակատարութիւններու շարքին կը կատարուի նաեւ Տնօրհնէքի արարողութիւնը: Ս. Ծննդեան եւ Ս. Յարութեան տօներէն ետք, մարդիկ հոգեւորականներ կը հրաւիրեն իրենց տունները կամ աշխատավայրերը՝ տօնի կենսաբար աստիքը եւ աստուածային օրհնութիւնը ստանալու նպատակով: Տնօրհնէք կը կատարուի նաեւ, երբ տան մէջ խաղաղութիւնը կը խախտի կամ կը զգացուի գերբնական ուժերու ներկայութիւնը:

# THE FEAST OF THE RESURECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST



## THE FEAST OF HOLY NATIVITY AND THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST / BLESSING OF WATER SERVICE

### CANDLELIGHT SERVICE - *Jrakalooytz*

**O**n Saturday evening, January 5<sup>th</sup>, the students of Armenian and Sunday Schools read the Scriptures anticipating the birth of Our Lord before the start of the *Jrakalooytzee Badarak*. Congratulations to all the students for a job well done! At the end of *Badarak*, we proclaimed the birth of our Lord—*Krisdos Dznay yev Haydnetsav*.

### HOME BLESSING

Following the Christmas Eve *Badarak*, the faithful followed Fr. Mesrob and a procession of choir members, deacons and altar servers into the church atrium for the traditional home blessing ceremony. After the blessing, the faithful lit candles to take home as a symbol of the *Jrakalooytz*—the light of the birth of our Lord.



Following the services, ACYOA Juniors and Seniors held their Christmas party and gift exchange in the Harry and Edna Keleshian Hall.



## THE GODFATHER OF THE CROSS

**O**n Sunday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, Cody Eskandarian served as the Godfather of the Cross during the Blessing of the Water service. Following the service parishioners congratulated Cody, kissed the cross and took home portions of the blessed water.

Cody, son of Edik and Edna Eskandarian, is one of the talented young members of our community. We are fortunate to have him play organ during the church ser-

vices. Frequently he is a featured performer at various church events. Cody felt very honored when he was told the good news about being the Godfather and was very grateful to have that opportunity. Congratulations to Cody and the Eskandarian Family!

Following the services all the parishioners enjoyed the Communion Breakfast prepared and sponsored by the Women's Guild of St. Gregory.





Parish Council, 2018-2019

## GREETINGS FROM YOUR PARISH COUNCIL

**W**e have begun this new year, the Year of the Family as designated by Catholicos Karekin II with enthusiasm, new ideas and a renewed commitment to building and serving our parish community.

New this year is the introduction of Pot Luck Sundays. On the first Sunday of each month Fellowship Hour will be hosted by one or more of our parishioners. You are invited to bring whatever food and special dishes you might like. A Parish Council member will always be on duty to assist. We thank Dr. Anna Kazanjyan for hosting the first one in March and the Ovanessian family for volunteering for an upcoming Sunday. The sign up board is in the atrium and we look forward to everyone having a chance to participate.

The Parish Assembly was held on Feb 24th. Newly elected members of the Parish Council are Gayane Hovakymian, Nectar Munro and Armen Arsenyan. As we welcome them to their two year term we also say goodbye and thank you to Anthony Picone and Arman Bedonian. A special thank you to Arman for serving as our recording secretary so diligently and for his insights and critical thinking on important issues throughout his

tenure. And we congratulate Lauren Kayaian and Greg Sahagian on their re-elections

Through the diligent efforts of Ann Daw, Zaven Tachdjian and Dennis Krolian a five year contract with the bridge club was finalized this year.

The Parish Council continues to work on developing a security plan for the church.

The Armenian School successfully participated in a fire drill and we are in the planning stages for fire drills for the Sunday school and the entire community. Additional security features will be added to the classroom area to maintain a safer and more secure environment for staff and children. We have formed a Security Committee composed of Tom Daw, Berdj Stepanian and Dennis Krolian. They will be responsible for assessing the need for and implementing security improvements. They will coordinate their efforts with the Parish Council and Der Mesrob.

For the first time our Lenten Dinners have been co-hosted by different organizations partnering to plan a warm evening of good fellowship and delicious Lenten food. Thank you to Lauren Kayaian for this idea of

having our organizations working together in this way.

We also continue to work on maintaining our church grounds and buildings. Significant outdoor work will be undertaken as well as interior maintenance and repair. Our buildings are 20 years old now and the investment in keeping them in good condition will pay off in the long run.

As a reminder well in advance, our church Picnic will be held on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Ann Daw continues to be our point person in making this such a well run event and we thank her tremendously. What we also need is a good team of VOLUN-

TEERS to share the work. Please contact Ann, Greg Sahagian or Ellie Krolian to let us know that you can help.

Please know that every member of the Parish Council is available to you in any way we can be of help. Concerns, complaints or compliments are all equally welcome and of value to us as we do our job. We meet monthly at 7 pm, usually the third Wednesday or Thursday of the month and welcome your presence.

Ellie Krolian

*Parish Council Chair*

## ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

**O**n Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Parish Assembly was held after *Soorp Badarak*. Members reviewed the Assembly reports and participated in a question and answer session. Dues-paying members voted for those candidates who were running for Parish Council.

Two members of our Parish Council, Arman Bedonian and Anthony Picone, completed their six and two year-terms respectively, and stepped down. We express our heartfelt appreciation to both of them for their devoted service to our parish.

Gayane Hovakimian, Nectar Munro, and Armen Arsenyan were elected to serve on Parish Council for the

first time; Greg Sahagian and Lauren Kayaian were reelected to serve for another two-year term. We extend our great appreciation to all our Parish Council members for committing their time and energy for our community.

## ACYOA JUNIORS AND SENIORS EVENT

**T**he ACYOA Juniors and Seniors came together for a fun game of dodgeball hosted by ACYOA Seniors and coordinated by Paul Derderian in the Harry and Edna Keleshian Hall. This was a great event where we all got to bond with each other over a fun game of dodgeball. Teams were mixed together and everyone got to play each other. We also played volleyball together. ACYOA dodgeball was very successful and hope to have more events like this in the future.

### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

**WHO IS A MEMBER?** All parishioners ages 18 and older are eligible to become members at St. Gregory. As a member, you will have a voice and vote at our annual Parish Assembly and you will be able to run for leadership positions.

#### HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER?

- In person: stop by the church office during the week or fill out a membership card on Sunday. The membership forms can be found in the narthex of the church.
- Mail: send in a membership form with your payment
- Phone: call us at 914.428.2595.

#### MEMBERSHIP DUES (by age)

18-25: \$50.00  
 26-69: \$100.00  
 70 and above: \$50.00

**Your membership MAKES A DIFFERENCE!**

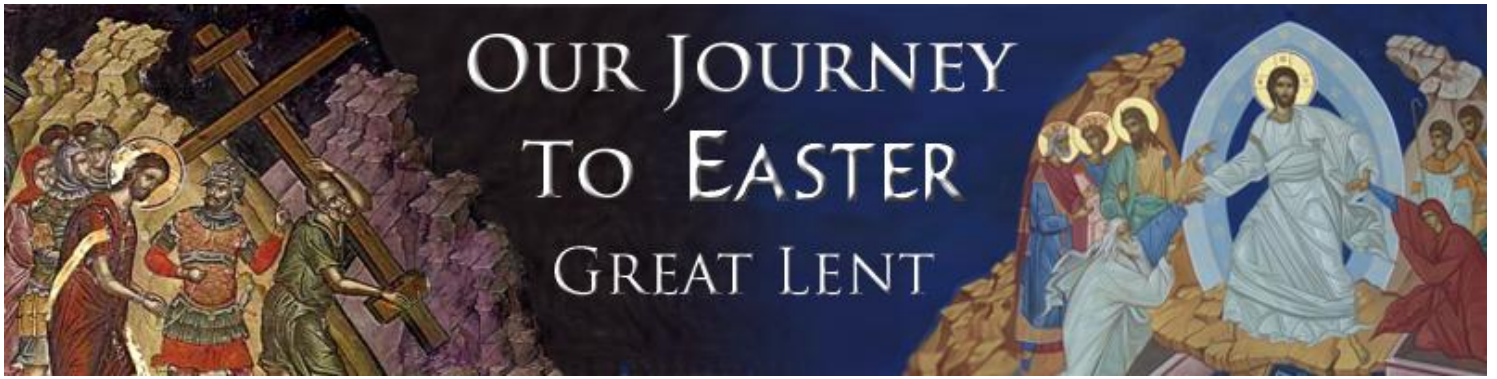
## PILGRIMAGE TO ST. VARTAN CATHEDRAL



On Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, More than 40 parishioners of St. Gregory joined on the pilgrimage to St. Vartan Cathedral. Most of our parishioners travelled together by bus (sponsored by the Parish Council), enjoying each others company to and from the Cathedral.

The pilgrimage was made on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the consecration of St. Vartan Cathedral in the heart of Manhattan. Fr. Mesrob celebrated the Divine Liturgy and delivered the sermon that day. Following the *Badarak* our parishioners joined parishioners of St. Vartan for the fellowship coffee hour hosted by St. Vartan community.





## Lenten Friday Evening Service & Program Coptic Orthodox Church: History and Traditions

On Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, we began the Lenten Friday evening services and presentations. This year the presentations were concentrated on the Oriental Orthodox Churches which are sister churches to the Armenian Orthodox Church.

Following the first Lenten service and dinner, which was hosted by the Sunday School, Choir, New Hall Committee/Dance Troupe, the parishioners viewed a video about the Coptic Orthodox Church. We welcomed Dn. Malak Shafik from Virgin Mary and St. Demaina Coptic Orthodox Church who spoke about the history and theology of the Coptic Church.



## Lenten Friday Evening Service & Program Syriac Orthodox Church: History and Traditions

On Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, following the second Lenten service and Lenten dinner, the parishioners welcomed Dn. Jake Jacob, a student from St. Vladimir's Seminary, who presented the history and theology of the Syriac Orthodox Church. The Lenten dinner was hosted by Armenian School, Culture Committee, Hye Steppers, and Outreach Committee.

## Lenten Friday Evening Service & Program Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church: History and Traditions

On Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, following the third Lenten service and Lenten dinner, the parishioners welcomed Rev. Fr. Givargis (Abu) Koshy who presented the history and traditions of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. The Lenten dinner was hosted by ACYOA Jrs., ACYOA Srs., Women's Guild, and Men's Club.



## FAMILY FUNDRAISER KEF NIGHT



**O**n Saturday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> The St. Gregory Men's Club (SGMC) hosted a Family FUNdraiser KEF Night in St. Gregory's new Harry and Edna Keleshian Hall (HEK). This Super Bowl Eve party was the inaugural, parish-wide event in the beautiful and spacious HEK hall.



The large gymnasium was divided into separate spaces for "kids" of all ages to hang out and play their games of choice....board games, puzzling, basketball, soccer, volleyball and face painting were some of the activities, led by ACYOA Jrs. leader, Emma Daw. She was instrumental in keeping the little ones occupied, so everyone, including the parents enjoyed a fun night out.

Due to the generosity of many local restaurants, friends and faithful parishioners, there was an incredible selection of delicious mezzes, foods, desserts, wine, beer and beverages.

The night was made even better by St. Gregory's own musically talented HYE GUYS, Paul Derderian, Arsen Yelegan, Cody Eskanderian and Timothy Aivazian. Lively KEF night dancing and music filled the hall with high

energy and bright smiles. Check out the photos for proof!

There was standing room only for an official Tavloo Tournament, with dozens of tavloo (backgammon) enthusiasts competing all night for fun and prizes. The tournament was wonderfully organized by Simon Ovanessian. Congratulations to first place prize winner, Aram Kalajian! Second & third place finalists were Hagop Tekeyan & Simon Ovanessian respectively.

Thanks to Chrissie Blonquist, the raffle sales were "through the roof". She single handedly sold over \$600 in tickets! Three prizes were distributed to lucky winners: John Vorperian, John Pisani and Harout Tekranian.

The SGMC can't thank enough the many, many folks who helped by coming together to cook, serve, transport,



set up, clean up and organize this truly fun, family friendly evening. With so much positive feedback on an event enjoyable for all ages, we all look forward to doing it more often.



## ARMENIAN SCHOOL EVENTS

**O**n Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Gregory Armenian School celebrated Poon Paregentan with its annual “Manti Night” dinner which was held at the festively decorated Tutak Hall.

Paregentan is one of the happiest holidays for Armenians. The word Paregentan derives from the two roots – “bari” which means “good” and “gendan” or “gendani” which means “alive” or “living. Paregentan is associated with the arrival of spring, and is celebrated at the end of February or the beginning of March, right before the Great Lent. It is also known as a feast day for eating and

drinking, joyous song and dance, games activities and enjoyment.

The school Parents’ Committee and teachers made every effort to ensure the success of the school’s largest fundraising event. And it was indeed a great success!

The event brought together over 150 people, who not only enjoyed the delicious *manti*, mezzes, homemade desserts, and wine but had great fun dancing and playing various games and activities planned both for children and adults.





## POON PAREGENTAN AND BLESSING OF THE CHILDREN

**O**n March 3<sup>rd</sup>, following the children's sermon, all Sunday School students, children, and youth participated in the Blessing of the Children service on the occasion of *Poon Paregentan*.

As we reflected on the meaning of the day, Good Living (*Paregentan*), we also reflected on the goodness and blessing of our children in the life of St. Gregory family.



# TEA PARTY FOR WOMEN OF THE ST. GREGORY

**S**aturday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019 An afternoon Tea Party for Women of the St. Gregory community was hosted by our Women’s Guild (WG). It was truly a delightful, warm and sunny day in many ways. For this special “Meet & Greet”, the St. Gregory WG Executive Board decorated the Atrium with spring splendor. In addition, each Executive Board member donated toward the delicious Lenten finger food buffet. Every one of the 40 guests left clearly, happy to have been a part of the day. Please open the attached photo collage to see the smiles!

Sylvia Kruiuzenga announced that she is stepping down from the WG Executive Board. Sylvia has been an active participant of the board for over 10 years, most recently serving as Chairperson. Everyone expressed appreciation for her dedication and certainly wish her well with the new endeavors. She promised to remain involved with the Women’s Guild in the future.

The following appointments were made to the Executive Board: Dawn Paplian & Lauren Kayaian will serve as Co-Chairs, Victoria Gurunian & Adrienne Sirinian will join the Executive Board along with current

board members Gladys Tachdjian, Adriane Keleshian Bonfiglio, Rita Kurkjian and Maria Bedonian. Also, this summer, Adriane Keleshian Bonfiglio will take over management of the Women’s Guild Thrift Shoppe when Annette Bashian leaves the position. Sincere congratulations to Annette for a job well done over the past 3+ years. Appreciation was also extended to the volunteer staff lead by Lillian Boyajian, Lucy Krolian, Lucine Haroutunian, Kohar Teknazian and Luisa Balthazar.



The Women’s Guild was happy to make a \$500 donation to St. Nersess Armenian Seminary as part of their “buy-a-brick” garden walk. The brick will be engraved from

“The Women’s Guild of St. Gregory the Enlightener Armenian Church”.

All women of the St. Gregory Parish are cordially invited to join the Women’s Guild.

Annual dues are \$20. Please contact Rita Kurkjian at (914) 522-8860 if you are interested in joining.





## ARMENIAN ADULT LANGUAGE CLASSES



**T**he St. Gregory Armenian language classes for adults successfully resumed on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019 with 15 students. Established over twenty years ago, the classes continued with great enthusiasm, both on the part of the students and instructors. Classes are held on Monday and Tuesday evenings.

Reading, writing and conversation are taught in these classes based on the proficiency levels of beginners, elementary and intermediate. Additionally, there is a segment on Armenian culture, history and religion which meets the interest of the students.

It should be mentioned that in 2017 we initiated a collaboration with AGBU Armenian Virtual College (AVC) which has been giving access to individual students to AVC courses, based on the students' proficiency level.

The instructors of the classes are Rev. Father Karekin Kasparian, Pastor Emeritus of St. Gregory the Enlightener Armenian Church in White Plains, NY and our parishioner Gayane Manukyan, who holds an MA in TEFL from American University of Armenia (AUA).



## ACYOA JUNIORS' LENTEN RETREAT



**O**n Saturday/Sunday, March 30/31<sup>st</sup>, ACYOA Juniors of St. Gregory organized a very successful regional Lenten retreat which was attended by over 45 participants. The theme for this year was “In One Chord: Finding Harmony in an Out-of-Tune World”. Juniors representing St. Gregory the Enlightener, Holy Martyrs of Bayside, NY, St. Leon of Fair Lawn, NJ, Sts. Sahag and Mesrob of Wynnewood, PA parishes learned about spiritual care, emotional well-being and

their relationship with God. The Juniors engaged in a productive Q&A with Der Mesrob and Der Karekin. It was also a great occasion for all the Juniors to come together and share each other’s experiences.

We express our appreciation to Emma Daw - ACYOA Juniors' chairperson, Chris Pahigian - ACYOA Juniors' adviser, all the speakers, parents and volunteers who made this event possible.



## UPDATES FROM SUNDAY SCHOOL

**S**unday School is in full session each week with our dedicated teachers leading discussions about our faith and the Armenian Church. Throughout Lent, we have been discussing the Parables and lessons of each Sunday as we are preparing for Holy Week and Easter Sunday.

We attended Badarak for the Feast of the Annunciation of Mary. We all received Communion and Der Mesrob provided a Children's sermon for us. May takes us to Mother's Day for our annual Plant, Bake, and Craft sale. We will conclude the Sunday School year with graduation, which will be celebrated on Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>.

## KNIT AND CHAT GROUP

**T**he Wednesday "Knit Chat" group has assembled a beautiful collection of hats, scarves, booties and lap blankets which will be hand carried to Armenia in May. Annette Bashian, Mary Sohigian, Gladys Tachdjian and Yn. Dawn together with the originator of the "Hye Hats" project, Carol Der Boghosian of Hart-

ford, have just over 100 colorful, cozy items ready to be delivered. We will share the distribution of their handiwork in the next issue.

Please come join the group on Wednesday's at 10:30 am in the church classrooms if you knit, crochet or would like to learn something new and rewarding.



## CULTURAL COMMITTEE UPDATES

**T**he first quarter for the Cultural Committee was a quiet one focusing more on planning events for the upcoming months. On Sunday February 17<sup>th</sup>, we held our planning meeting to discuss the details and logistics for our upcoming calendar of events which includes Pot Luck Luncheon, movie screening in commemoration of Armenian Genocide and the Lionel Galstaun Memorial Concert.

We also warmly welcomed our parishioners Mary Sohigian and Linda Azarian as the newest members of our Committee.

On March 24<sup>th</sup> we hosted the Sunday Coffee Hour for

the Parish and we would like to thank all our members who participated.

Long time parishioner and Cultural Committee member Alice Basmajian recently relocated to Florida. She graciously donated her piano to the church and the Cultural Committee bought a new piano bench. The Church paid for the moving and tuning costs. The piano will be used for the May 2019 Lionel Galstaun Memorial Concert for the first time.

We send our heartfelt thanks to Alice for giving us a gift which will enrich our musical enjoyment for years to come.

# FRAIJ AND MARIE YAPOUJIAN'S MISSION AND TRIP PRESENTATION

On Sunday, January 13th our parishioners, Fraij and Marie Yapoujian gave a presentation about their mission and trip to Armenia which took place in September 2018. It was a heartwarming and rewarding outreach effort for them, the Brookfield Lion's Club, and the Lion's Club of Armenia. In conjunction with these organizations they found a way to pay forward the good fortune that God has bestowed upon them.

The Lion's Club International is known worldwide for its Kid's Vision Screening program. As Lions, they extended the humanitarian program to the children in our ancestral homeland. They contacted their sister club in Artashat, Armenia led by the Lion's chairperson, Mkrtich Sargsyan, who cheerfully welcomed their plan and enabled them to move forward. In no time, the "why", the "how" and the "when" of their mission took shape.

In August 2018, armed with the Lion's Spot camera, which is capable of immediately screening and diagnosing children's eye conditions, they embarked upon their trip. Within two weeks they visited thirteen schools and social centers, all in rural towns and remote border villages of Armenia. Many of these areas have no medical facilities at all. They screened 1,953 children, 226 of whom were referred to ophthalmologists. They left this portion of the mission in the capable hands of Lion

Mkrtich and his club, with the assurance that all the children will receive their glasses at no expense as part of this program.



By Christmas they were rewarded with countless photos of these children with smiling faces wearing their new glasses. Fraij and Marie are committed to return to Armenia to continue their mission in near future.

Fraij and Marie have already secured over 500 pairs of new eyeglasses and now their goal is to obtain a brand-new Spot camera to train their fellow Lions in Armenia. The camera would remain in Armenia so that they continue the mission at their own pace hoping to screen 3000 children. The cost of the camera, lenses and medical expenses is \$10,000.

Thus far, they have pledges of \$2,500!

If you want to support Lions Fraij and Marie Yapoujian, please speak to Fraij and Marie Yapoujian directly.

You can read about our mission by following this link:

<https://patch.com/connecticut/brookfield/hands-across-sea>



## MARIAM MARKARIAN'S AT METROPOLITAN OPERA

An 11-year old member of our Parish, Mariam Markarian, is a vocal artist who regularly performs at the Metropolitan Opera. In the 2018-2019 season, she auditioned for and was selected to appear in two of Puccini's famous operas – La Boheme and Tosca.

Her journey to the Met Opera started with an audition for the Children's Chorus on April 19, 2017. She was selected for the beginner's class. Under the tutelage of her Maestro, Mr. Piccolo, she learned how to project her voice so that everyone in the audience could hear her. Singers at the Met only use their natural voices - there are no microphones!

In a few months, she was promoted to the Intermediate class. A month later, she was promoted to the advanced class. Fast forward a few more months and she started to practice parts for the operas. The operatic parts were in French, Italian, and Latin. She learned by listening and repeating during the class only and had to practice all the parts for all the Operas.

In August 2018, Mariam auditioned for the 2018-2019 season and was selected to appear in La Boheme and Tosca.

Mariam has learned a great deal during her journey at the Met Opera, and not all of it had to do with singing and performing. She has learned that no one can succeed on their own, no matter how talented they are. We all need

the support and encouragement of those around us. It's always good to dream big and always take the next step! One never feels ready but if you just take the first step and then the next step, and keep going, one day you will find yourself performing on the stage of your dreams!

One always has to work hard and smart, and practice, practice, practice! Albert Einstein was

right when he said: Genius is 1 percent talent, and 99 percent hard work. It took Mariam hundreds of hours of practice to get to her first performance, and it will take her many hundreds of hours more to get bigger roles. The same is true for studies – be it learning math, learning science, or a foreign language.



Mariam Markarian (second from right) with her mother and the crew

**In our next newsletter you will get to meet our talented Ortiz twins.**

**Feel free to submit an article highlighting a parishioner we should know about.**



# YEAR OF FAMILY

# 2019

## 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARIES OF KOMITAS AND HOVHANNES TUMANYAN



The 39<sup>th</sup> session of the UNESCO General Conference being held in Paris has adopted a decision to include the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of Komitas and Hovhannes Tumanyan in the UNESCO Calendar of anniversaries of eminent personalities and important events for the 2018-2019 cycle.

The nominations submitted by the Republic of Armenia – the "150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Soghomon Soghomonian, known as Komitas Vardapet, composer, ethnomusicologist, music collector, singer (1869-1935)" (with the support of France and Germany), and the "150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Hovhannes Tumanyan, poet, writer, translator (1869-1923)" (with the

support of Georgia and Russia) have been approved by the Organization.

*Note: Since 1998 twenty-three anniversaries submitted by the Republic of Armenia have been included in the UNESCO Calendar of anniversaries of eminent personalities and important events.*

*Two anniversaries submitted by the Republic of Armenia were included in the Calendar for the 2016-2017 cycle: the "350th anniversary of the first printed Bible in Armenian by Voskan Yerevantsi," and the "200th anniversary of the birth of Ivan Aivazovsky (1817-1900)."*

## SACRED VESSELS AND ALTAR CLOTHES DONATED TO ST. GREGORY

We express our heartfelt appreciation for these special gifts to our church.



A set of white hand-painted altar clothes made in Armenia are donated by our ACYOA Juniors.



A set of red hand-painted altar clothes made in Armenia are donated by our Women's Guild.



A large cross and a pair of *jajanch* (Ostensorium) are donated by Gloria Aslanian in loving memory of her husband Dr. Robert Aslanian.



# PARISH DIRECTORY

## PARISH COUNCIL

<b>President</b>	<b>Rev. Fr. Mesrob Hovsepyan</b> (804) 405-9399
<b>Chair</b>	<b>Eleanor Krolian</b> (914) 428-7037
<b>Vice Chair</b>	<b>Lauren Kayaian</b> (914) 723-7159
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Chris Bonfiglio</b> (914) 741-6220
<b>Asst. Treasurer</b>	<b>Fram Cehreci</b> (201) 917-3495
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	<b>Noone Janjigian</b> (914) 837-1722
<b>Corresponding Secretary</b>	<b>Gayane Hovakimian</b> (914) 725-8256
<b>Members:</b>	<b>Greg Sahagian</b> (914) 667-1597
	<b>Gayane Manoukyan</b> (347) 465-8503
	<b>Edik Eskandarian</b> (914) 997-9363
	<b>Armen Arsenian</b> (914) 960-0439
	<b>Nectar Munro</b> (203) 273-8829

## DIOCESAN DELEGATES

**Lisa Kouzoujian**  
(203) 536-2622  
**Van Krikorian**  
(914) 835-5080

## PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

<b>Choir Director</b>	<b>Dn. Mirijohn Givelekian</b> (203) 321-8642
<b>Choir Chair</b>	<b>Anoush Givelekian</b> (203) 321-8642
<b>Armenian School Principals</b>	<b>Margrit Hamparsoumian</b> (914) 686-0840
	<b>Maria Bedonian</b> (914) 747-2521

### 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, hospitalized, or homebound 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.

<b>Sunday School Superintendents</b>	<b>Tom Daw</b> (914)528-7845 <b>Alice Leylegian</b> (203) 461-8343
<b>ACYOA Jrs. Chair</b>	<b>Emma Daw</b> (914) 409-8505
<b>ACYOA Srs. Chair</b>	<b>Michael Givelekian</b> (203) 565-9880
<b>Women's Guild Co-Chair</b>	<b>Dawn Papalian</b> (301) 850-6496 <b>Lauren Kayaian</b> (914) 723-7159
<b>Thrift Shop (a division of Women's Guild)</b>	<b>Adriane Bonfiglio</b> (914) 649-1072
<b>Men's Club Chair</b>	<b>Chris Bonfiglio</b> (914) 741-6220
<b>Culture Committee Chair</b>	<b>John Wolohojian</b> (212) 724-2575
<b>Outreach Committee</b>	<b>Gail Keyishian</b> (845) 855-1484
<b>Stewardship/</b>	<b>Gail Keyishian</b> (845) 855-1484
<b>Membership</b>	<b>Paul Keyishian</b> (845) 855-1484

## OTHER CHURCH CONTACTS

<b>Church Secretary</b>	<b>Elise Meneshian-Hingson</b> (203) 249-3339
<b>Librarian</b>	<b>Aida Pisani</b> (914) 793-4007
<b>Property Management</b>	<b>Greg Sahagian</b> (914) 667-1597

## SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

### 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) can be help any Sunday except on the Major Feast days. 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](mailto:saintgretorychurchwp@gmail.com)

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## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 12, Sunday** **Annual Mother's Day Plant, Craft and bake sale.** All proceeds will benefit to St. Gregory Sunday School.
- May 18, Saturday** **MORNING:** Inaugural Divine Liturgy of the Primate of our Diocese, Bishop-elect Fr. Daniel Findikyan following his Episcopal Ordination. Transportation will be arranged to travel from St. Gregory to St. Vartan.  
**EVENING:** St. Nersess Armenian Seminary invites to *A Celebration of Hope & Gratitude*, honoring His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian and Bishop-elect Fr. Daniel Findikyan as past and present St. Nersess board presidents.
- May 19, Sunday** **Lionel Galstaun Annual Memorial Concert:** Featuring young violinist Haig Hovsepian. Accompanied by Pianist Ani Hovsepian.
- June 2, Sunday** **Armenian School Graduation—1:30PM.**
- June 9, Sunday** **Sunday School Graduation** following the Divine Liturgy.
- June 23, Sunday** **CASP Awareness & Collection Day. Women's Guild General Meeting** (following Badarak). Details to follow.
- July 28, Sunday** **All-American BBQ annual fundraiser to benefit Fuller Center for Housing in Armenia.** Sponsored by The Women's Guild. Details to follow.
- September 22, Sunday** **SAVE THE DATE:** Annual Family Picnic. Anyone wishing to volunteer should contact Ann Daw at [Anndaw@optonline.net](mailto:Anndaw@optonline.net) or Ellie Krolian at [ebkrolian@gmail.com](mailto:ebkrolian@gmail.com)
- October 13, Sunday** **Art Show and Fundraiser, 11 am - 2 pm.** Sponsored by the Cultural Committee. Details to follow.
- October 26, Saturday** **St. Gregory Men's Club Family KEF Night - adult & children costume party.** Details to follow.