

1981 Pastoral Report

The Holy Eucharist is the center and heart of all of our church services, activities and community life. The church was built primarily for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist; and the church is maintained so that we may continually enjoy the blessing of this Holy Sacrament. It is the source of all of our consolation and without this holy celebration there would be no reason to have a church—a House of God.

The Holy Eucharist was celebrated every Sunday except the two Sundays of my vacation. I had a third Sunday of my vacation which I did not take this last year. The Sunday of the Diocesan Assembly I was able to return on time to celebrate the blessed sacrament.

A spiritual message relevant to the celebration of the day was given in English and Armenian every week except for the week when time was needed for the program at which Tom Bozikian showed films and taught Armenian dance. Homilies were given at other appropriate occasions such as weddings, baptisms, social/religious gatherings, meetings, programs, etc.

There were instructional meetings with those engaged to be married and also for those to be baptized and with the parents requesting baptism of their child. The meetings for those to be married were held each week over a 2 or 3 month period.

The following is the number of services held during the course of the year for (1) baptism - 4 (2) weddings - 3 (3) funerals - 4

Visitations to the sick were extensive as well as to shut-ins. I took the altar flowers to them whenever we had flowers. Family visitations were done as much as my time permitted.

Because of the nature of my work much time was expended for reading, writing and studying on a variety of subjects other than religion and beside our own religion and history because our faith is related and interrelated with all fields of life.

I presided over the meetings of our church organizations. At times when required I took on the responsibilities when there was no volunteers or it was difficult for someone to do the work which needed to be done.

I coordinated the activities of our church organizations to avoid conflicts and try to minimize conflicts as feasibly as possible. I prepared a calendar of events of church activities. A regular reporting of the church activities together with donations to the church and requested services appeared regularly in the Sevan together with informational articles which we thought would be of interest.

There was the writing of letters and the purchasing of office supplies when it was necessary.

I have been counsellor and advisor to members, non-members and friends of our community in varying situations.

I handled the monies sent to the church during the week, be they donations, or 'in lieu of flowers' donations and other contributions. I left notes on these donations as to what they were for in order to lighten the duties of the Treasurer on Sundays.

The Stewards were contacted but the program was not as productive as previous years due to the time that had to be given for the preparations for the 25th Anniversary Celebration of the Consecration of our church. Hopefully we will be able to improve this program with some recommendations that I will have concerning a Membership Committee about which I will speak later.

Together with your elected representatives, a report was given on the Diocesan Assembly proceedings.

Duties in conjunctions with Feast Days were seen to during the year....

- (a) On Armenian Christmas - the rehearsal with the Godfather and other preparations for 'The Water-blessing' Service..
- (b) the Lenten preparations such as the hanging of the curtains; the plaing of the altar in front of the closed curtain
- (c) rehearsal with the children and choir for the Palm Sunday processional march and the 'Opening-of-the-Door' service..
- (d) the preparations for the Holy Week Services of 'The Dark Night', 'Washing-of-the-Feet', decorating of the tomb of Christ and Easter Eve and Easter Day services
- (e) arrangements and preparation of the grapes for the Feast of St. Mary's.
- (f) floral and rayhan arrangements for the Feast of the Holy Cross.

I made arrangements for the altar flowers when they were requested changed our purchase of them to Coleman Florist because of problems that arose with our former florist during the 25th Anniversary Banquet.

The following are some of the things that I have done during the course of the year.....

- 1-attended to personal problems of parishoners when requested
- 2-gave lectures on religion each during Lent.
- 3-made arrangements to have church articles polished either by some of our members or by someone who specializes in this work
- 4-supervised the making of the niches of the side altars; the oil paintings for them; and also having the paintings framed with a proper frame
- 5-had the niche over the baptismal made and the scripural writing on a wooden plaque below the baptismal picture.
- 6-made arrangements to have an engraving made on marble of a lamb seated upon a Bible having seven latches. All these have symbolic significances.
- 7-ordering and the arrangements of palms for the Palm Sunday service..
- 8-work involved in having the scripural writing installed over altar arch
- 9-arrangements in having the cabinets made in the vestry and choir rooms
- 10-arranged to have a speaker for the Vartanantz program
- 11-organized the Martyr's Day service for April 24th and the dinner-program the following Sunday with a speaker
- 12-preliminary work being undertaken for another "Walk in the Garden of Armenian Literature" in which there will be a presentation of the works of the famous Armenian saterist, Hagop Baronian
- 13-prepared the acolytes for the 25th Anniversary Celebration service..
- 14-aided students preparing papers on our faith and history in finding material for their particular study..
- 15-removing and returning the articles,, robes and all movable objects from the church, vestibule, vestry and choir rooms when the interior of the church was painted..
- 16-preparation of the slide-tape and cultural display exhibited during the Bazaar days.
- 17-arrangements for the program-dinner when Tom Bozikian was here.
- 18-participated in the annual joint Thanksgiving Day service that was held at St. Giles Presbyterian Church
- 19-organized our Church Name-Day celebration dinner-program
- 20-handled the account and monies in our Educational Fund
- 21-assisted in making circulars with information written in Armenian and having them printed.
- 22-got jackets and pictures for the jackets of records to be sold by the Anoush Dance Group
- 23-made arrangements for Arachnort Surpazan Hayr's interview with the newspaper and on television.

24-prepared a 25th Anniversary Consecration Commemorative Booklet which was sent to all on the mailing list

25-attempting to keep our inventory list of church belongings current

26-gave religious lessons to the children in Armenian School on topics pertinent to the day and also songs from the Badarak service

27-went Christmas carolling with some parishoners on Armenian Christmas Eve after service

28-translated from the Armenian to English the martyrdom of Hamazaspouhi Mamigonian for the Women's Saint Day celebration when the Ladies Guild held a joint meeting with the Ladies Guild from the Washington Church

29-took care of the library, reminding those who borrow books to return them.. One important book is still missing "The First Genocide of the 20th Century" catalogue number H37.. Someone took the book without signing the card and has never brought it back

30-the work on the Sevan Newsletter and other printed circulars having at times to stamping and mailing them

All of this is done as I have said in the beginning in order the blessings of the Holy Eucharist Service.. That is why the church was built and that is why we maintain her.

The recommendation that I have to this Assembly as I mentioned in my report is....

I strongly urge that we organize a 2-3 person Membership Committee of persons who are not serving on the Parish Council but who would work with and under the Parish Council. Their duties would be to study methods of increasing the membership and also revenues seeking potential annual contributors.. They would study and be knowledgeable of our financial condition for the past two years and our current needs such as general repairs and improvements... They would visit or ask a person whom they believe would be effectual to visit a potential contributor.. In the case of having another person visit they would first inform him on the church's financial condition.. Potential contributors could be of one of several categories..

(a) a pledge due paying member (b) a steward who having a donation pledge of \$100.00 or more would be entitled to the rates and privileges of the dues paying member as an added incentive to be a part of this program (c) an annual donator of lesser amounts from friends of the Armanian community who are willing by their financial assistance lend support to our programs..

*Rev. Arsen Barsamian*