

*St. Leon Armenian Church Reconservation*  
*November 17, 1966*



*St. Leon Armenian Church Recons...*  
*November 17, 1990*

Cover photo by Alyce Parseghian

Սիրեցէք Ձմիտեանս Ձի Աստուած ԱՄԷՆ

Translation: Love each other for God is love.



Photo by Carol Der Bagdasarian

ԳԻՐ ՀԱՅՐԱՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ ՕՐՀՆՈՒԹԵԱՆ  
ԱՌ ՄՐԲՈՑ ՂԵՒՈՆԴԵԱՆՑ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻ  
ՈՐ Ի ՖԷՐԼՈՆ, ՆԻԻ ՃԸՐՁԻ, Ի ՄԻԱՑԵԱԼ ՆԱՀԱՆԳՍ ԱՄԵՐԻԿԱՅԻ

Մրտի խոր գոհունակութեամբ տեղեկացանք Հիւսիսային Ամերիկայի Բարեխնամ Առաջնորդ՝  
Գերաշնորհ Տ. Խաժակ Արքեպիսկոպոս Պարտամեանին որ Ֆերլոնի (Նյու Ճրքզի) Մրբոց  
Ղեւոնդեանց եկեղեցին հիմնական վերանորոգութեան էք ենթարկած եւ քայն օժտած էք  
հայկական ճարտարապետական ոճով կառուցած երկնայաց գմբէթով:

Կ'երեւակայենք թէ որքան խոր ուրախութեամբ կը պատրաստուիք վերաբացման արարելութեան  
որ հանդիսաւոր շուքով տեղի պիտի ունենայ յատաճիկայ Նոյեմբերի 17-ին: (1996)

Ձեր կատարած հաւաքական աշխատանքին մէջ Մենք կը կարգանք Ձեր հաստորը, սերն ու  
նուիրումը հանդէպ մեր Ս. եկեղեցու: Եկեղեցի կառուցել կամ եկեղեցի վերանորոգել գուտ  
ճարտարապետական կամ ճարտարաշինական գործ է: Ամէն բանէ առաջ եւ վեր՝ հաստորի՝ գործ  
է: Երբ հաւատքը կենդանի է՝ բոլոր տեսակի շինարարական գործերը կը գտնան կարելի:

Վաստէ ենք որ վերանորոգութեան եւ բարեկարգման այս գործը պիտի գտնուի սքանչելի աւիթ  
մը Ձեր շրջանի հայ հաստացեալ ժողովուրդի կեանքին մէջ Քրիստոնէական սուրբ հաստորին  
գօրացման եւ ազգային պատկանելիութեան պատգամին վերակենդանութեան: Նխիտական  
պայծառութեան մէջ կենսականը հոգեւոր կեանքի պայծառացումն է: Թող գալիք սերունդները  
ներշնչուին ձեր օրինակով: Ձեր Առաջնորդ Սրբազանին շուքը բողբոսած՝ նոր թափ ստէք  
Քրիստոնէական եւ հայեցի դաստարակութեան նախական եւ ժրկաւէտ գործին:

Ահա այս զգուցամունքով եւ հայրական ջերմ սիրով կաջնանք Ձեզ եւ կը պահանջենք Ձեր  
համայնքի հոգեւոր հովիտին եւ բոլոր նախկին հովիտներուն եւ բոլոր աշխարհական անձերու եւ  
եկեղեցւոցը համայնքային կազմակերպութիւններուն նախանձախնայութիւնն ու գոհարութիւնները:  
Բոլորիդ անխտիր կը յղենք Մայր Աթոս Ս. Էջմիածնի օրհնութիւնները:

Թող Բարձրեալն Աստուած ձեզ պօրացնէ, Ղեւոնդեանց բահանայից եւ Վարդանան  
սերունդի ոգիով:

Ողջ լերուք ի Տէր, պօրացեալք շնորհօք Ս. Հոգուցն, եւ յաւէտ օրհնեալ ի Մէնջ. ամէն:

ԳԱՐԵԳԻՆ Ա.  
ԿԱԹՈՂԻԿՈՍ ԱՄԵՆԱՅՆ ՀԱՅՈՑ

Տուտ Օրհնութեան Գիրտ  
Ի 21 Հոկտեմբերի 1996  
Ի Մայրական Մրբոց Էջմիածնի  
Ընդ համարաւ է/38



Photo: Samir H.

November 17, 1996

It is a great pleasure for me to extend my greetings to the people of the St. Leon Church of Fair Lawn, New Jersey, on an occasion which embodies the hard work, dedication and optimism of this community.

Transforming the dream of this renovation into a reality took a great deal of hard work and determination, and the Fair Lawn Armenian community deserves to be congratulated for this wonderful achievement.

Thanks to the leadership of your pastor, the Very Reverend Fr. Vahan Hovhannessian, the labors of the building committee, and the contributions of many individuals and families, you have succeeded in creating a worthy environment for promoting the life in Christ in your community and for participating in the Armenian cultural heritage.

The brave and pious souls who first settled in this area, and who went on to establish an Armenian sanctuary in Fair Lawn, would be proud of your accomplishment today. You have taken the legacy they bestowed, and built upon it—expanded it. And in doing so, you have contributed your own vital legacy to future generations.

May the God of our fathers always keep the people of this parish under His protective watch; and may He bestow His blessings upon you, whenever you gather in this building to worship in His Name.

With prayers,

*Abp. Khajag Barsamian*

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian  
Primate

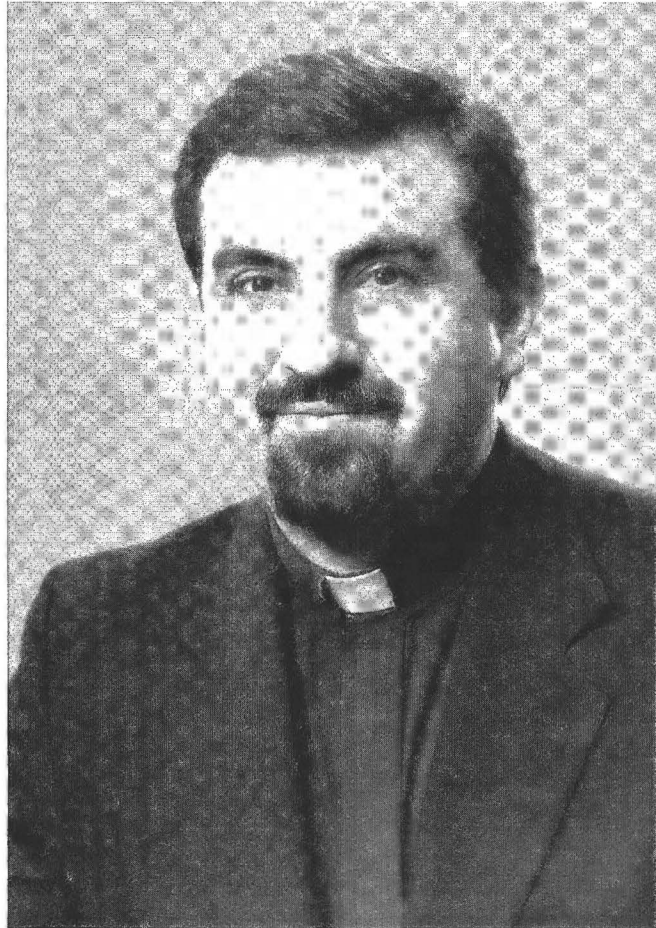


Photo: Fr. Vahan Hovhannessian

Beloved Parishioners and Friends of St. Leon Armenian Church:

It is with great joy and thanksgiving to God that I write these few lines on the occasion of the reconsecration of our Church. Indeed the expansion and renovation of our sanctuary, school and other Church facilities is yet another milestone in the history of our Christ-loving Armenian family.

The expansion of our church facilities comes as the climax of a long process of development and spiritual growth that we continue to experience in our community. The Sunday worshippers, altar servers, Sunday School students and visitors of our Church will now enjoy the beautiful space and accommodations, compatible to the activities and growth of the church community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who contributed to the expansion project. May God almighty keep us firm in our faith. May the Savior grant our community the strength and determination to continue following His steps and witnessing to His life-gospel. May the Holy Spirit continue to pour out divine blessings upon the faithful worshippers here at St. Leon Armenian Church.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Fr. Vahan Hovhannessian".

Fr. Vahan Hovhannessian  
November 17, 1996

September 26, 1996



Warm greetings to everyone gathered to celebrate the reconsecration of St. Leon Armenian Church of Fair Lawn.

Your church stands as evidence of the faith and vision of your community. That enduring faith binds members of a congregation together in fellowship and prayer, and will help to lead all of you through the struggles and joys of life.

Our country was founded on a great tradition of religious liberty, which helps to unite our nation of diverse faiths and creeds and gives us common ground for tolerance, healing, and understanding. This celebration is a reminder of the ways that God's blessings can be used to fulfill our obligation to help others.

Best wishes for a memorable ceremony.

*Bill Clinton*

November 17, 1996



Dear Friends:

I am delighted to extend warm greetings to everyone gathered for the reconsecration of St. Leon Armenian Church.

The strength of our society can be clearly seen in the community spirit that brings you together today. As you mark the opening of your new facilities, you can take pride in your congregation's long record of service to the Fair Lawn community. As Governor of the State of New Jersey, I offer congratulations to everyone celebrating this special day, and I salute all who contribute to the life of your church.

Again, congratulations. Best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

*Christine Todd Whitman*

Christine Todd Whitman  
Governor

November 17, 1996

Dear Parishioners and Friends of St. Leon:

Today we are here to celebrate another milestone in the growth and development of our parish. The reconsecration of our Church is indeed a crowning achievement reflecting the vision and commitment of all those who came before us and to you for your foresight and dedication in preparing our parish for the next century.

St. Leon has been blessed, from its beginning as a small parish in Paterson to its relocation in Fair Lawn, with hard working, faithful and dedicated parishioners with a common spiritual being. Our Church has been given a new face, the Sanctuary and Narthex have been enlarged and the classrooms have all been renovated. The splendor of our church will provide us with a platform from which we can grow in our Christian faith and Armenian heritage.

To all of you who have contributed your time, talent and resources to this project, we thank you.

Let us all hope and pray together that the Holy Spirit who has guided us in the past will continue to lead us in the future.

Sincerely yours,



S. Rex Kachigian  
Chairman, Parish Council

November 17, 1996

Congratulations to one and all:

Today, we celebrate the reconsecration of our church edifice, our house of worship, after completing a major expansion of the administrative office facilities, renovation and restoration of our religious and language classrooms and virtually rebuilding the sanctuary with a uniquely Armenian architecture giving our parish in a new identity in the community.

It is said that our homes are a reflection of our personality. We believe the newly reconsecrated St. Leon Church now adds a physical dimension reflecting the uniqueness of the Armenian Church tradition and its personality.

We chose to work with a large committee to broaden participation and benefit from the diversity of talent and experience in our community. The group worked under the motto of the Committee for Building Faith, Family and Future... to emphasize the fact that while this project is a physical one, its real purpose and emphasis is our recommitment to our faith and spiritual development; the strengthening of our personal and church family; and to an optimistic future for the next generation of St. Leonians.

Three decades have passed since the St. Leon Parishioners and another committee brought St. Leon to Fair Lawn and gave their best with great sacrifice and generosity. The same spirit of support, broad participation, and generosity of our parishioners and the community at large in making this project a reality is indeed gratifying to us.

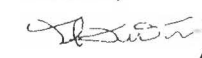
In addition to the magnificent architectural enhancements, the expansion in seating capacity and the addition of a new Narthex will accommodate our increasing number of church attendees. The enlargement of the Chancel will benefit our growing number of young altar servers and "tbirs". The new and unique addition of a "children's room" will encourage our young families to be in church without concerns of disrupting the service and begin the family experience of our divine liturgy, sacred music, and chanting of psalms and litanies at an early age.

Our parishioners can rightfully be proud of this important milestone in the history of the Parish and look to the future with confidence that the tradition to build and grow will continue.

We want to take this opportunity to thank all members of the committee for giving generously of their time and talent and for always making the success of the project the highest priority by working in full harmony and cooperation with one another.

We, as co-chairmen of the committee in carrying out the wishes of our parishioners, consider it a privilege and an honor to be part of such an important and historic undertaking.

Sincerely,



Sarkis Soutanian  
Co-Chairman



Sarkis Gabrellian  
Co-Chairman



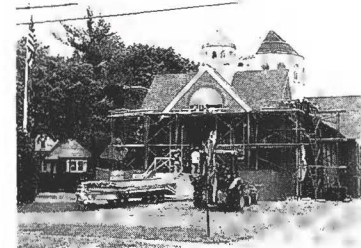
## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CONSECRATION

The origins of consecrating an edifice and dedicating it as a place for worship go back as far as the Old Testament times, to the consecration of Solomon's temple. Consecration is the act by which a person or a thing is separated from common use and permanently dedicated to the service and worship of God.

During the first three centuries of our common era, Christianity was a persecuted religion. Early Christians, consequently, could not afford building public houses of worship. Naturally, they gathered in private houses to celebrate their sacraments and worship God. Indeed, the Armenian word for Church, *Yeghertsi*, comes from the Greek word *Ekklesia*, which originally referred to the group of people who gathered to celebrate the Eucharist and other sacraments. It was only by extension that the term came to mean the building in which Christians congregated for the above-mentioned purposes. Our mother cathedral in Etchmiadzin, Armenia, has the distinction of being one of the very first buildings in the world consecrated especially as a Church. Today, the term is used to refer to both the building and the congregation. If a building is dedicated to the celebration of the Sacraments and the preservation of Holy Communion, then, Christ Himself is present in that building. The Church building, therefore, serves a special purpose and should be set aside and consecrated.

The essential part of the consecration of a Church building in the Armenian Church tradition is, first, the anointment of the *Alta*, which is poured by water and wine and then anointed. After the *alta*, two pillars of the Apse are anointed, then the *Charakertsi*, where the lectern is placed, then, consecutively, the western, northern and southern sides of the Church, and finally the main doors. The Holy Mirrors are used for the consecration, which is a symbol of God's grace and presence during the service.

Today we witness the consecration of the main entrance doors and the northern and southern walls of the apses which constitutes the newly renovated sections of our church.



September 30, 1996

The 1995–96 reconstruction of St. Leon Armenian Church is a milestone in our Parish history. With its modification from a simple building, the architectural form and the sanctuary character has been transformed to a more traditional Armenian Church 30 years after the original construction.

Expansion of the worship area with apses to either side has created a cruciform plan and added substantial volume to interior space. The apses and increased floor area at the entry of the sanctuary allow for new pews accommodating approximately 84 new seats. The structure of the apses has also raised the roof lines in the center of the sanctuary and provides for the mounting of a 20 foot wide 12 sided dome rising 45 feet above the pews. Windows in each face of the dome flood the sanctuary with natural light never seen in the center of the worship area. Additional graceful arched and circular windows have been added to compliment existing stained glass.

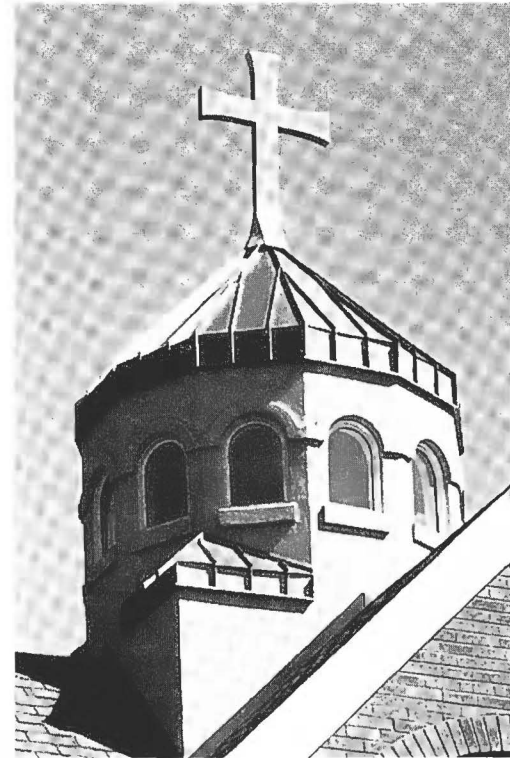
The Narthex addition accommodates a larger Parish Council room, a children's room, an elevator, and increased area for parishioners to prepare for their entry into the sanctuary. The Narthex also is crowned with a small dome allowing for substantial light to enter. The three exterior walls of the Narthex are tastefully penetrated by large arched topped windows. New 8 foot high mahogany exterior doors are mounted at the entrance below the original stained glass entry window. A new chancel rail, chandelier, and candle niches adorn the interior.

The exterior of the entire church has been completely reconstructed in new brick, precast stone, metal and stucco materials. The color combinations, materials, shape and proportions evoke the appearance of churches in Armenia constructed over 1200 years ago. Careful architectural articulation of the additions and the original building has resulted in an integrated design which belies the Church building's modest beginnings. New Armenian crosses sit atop each dome.

Due to a major gas explosion in the lower level of the Church building, the Sunday School facility has been remodeled and expanded as part of the overall building effort. New walls, ceilings, doors, and flooring prepare the classroom facility for many years to come as the heart of our education programs. Unseen but vitally important, are new energy efficient boiler and air-conditioning systems. Additionally, all bathrooms have been gutted and rebuilt. Two of the rooms now contain baby changing stations for the growing population of young families.

Although conceived in 1988, progress on the proposed expansion project was suspended for sometime due to the earthquake in Armenia. Reconstruction then took place over one year commencing in the fall of 1995 and was completed with a minimum of disruption to Parish life. The sanctuary and access to it was maintained throughout construction. In true St. Leon fashion, all parishioners participated in this uplifting effort through their hard work, patience, and quiet belief in constant betterment of their Parish and ultimately in the Glory of God.

Thomas V. Ashbahian  
Architect/Engineer



FAITH \* FAMILY \* FUTURE

*Contributors*

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ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԿԱՌԱՅՈՒՄՆԵՐ

Robert Buchakian\*  
T. George & Lucy Dabagian  
Sarkis & Siran Gabriellian  
Charles & Grace Pinajian  
Sarkis & Ekouby Soukmanian

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George & Helen Beshlian  
Arthur & Lynn Beylerian  
Avedis & Lusi Caparyan  
Rikbani & Chris Dalvagian  
Zaven & Arline Dadekian  
Noubar & Anita Jessourian  
George Kachajian, Sr.  
Hydook & Tineke Mantashian  
Rose, Gregg & Arpie, Jonathan Najarian  
Paul Pinajian  
The Rymos Family  
Caring Shakarian

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Errol & Nima Karakash  
Nabet & Suzanne Kasabian  
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James & Carolyn Soojian  
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Jacques & Eliz Jossoumian  
Berjouni Varpbedian  
The Yechildian Family

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Family & Friends of John Chagachbarian  
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Doris Edlman  
Gloria Tomarian  
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Edna Tanguian  
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Alfred & Agnes Voskian  
Garabed & Eva Yazidjian  
John & Blenda Yildjian

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ՍՏՅՈՒՆԻ ԿԱՌԱՅՈՒՄՆԵՐ

Hagop & Sirapi Azari  
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Haig Robert Cospianian  
Mendahn Cernyan  
Mary Dabakian  
Gerard & Rose Dilian  
Florence Gulkasian  
Douglas & Lisa Hahedjian  
Ely Jelalian  
Armen & Rose Jerjian  
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Abeq Nazarian  
Jacques & Rose Nalbantian  
Allur Jossoumian  
Walter & Arpie Vartanessian  
Arton & Armenoushi Vartoukian

Acknowledgements

Outdoor Railings  
*Ralph Marchione*

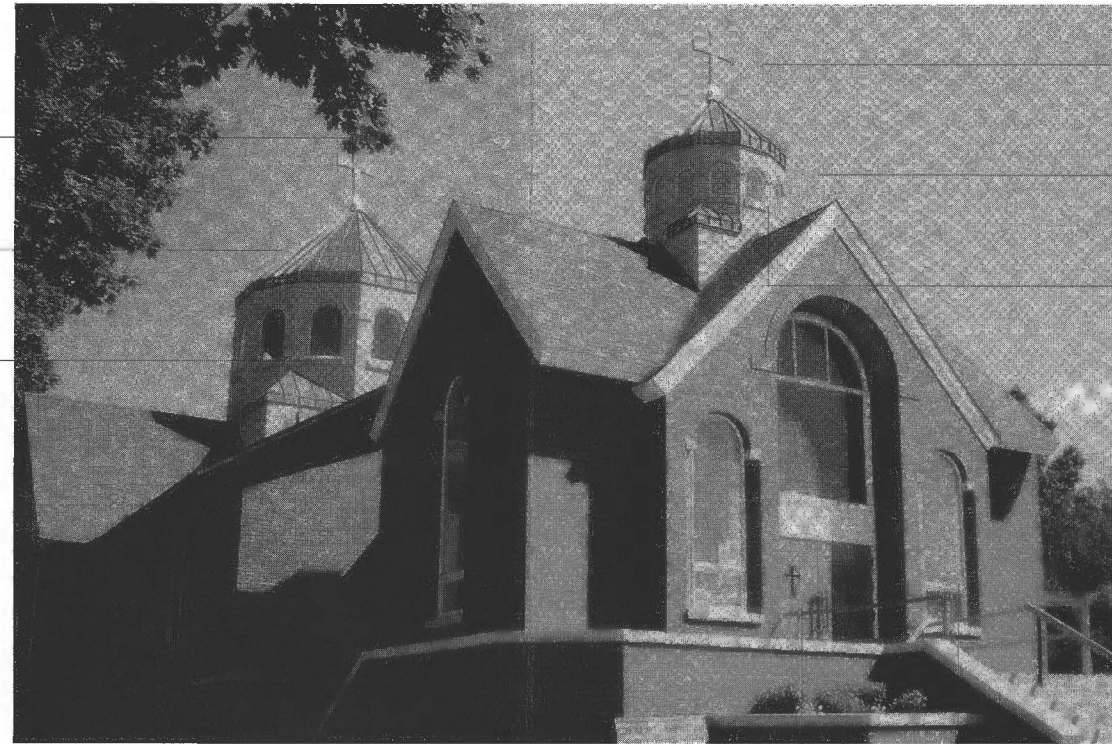
Granite Steps  
*Arie Leegwater*

Paving Stones  
*Mr. & Mrs. Haig Gamarekian*

Design & Fabrication of Crosses  
*Allen Devrishian*

Mulch  
*Jay Ferreira*

# *In memory of... In honor of...*



## **Nave Dome Cross**

*Jon Najarian* Rose, Gregg & Arpic, Jonathan Najarian  
*Moses, Hermina, Garbis Devrishian* Allen Devrishian Family

## **Nave Dome**

*George & Emelin Dabagian, Khoren & Shooshan Barmakian* E. George & Lucy Dabagian

## **Nave Dome Windows**

*our Parents* Rick & Chris Dabagian  
*our Parents* Richard & Linda Galgano  
*Andrew John Halejian* Barry & Andrea Halejian  
*Sarkis Ishkanian & Krikor Margossian* Robert & Joyce Ishkanian  
*Zaven Marootian* George, Joseph & Ira Marootian  
*our Parents* Aram & Helen Mazoujian  
*Mihran & Victoria Noorigian, Hagop & Anahid Ketigian* James & Emerald Noorigian  
*Carnig & Azniv Shakarjian* Carnig Shakarjian  
*Garabed & Armenouhi Soutanian* David & Gail Soutanian  
*Jack Tarzian* Helen Tarzian  
*Levon Tossounian & Ghevont Bezidjian* Jacques & Eliz Tossounian  
*Garabet Yedibalian* The Yedibalian Family

## **Nave Doors**

*Heripsic, Anna & Karl Mantashian* Hydoon & Tineke Mantashian

## **Main Entrance Doors**

*Garabed & Armenouhi Soutanian* Sarkis & Takouhy Soutanian

## **Narthex**

*Hermine & Vahe Buchakian* Robert Buchakian

## **Narthex Dome Cross**

*Boghos & Elizabeth Hachigian* Paul & Rose Hachigian

## **Narthex Dome**

*deceased members of Dadekian & Boyajian families* Zaven & Arline Dadekian

## **Narthex Dome Windows**

*Arthur Haig Burchian Abel* Family & Friends  
*Shamina Afarian* Hagop Afarian  
*brother Levon Bajakian* Edward Bajakian  
*Dr. Hagop & Araxie Jessourian* Sebouh & Seta Jessourian  
*deceased members of Kaprelian & Hadjinlian families* Gabriel & Isabelle Kaprelian  
*deceased members of Kiljian & Toudjian families* Vahe & Arda Kiljian  
*parents Pailak & Nevart* Ralph & Knarig Khatchadurian Meyer  
*Khatcher Ohanessian* Koko & Marta Ohanessian  
*Beloved Ones* James & Carolyn Soojian  
*Andrew Tilbian* Dovic Tilbian  
*Varsen Torosian* Edward & Rose Torosian  
*Bedros Yilanjian* John & Blanda Yilanjian

## **Narthex Chandelier**

*our Parents* Nabet & Suzanne Kasabian

## **Narthex Windows**

*Our Holy Martyrs, To the Glory of God* Sarkis & Ruth Bedevian  
*Dr. Hagop & Elizabeth Beshlian* George & Helen Beshlian  
*Garo Caparyan* Avedis & Lusi Caparyan  
*Robert Buchakian* Lynn Beylerian & Paul Pinajian  
*Rymos Family* The Rymos Estate  
*Vahram Varjabedian* Berjouhi Varjabedian

**Stained Glass Panels**

*John Chagachbanian* Family & Friends  
*Alice Chekemian Muhibian* John & Rose Donigian  
*Mirjan Kirian* Rose Kirian  
*Anthony Tungrian* Edna Tungrian

**North Apse with Candle Niche**

*daughter Arline Ardem Gabrellian* Sarkis & Siran Gabrellian

**North Apse Windows**

*parents Souren & Ardem Serabian, Gabriel & Ardzvik Gabrellian*  
Sarkis & Siran Gabrellian

**North Apse Pews (8)**

*Sarkis & Siran Gabrellian* Sarkis & Siran Gabrellian

**North Apse Round Window**

*Shahan Karakash* Errol & Nina Karakash

**Rear Pews**

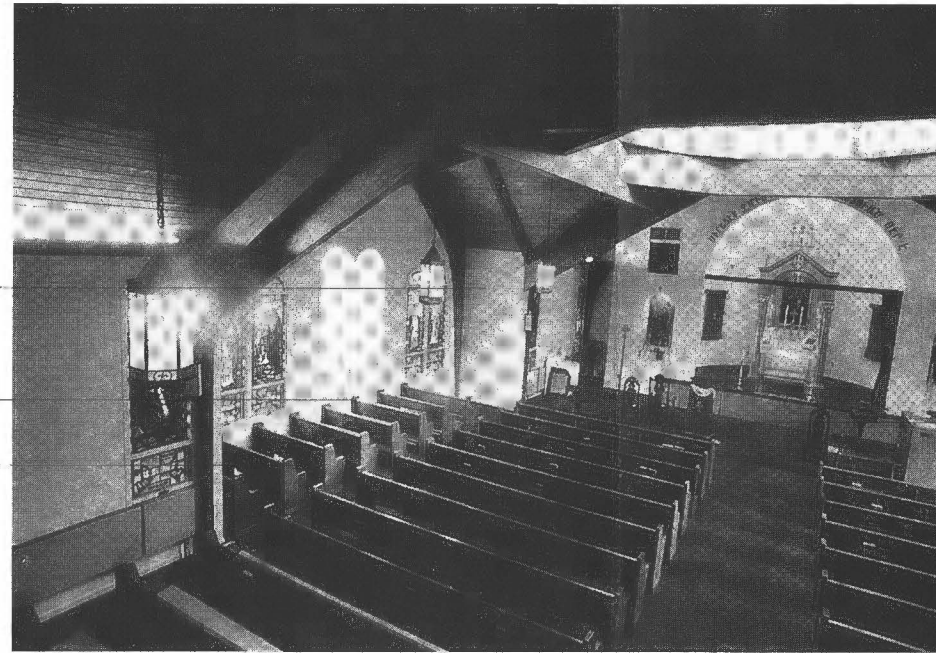
*Levon Bajakian* Family & Friends  
*Khatchig Bedevian* Sylvia Bedevian, Paul & Christopher  
*deceased members of Dabbakian & Hourdajian families* Ara & Dawn Hourdajian  
*father Harry Tarzian* Dennis & Linda Tarzian

**Sunday School Nursery**

*Sunday School Superintendents & Staff* Leon & Barbara Hovsepien

**Children's Room**

*Ajamian & Kachigian families* Glenn & Margaret Ajamian



**Sanctuary Chandelier**

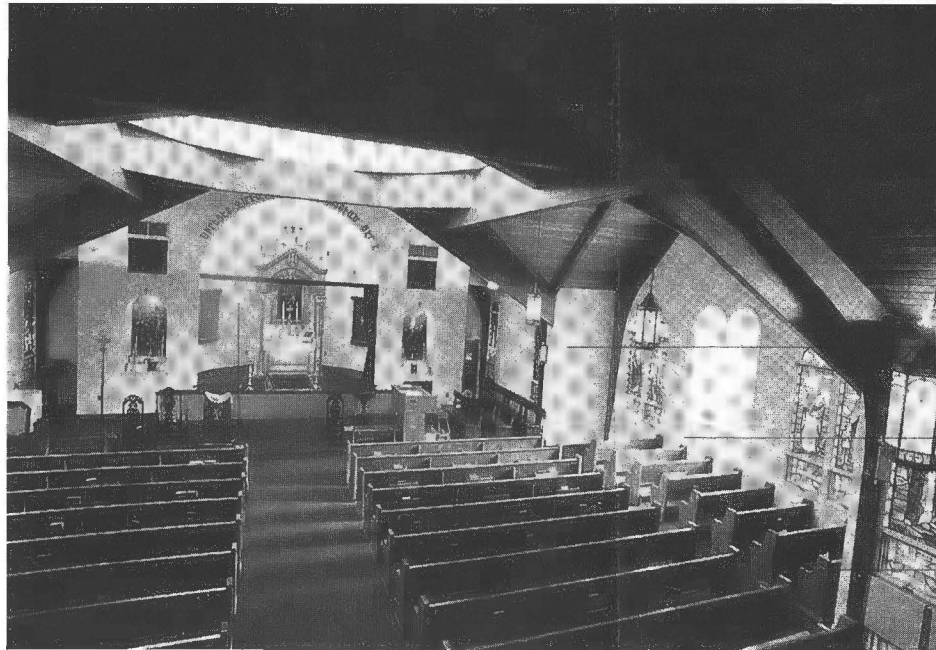
*Dr. Hagop & Araxie Jessourian* Noubar & Anita Jessourian

**Chancel Railing**

*George, Linda & Kim Paroonagian* George, Linda & Kim Paroonagian

**Chimes**

*Richard Tomasian* Family & Friends



**Balcony Windows**

*our Parents* Thomas & Carol Ashbahian  
*Simon & Lousaper Kachajian* George Kachajian Sr.

**South Apse with Candle Niche**

*Charles & Grace Pinajian* Charles & Grace Pinajian

**South Apse Windows**

*parents Nishan & Mina Pinajian & brother George Pinajian* Charles & Grace Pinajian  
*mother Sirvart Simonyan* Karabet Simonyan

**South Apse Pews (5)**

*Kapriel & Marinos Krikorian, Garabed & Miriam Kachigian* S. Rex & Anne Kachigian

**South Apse Round Window**

*grandparents Nazareth & Siranoosh Boyajian* Ara & Lorig Chorluyan,  
David & Ani Kasparian, Michael & Nancy Kasparian

**President**

Very Rev. Vahan I Hovhannessian

**Honorary Chairman**

E. George Dabagian

**Co-Chairpersons**

Sarkis Gabrellian  
Sarkis Soutanian

**Parish Council Chairman**

S. Rex Kachigian

**Secretary**

Arda Kiljian  
Barbara Royland

**Co-Treasurers**

Garabed Yazidjian  
Jacques Tossounian

**Fund Raising & Memorial**

Sarkis Bedevian  
Noubar Jessourian  
Charles Pinajian

**Construction**

Sarkis Gabrellian  
Zaven Dadekian

**Interior Design**

Rose Najarian

**Public Relations**

Lynn Beylerian  
Alyce Parseghian  
Lisa Vartabedian

**Legal**

Joseph Basralian

**Architect/Engineer**

Thomas V. Ashbahian



*Back Row (from left to right):* Thomas Ashbahian, Garabed Yazidjian, Charles Pinajian, S. Rex Kachigian, Noubar Jessourian, Sarkis Bedevian, Jacques Tossounian; *Front Row (from left to right):* Barbara Royland, Rose Najarian, Sarkis Gabrellian, Fr. Vahan, E. George Dabagian, Sarkis Soutanian, Lynn Beylerian, Arda Kiljian

*Missing from photo:* Joseph Basralian, Zaven Dadekian, Alyce Parseghian, Lisa Vartabedian



*Back row (left to right):* Andrea Halejian, Suzanne Kasabian, Janet Ashbahian, Barbara Royland, Nancy Scicchitano, Lucy Dabagian, Linda Galgano, Rick Dabagian; *Front row (left to right):* Anne Kachigian, Margaret Ajamian, Fr. Vahan, Lynn Beylerian, Grace Pinajian

*Missing from photo:* Mary Ann Bonjouklian, Arpie Gennetian Najarian, Gregg Najarian, Dawn Hourdajian, John Vaniskhian, Robert Ishkanian

**Co-Chairpersons**

Margaret Ajamian  
Lynn Beylerian

**Reservations**

Anne Kachigian  
Grace Pinajian

**Publicity**

Dawn Hourdajian  
John Vaniskhian

**Program**

Lucy Dabagian

**Booklet**

Janet Ashbahian  
Andrea Halejian  
Suzanne Kasabian  
Arpie Gennetian Najarian  
*Advisor:* Rick Dabagian

**Booklet Fundraising**

Linda Galgano  
Gregg Najarian

**Secretary**

Nancy Scicchitano

**Treasurer**

Robert Ishkanian

**Cocktail Reception**

Mary Ann Bonjouklian  
Barbara Royland

## LIFE IN GOD'S SERVICE

*“So then, my brothers, because of God's great mercy to us I appeal to you: Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer. Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God—what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect.”*

*“And because of God's gracious gift to me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you should. Instead, be modest in your thinking, and judge yourself according to the amount of faith that God had given to you. We have many parts in the one body, and all these parts have different functions. In the same way, though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body. So we are to use our different gifts in accordance with the grace that God has given us. If our gift is to speak God's message, we should do it according to the faith that we have; if it is to serve, we should serve; if it is to teach, we should teach; if it is to encourage others, we should do so. Whoever shares with others should do it generously; whoever has authority should work hard; whoever shows kindness to others should do it cheerfully.”*

Romans 12:1-8

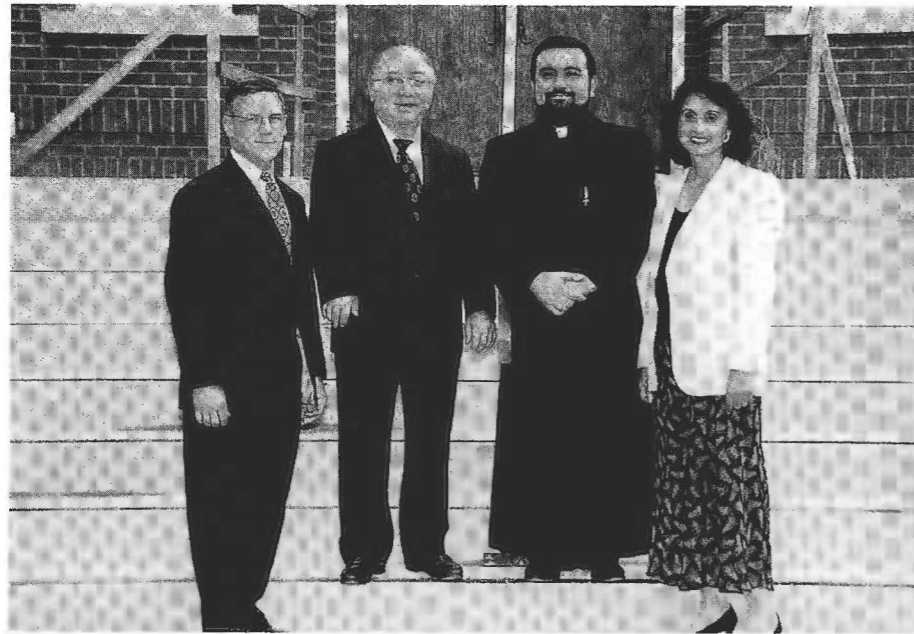


**Delegates 1996**

Thomas Ashbahian  
Rose Najarian  
Sarkis Soutanian

*"How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadows of thy wings. O continue thy loving kindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart."*

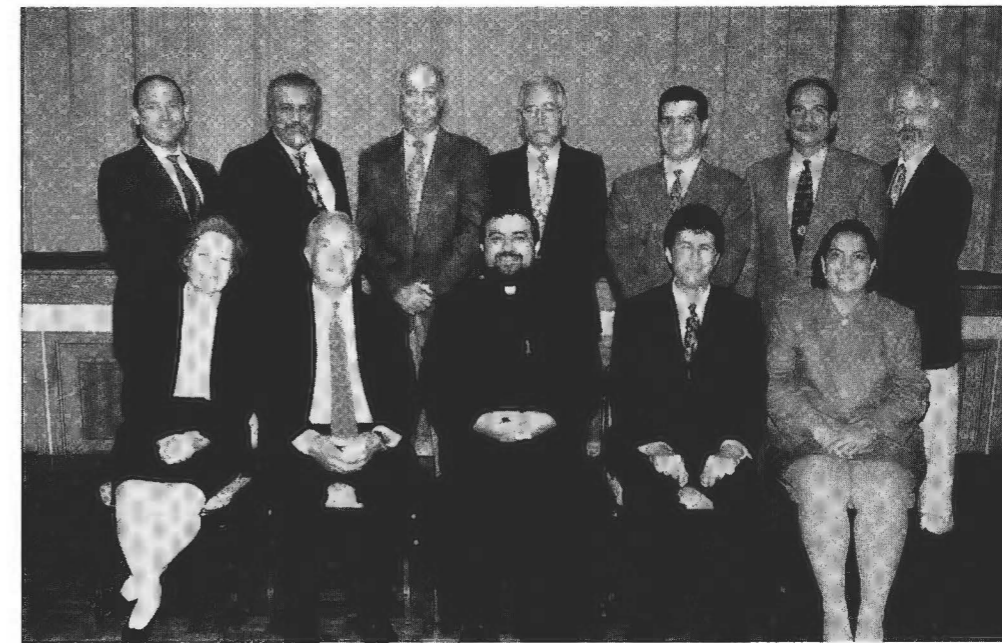
Psalm 36: 7 & 10



*Left to right:* Thomas Ashbahian, Sarkis Soutanian, Fr. Vahan, Rose Najarian

*"To be shepherds of the flock that God gave you and to take care of it willingly, as God wants you to and not unwillingly. Do your work, not for mere pay, but from a real desire to serve. Do not try to rule over those who have been put in your care, but be examples to the flock."*

1 Peter 5:2



*Back row (left to right):* Gregory Ashbahian, Leo Manuelian, Gabriel Kaprelian, Arthur Ohnikian, Glenn Ajamian, Rick Dabagian, Ara Hourdajian; *Front row (left to right):* Barbara Boghosian, S. Rex Kachigian, Fr. Vahan, Allan Tossonian, Lynda Chagachbanian

**Chairpersons**

- 1941-1947 Sahag Avedisian
- 1948 Ohannes Bejian
- 1949 Mihran Noorigian
- 1950-1953 Zaven Marootian
- 1954-1956 Albert Mardirossian
- 1957 Zaven Marootian
- 1958-1959 John Nakashian
- 1960-1964 Andrew Tilbian
- 1965 Paul Hachigian
- 1966 James Boyajian
- 1967 Paul Hachigian
- 1968-1969 Alfred A. Voskian
- 1970 Charles Pinajian
- 1971-1972 Zaven Dadekian
- 1973 Jon Najarian
- 1974 S. Rex Kachigian
- 1975 E. George Dabagian
- 1976 Jon Najarian
- 1977 Martin Kapoian
- 1978-1980 Charles Pinajian
- 1981-1983 Sarkis Soutanian
- 1984 Arthur Ohnikian
- 1985 John Nakashian
- 1986 Mirjan Kirian
- 1987-1988 Arthur Ohnikian
- 1989-1990 Charles Pinajian
- 1991-1992 Dr. Knarig Khatchadurian Meyer
- 1993-present S. Rex Kachigian

**Deacons**

Charles Pinajian  
Sarkis Soutanian

**Subdeacons**

Jason Capizzi  
Haig Hovsepian  
Armen Jesalyan  
Nubar Kasaryan  
Patrick Kaprelian  
Garo Moundjian

**Altar Servers (Tbirs)**

Michael Burdman  
Gregory Capizzi\*  
Kirk Hourdajian\*  
Hratch "Ike" Kasaryan\*  
Diran Jebedjian\*

*"Go, then, to all my people everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the father, the son, and the holy spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always to the end of the age."*

Matthew 28:19,20



*Back row (left to right):* Diran Jebedjian, Kirk Hourdajian, Haig Hovsepian, Patrick Kaprelian, Nubar Kasaryan, Jason Capizzi, Gregory Capizzi, Hratch "Ike" Kasaryan; *Front row (left to right):* Sarkis Soutanian, Fr. Vahan, Charles Pinajian, George Paroongian

*Missing from photo:* Armen Jesalyan, Garo Moundjian, Michael Burdman

\* Ordained to the rank of Subdeacon today.

**Choir Directors**

1929-1934 Sisak Sargavak Nalbandian  
1929-1941 Esther Avedisian  
1942-1943 Margaret Tilbian  
1943-1945 Isabel Pabian  
1948-1950 Esther Avedisian  
1950-1953 Lillian Kasparian  
1953-1978 Lucy Dabagian  
1978-present George Paroongian

**Organists**

1929-1941 Esther Avedisian  
1942-1943 Margaret Tilbian  
1943-1945 Isabel Pabian  
1948-1950 Esther Avedisian  
1950-1953 Lillian Kasparian  
1953-1978 Lucy Dabagian  
1979 Lucille Varjian  
1980-present Sirvard Galstian

**Choir Chairpersons**

1963-1971 Charles Pinajian  
1989-1990 Berdj Peredjian  
1991-1992 Leon Doungarian  
1993-present George Paroongian

*"A day is coming when people will sing. Give thanks to the Lord! Call for him to help you! Tell all the nations what he has done! Tell them how great he is! Sing to the Lord because of the great things he's done! Tell them how great he is."*

Isaiah 12:4,5



*Back row (left to right):* Lynn Beylerian, Vahé Kiljian, John Demirdjian, Iván Kaprelian, Allan Tossoonim, Gabriel Kaprelian, Sarkis Kaprelian, Harry Bargamian; *Second row (left to right):* Florence Gulkastan, Dawn Hourdajian, Rose Kirian, Emerald Noorigian, Lucy Dabagian, Alice Najarian, Blanda Yilanjan, Satemg Loughthead; *Front row (left to right):* George Paroongian, Sarkis Soutanian, Fr. Vahan, Charles Pinajian, Sirvard Galstian

*Missing from photo:* Sandy Chobanian, Dawn Donofrio, Linda Galgano, Vivian Hovsepian, Aram & Helen Mazoujian, Shake McMahon

**Superintendents**

- 1949-1953 Leo Bakalian/Bette Noorigian
- 1954-1957 Leo Bakalian/  
Ann Dishian Pace
- 1958-1960 Bette Noorigian
- 1960-1966 Yeretgin Rose Hallajian
- 1967-1971 Yeretgin Rose Hallajian/  
Ann Dishian Pace/Elsie Bedrosian
- 1972 Yeretgin Rose Hallajian/  
Ann Dishian Pace/George Marootian
- 1973 Leon Hojegian/Ara Kapooshian
- 1974 Leon & Rosalie Hojegian
- 1975-1977 Sarkis Bedevian
- 1978-1979 Leon & Rosalie Hojegian
- 1980-1981 Berdjouhi Feredjian/  
Barbara Hovsepian
- 1981-1982 Barbara Hovsepian
- 1983-1984 Berdjouhi Feredjian
- 1985 Barbara Hovsepian/  
Berdjouhi Feredjian
- 1986 Donna Siroonian/  
Berdjouhi Feredjian
- 1987-1989 Linda Paroonagian
- 1989-1991 Barbara Hovsepian
- 1991 Yeretgin Sirarpi Aivazian
- 1992 Linda Galgano/Linda Paroonagian
- 1993 Linda Paroonagian
- 1994-present Araxie Moundjian

St. Leon first Church Sunday School was begun under the guidance of Bishop Shnork Kaloustian, then pastor of St. Leon Church.

The first session was held on Sunday morning, May 1, 1949, with a teaching staff of two. Seven children attended. By 1965, the Sunday School had grown to 86 children with a teaching staff of 20.

Today, our Sunday School stands at 123 with 24 dedicated teachers.

*"Teach me, Lord, what you want me to do, and I will obey you faithfully; teach me to serve you with complete devotion."*

Psalm 86:11



*Sunday School Students*

*Superintendent: Araxie Moundjian*

*Teachers: Adrena Aiazian, Anahita Arakelian, Thomas Ashbahian, Pamela Bedrock, Mary Ann Bonjuklian, Linda Caparyan, Andrea Cardin, Lorig Chorluyan, Hagop Cilingirian, Andrea Halejian, Joyce Ishkanian, Suzanne Kasabian, Mary Ann Kinoian, Grace Moroukian, Marta Ohanessian, Berdjouhi Parseghian, Doreen Rusenian, Anita Sarkissians, Patricia Toofangjian, Eva Yazidjian*

*Substitutes: Betty Ajanian, Carole Andreasian, Janet Ashbahian, Rosemary Bedrosian, Barbara Hovsepian*

*Assembly Leaders: Lucy Dabagian, Barbara Hovsepian, Yeretgin Violet Kasparian*

*Treasurer: William McMahon*

*Parish Council Liaison: Gregory Ashbahian*

**Principals**

- beginning 1930*
- Manooshag Tellalian
- Nevart Bakalian Hajian
- Mr. A Hovasapian
- Bishop Shnork Kaloustian
- Vartanoush Paboojian
- Yeretgin Jelalian
- 1958-1972 Rev. Carnig Hallajian
- 1973-1975 Vahram Varjabedian
- 1975-1985 Hermine Menakian
- 1985-1989 Verkin Marashian
- 1989-1991 Hagop & Sirarpi Aram
- 1991-1992 Hermine Menakian
- 1992-1993 Verkin Marashian/  
Hermine Menakian
- 1993-1995 Verkin Marashian
- 1995-present V. Rev. Fr. Vahan  
Hovhannessian (acting principal)

**Superintendents**

- 1958-1972 Rev. Carnig Hallajian

**Chairpersons**

- 1973-1975 Martin Kapoian
- 1976-1985 Rose Najarian
- 1986-present Mary Ann Mozian

The first parish Armenian School was founded in 1934.

Classes were held from 4 to 6 pm, 3 times a week. Tuition was \$10.

*"For this very reason do your best to add goodness to your faith; to your goodness add knowledge."*

2 Peter 1:5



*Front row (left to right): Christopher Yedibalian, Jeremy Badach, Mark Messerian, Philep Messerian; Second row (left to right): Taline Royland, Masis Parseghian, Levon Kafafian, Arda Kafafian, Ari Kartalyan, Albert Halatchian, Fr. Vahan; Third row (left to right): Jaklin Ekmekjian, Sarah Badach, Lucine Kinoian, Ara Ekmekjian, Matthew Forman; Fourth row (left to right): Nora Roubian, Zvart Rubian, Aylin Kartalyan, Taline Yedibalian, Ani Sarkissians, Harout Sahagian; Fifth row (left to right): Arda Jesraby, Irina Zargarian, Lena Jinivizian, Jennifer Bedrosian, Silva Jinivizian; Top row (left to right): Susan Clark, Mary Ann Mozian, Jemia Kazanjian, Isabelle Kaprelian*

**Chairladies**

- 1928 Manoosh Soghomonian
- 1929 Yeranig Dermanjian
- 1930 Zarouhie Najimian
- 1931 Makrouhi Dishian
- 1933 Vartouhi Marootian
- 1934 Azniv Ajemian
- 1935 Anna Der Boghosian
- 1936 Haiganoush Pooshijian
- 1941 Hannah Shahinian
- 1942 Nevert Sahatjian
- 1943 Mary Tilbian
- 1944 Elizabeth Hachigian
- 1945 Dikranouhi Nakashian
- 1946-1947 Makrouhi Dishian
- 1948-1949 Elsie Vahanian
- 1950-1951 Dikranouhi Nakashian
- 1952-1953 Mary Vartanesian
- 1954-1955 Sara Vahanian
- 1956-1957 Esther Avedisian
- 1958-1959 Mary Vartanesian
- 1960-1961 Esther Avedisian
- 1962-1963 Alice Yazmajian
- 1964-1966 Lucy Dabagian
- 1967-1968 Dovie Tilbian
- 1969-1970 Florence Gulkasian
- 1971-1972 Agnes Voskian
- 1973-1974 Varsen Torosian
- 1975-1976 Berjouhi Varjabedian
- 1977-1978 Siran Gabrellian
- 1978 Berjouhi Varjabedian
- 1979-1980 Florence Grunstra
- 1981-1982 Olga Chongoushian
- 1983 Florence Grunstra
- 1984 Edna Tungrian/Florence Grunstra
- 1985 Edna Tungrian
- 1986 Katherine Ohnikian/Helen Haig
- 1987 Helen Haig
- 1988 Barbara Hovsepian
- 1989-1990 Helen Mazoujian
- 1991-1992 Linda Powers
- 1993-1994 Carol Ashbahian/  
Eliz Tossounian
- 1995-present Carol Ashbahian

*"Be strong, be courageous, all you that hope in the Lord."*

Psalm 31:24



*Back row (left to right):* Dovie Tilbian, Adrena Aiazian, Barbara Hovsepian, Shake McMahon, Blanda Yilanjian, Artemis Jesraly, Vivian Hovsepian, Lucy Chagachbauian, Mary Ann Kimoian, Irma Altunyan, Sosie Derian, Shoushanik Kouchoukians; *Middle row (left to right):* Florence Gulkasian, Berjouhi Varjabedian, Carol Soojian, Vartir Arakelian, Arpie Vartanesian, Margaret Ajamian, Grace Pinajian, Janet Ashbahian, Varsenig Kouchoukians, Eliz Tossounian; *Front row (left to right):* Siran Gabrellian, Arax Der Boghosian, Donna Siroonian, Edna Tungrian, Mary Dabbakian, Anne Kachigian, Lucy Dabagian, Veronica Asdoorian, Alice Shabazian, Lucy Baroutjian, Kharig Khatchadourian-Meyer, Rose Kirian, Suzanne Kasabian, Emmy Noorigian; *Seated (left to right):* Andrea Halejian, Carol Ashbahian, Linda Galgano, Fr. Vahan, Harriet Markarian, Barbara Royland, Katherine Ohnikian

**Men's Club Chairpersons**

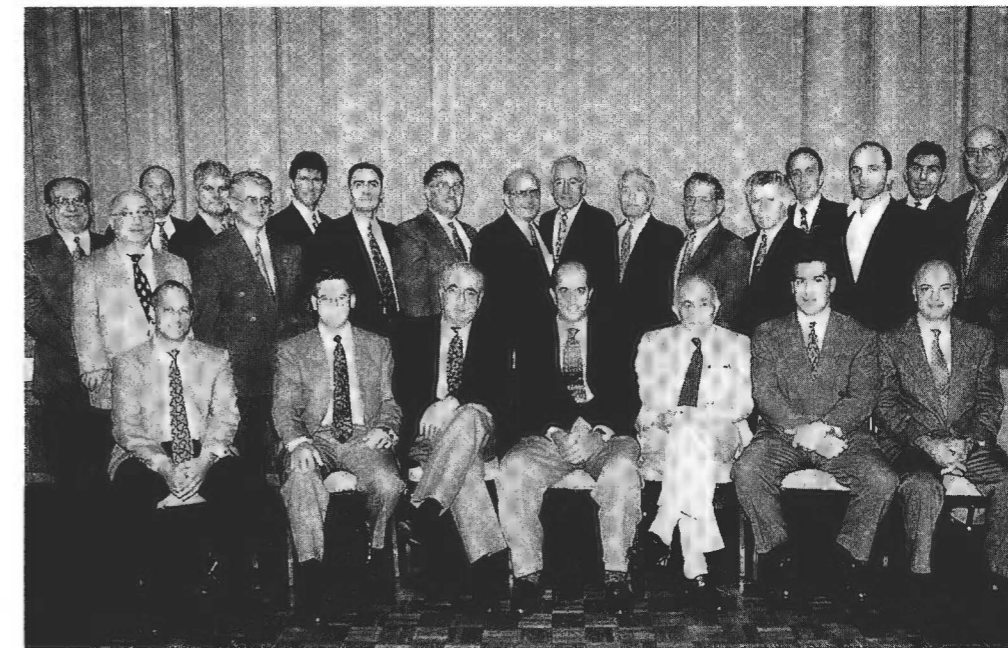
- 1966 Alfred A. Voskian
- 1967 E. George Dabagian
- 1968 John Jerrahian
- 1969 S. Theodore Takvorian  
*dissolved 1970*

**Chairpersons**

- 1981-1982 Arthur Ohnikian
- 1991-1992 Berdj Ferejdian
- 1993-1994 Barry Halejian
- 1995-present Ara Hourdajian

*"He was successful, because everything he did for the temple in or in observance of the law, he did in a spirit of complete loyalty and devotion to his God."*

2 Chronicles 31:21



*Back row (left to right):* Jacques Tossounian, Gregory Ashbahian, Jonathan Der Boghosian, Allan Tossoonian, Vahe Kiljian, Garabed Yazidjian, Charles Pinajian, Arthur Ohnikian, S. Rex Kachigian, John Nakashian, Antoine Moundjian, Joseph Basralian, Benjamin Zargarian, Dennis Tarzian, Gabriel Kaprelian; *Middle row (left to right):* Sarkis Soutanian, John Demirdjian; *Seated (left to right):* Gregory Parseghian, Thomas Ashbahian, Noubar Jessourian, George Kundakji, Sebouh Jessourian, Glenn Ajamian, John Yilanjian

**Chairpersons**

- 1975 John Vezirian
- 1976 Charles Takvorian
- 1979 George Donigian
- 1980-1981 Haroutune Boyadjian
- 1984-1990 Manuk Capan
- 1991-1993 Hagop Dellakian
- 1994-present George Shahinian

*"Son, don't forget what I teach you. Always remember what I tell you to do. My teaching will give you a long and prosperous life."*

Proverbs 3:1,2



*First row (seated left to right):* Archalous Takvorian, Pinna Perinjian, Lucy Bedrosian, Haig Tellian, Fr. Vahan, Zaroubie Hajinian, Nevert Gulamerian, Shushan Kandanian, Keghezig Halburian; *Second row (standing left to right):* Helen Avedisian, Vicky Vezirian, Helen Mazoujian, Joe Bedrosian, Daisy Chaderjian, Archalous Varjabedian, Gulnara Khatchaturian, Vartiter Arakelian, Vartuhi Kapitanian, Mary Tekirian, Areknaz Sarajian, Arax Berberian, Rose Tashjian, Armenuhi Tashjian; *Third row (standing left to right):* Lillian Doramajian, Vartan Jerahian, Mark Chookazian, Misag Aprimian, Harry Manoogian, Jack Mozian, Shavash Torosian, Aram Mazoujian, Aram Bashian, Renee Shahinian, Dorothy Kazanjian, George Shahinian; *Last row (standing left to right):* Dicran Chalian, Joe Sepetjian, Larry Chukoian, Paul Kahaumjian, Marty Sarkisian, Charles Sarajian; *Standing rear (left to right):* Ara Martaian, Berge Brooke

*"Whatever you do work at it with all your heart as though you were working for the Lord and not for man."*

Colossians 3:23,24



*Back row (left to right):* Patricia Trommelen, Minas Arakelian; *Front row (left to right):* Alice Yazmajian, Fr. Vahan, Mary Ann Mozian

**St. Leon Staff**

- Minas Arakelian
- Mary Ann Mozian
- Pat Trommelen

**Community Center Management**

- Anne & S. Rex Kachigian
- John Voskian
- Andrew Boyajian
- Barbara Boghosian
- Grace Pinajian
- Alice Yazmajian



*"Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but be an example for the believers in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith, and purity."*

1 Timothy 4:12

**Juniors**

*Back row (left to right):* Michael Burdman, Dara Hourdajian, Kirk Hourdajian, Victoria Hortian, Taline Kundakji;  
*Second row (left to right):* Valerie Hortian, Michelle Yazidjian, Kim Paroonagian, Vanessa Hortian;  
*Front row (left to right):* Roxanne Tashjian, Lori Hovsepien, Fr. Vahan, Doreen Rusenian, Andrea Scicchitano

**Seniors**

*Back row (left to right):* Anthony Giannuzzi, Edmond Arakelian, Benjamin Zargarian, Lynda Chagachbanian;  
*Middle row (left to right):* Sylva Tossounian, Carole Andreasian, Nadine Aljian, Jonathan Najarian, Anahita Arakelian;  
*Front row (left to right):* Adrian Giannuzzi, Allan Tossoonian, Fr. Vahan, Lisa Vartabedian, Stephen Kaprelian



**Juniors Chairpersons**

- 1965 George Marootian
- 1966 Nita DePalma
- 1967 Rebecca Bakalian
- 1968 Bill Amerkanian
- 1969 Rebecca Bakalian
- 1970-71 Bill Tfank
- 1973 Mark Gabrellian
- 1975 Allison Kapoian
- 1976 Richard Karamian
- 1979 Margie Kachigian
- 1980 Lynda Chagachbanian
- 1981 Peter Bedevian
- 1983 Armen Varjabedian
- 1984-1985 Edward Kalpagian
- 1986 Leslie Boghosian
- 1988 Karim Yilanjian
- 1989 Sylva Tossounian
- 1990 Dionne Shegerian
- 1991 Jon Hovsepien/Harout Moundjian
- 1992 Talin Sepetjian
- 1993 Joy Hovsepien
- 1994 Jason Capizzi
- 1995 Haig Hovsepien
- 1996 Andrea Scicchitano/Vanessa Hortian

**Seniors Chairpersons**

- 1989 Lynda Chagachbanian
- 1990 Nadine Aljian
- 1991-1992 Raffi Jessourian
- 1994 Patti Toofangjian /  
Patrick Kaprelian/Ted Takvorian, Jr.
- 1995 Patti Toofangjian
- 1996 Vartan Nazarian/Lisa Vartabedian

**Coaches Junior Boys**

1969-1970 Jack Tarzian/  
Harold Sargisoff  
1971-1973 Jack Tarzian  
1977-1983 Wayne Rallo  
1984-1985 Raffi Jessourian  
1986-1989 Paul Kapoian/  
Gary Soultanian  
1990-1993 Steven Chagachbanian/  
George Kachajian, Jr.  
1994 Steven Chagachbanian  
1995-present George Kachajian, Jr.

**Coaches Senior Boys**

1978-1982 Charles Boyajian  
1982-1983 Richard Tomasian  
1984-1985 Robert Ohnikian  
1985-1986 Vicken Jessourian  
1986-1987 George Kachajian, Jr./  
Richard Ohnikian  
1987-1988 David Kasparian  
1988-1990 George Kachajian, Jr.  
1990-1993 Paul Kapoian/  
Gary Soultanian  
1994-present George Kachajian, Jr.

**Coaches Girls**

1979-1982 Robert Ohnikian  
1983-1988 George Kachajian, Jr.  
1989-1990 Lisa Ekmekjian/  
Taline Jessourian  
1990-1991 Talin Hovsepian/  
Taline Jessourian  
1991-1992 Talin Hovsepian/  
George Kachajian, Jr.  
1992-present George Kachajian, Jr.

*"Surely you know that many runners take part in a race, but only one of them wins the prize. Run, then, in such a way as to win the prize. Every athlete in training submits to strict discipline, in order to be crowned with a wreath that will not last; but we do it for one that will last forever. That is why I run straight for the finish line; that is why I am like a boxer who does not waste his punches. I harden my body with blows and bring it under complete control to keep myself from being disqualified after having called others to the contest."*

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

*Back row (from left to right): George Kachajian, Jr., Coach; Second row (left to right): Taleen Aiazian, Arda Jesrally, Nayirie Kuyumjian, Stephanie Nevruzian, Taline Kundakji, Kim Paroonagian, Michelle Yazidjian, Lori Hovsepian, Linda Caparyan, Doreen Rusenian, Rick Dabagian, Parish Council Liaison; Front row (left to right): Adam Scicchitano, John Demirdjian, Armen Aiazian, Nubar Kasaryan, Fr. Vahan, Kirk Hourdajian, Dara Hourdajian, Hagop Kuyumjian, Joseph Hovsepian*





Ladies Aid Society 1934

1936-1938

Reverend Father Hovhannes Kavookjian (pastor)

1939-1941

Archbishop Mampre Calfayan (pastor)

1941-1947

Reverend Father Vahan Jelalian (pastor)

*"I was nine when I met my closest friend on the first day of Sunday School. We later shared memorable days in Armenian School, ACYOA, at our weddings, and recently as godmother to my son. A lifetime friendship at St. Leon."* (Age 38)

September 1928

Ladies Aid (now Women's Guild) established

1932

Purchased Paterson church

April 1934

Armenian School established

October 1941

Consecration of St. Leon Armenian Church, Paterson

1948

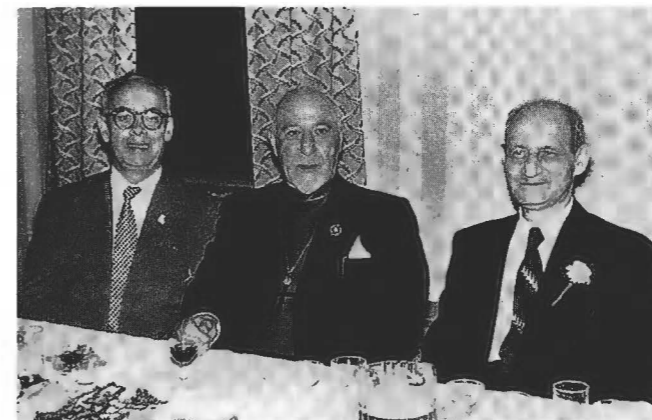
ACYOA established



Paterson church 1933



Mr. & Mrs. Club



Moses Hachigian, Srpazan Calfayan, Haroutume Nakashian



Choir



*“It was so fun last year because we had a Christmas pagaent and I was happy.” (Age 7)*



1951-1952  
Reverend Father Arten Ashjian (pastor)

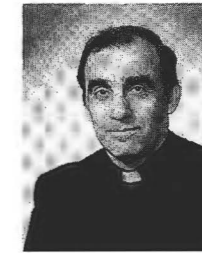
1953-1954  
V. Rev. Fr. Mampre Calfayan later to become Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian church (pastor)

1948-1951  
V. Rev. Fr. Shnork Kaloustian later to become the Patriarch of Constantinople (pastor)



Parish Council

1955-1957  
Reverend Father Vartan Der Assadourian (pastor)



1958-1972  
Reverend Father Carnig Hallajian (pastor)

July 1960  
Father Carnig Hallajian ordained at St. Leon, Paterson, NJ



Patriarch Shnork Kaloustian

May 1949  
Sunday School established

*Reminiscence of my Pastorate at St. Leon Church in South Paterson*  
*That hot summer of 1951 I spent many evening hours at St. Leon assisted at the organ by Yeretziin Mary to train altar servers in several areas: Charles Pinajian, Jack Hachigian, Mike Matosian as Cantors; Bared Dabaghian as Censor, Sarkis Jamgochian as Sacristan. These young men learned what they needed to learn, served with dedication, reached the level of ordination of diaconal ranks, and set good personal examples to the future generations of St. Leon's altar servers.*

*Reverend Fr. Arten Ashjian*



Sunday School teachers

February 1958  
Original property contract signed for future home of St. Leon Church  
(thanks to the foresight of the Nakashian family)

*I consider myself very fortunate for having had the opportunity to serve St. Leon Church which, in my opinion, is one of the most ideal parishes in our Diocese.*

*The almost fifteen years (from 1958-1972) that I served in this parish, both in Paterson and Fair Lawn, were probably the best pastoral years of my life. From the time that the late Primate Archbishop Mampre Calfayan assigned me as Deacon in Charge, I was accepted by the older generation as their son and by the young people as one of them.*

*In 1960, I was married to Yeretziin Rose and during the same month was ordained into the priesthood in the old church by the late Primate Archbishop Sion Manoogian. This was a new beginning for me as the Pastor and the parishioners together to show our deep love and total dedication to our church, which eventually enabled us to make the courageous move from Paterson to Fair Lawn.*

*Since 1965, this small parish of Paterson turned into a dynamic community in Fair Lawn. Under the leadership of several dedicated pastors and lay leaders much has been achieved since then.*

*I am truly proud to have been a part of the history and success of St. Leon Church.*

*With prayers,  
Rev. Fr. Carnig Hallajian*



Sunday School June 1957



First Sunday School Graduation Class 1962

*“My fond memory of St. Leon is meeting new people, and making friends with some of the kids my age in the Armenian community.”  
(Age 12)*



Men's Club 1981



1975-1985  
Reverend Father Paree Metjian  
(pastor)

1972-1975  
Reverend Father Arten Ashjian  
(pastor)

September 1963  
Ground-Blessing of Fair Lawn site by Archbishop Sion Manoogian, Primate

April 1965  
Blessing of Foundation Stones by Archbishop Sion Manoogian, Primate

September 1965  
Consecration of St. Leon Armenian Church, Fair Lawn by Archbishop Sion Manoogian, Primate

January 1966  
Men's Club organized

November 1969  
Boys' basketball team organized

January 1972  
Ordination of Deacons & Acolytes by Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate



Blessing of Foundation Stones 1965



Consecration 1965

*Long held aspiration, to reconstruct your house of worship has become a reality. Indeed, it is a cause of great celebration which you fittingly deserve. We are happy to be with you!*

*St. Leon, as a congregation, invokes many fond memories. We labored together for ten years for the Glory of God. As such, many friendships were formed which we cherish to this day.*

*May the Good Lord keep you under His wings and may you enter the sanctuary to enjoy His presence for years to come.*

*With Best Wishes, Der Paree & Yeretzgin Angel Metjian*



Senior Boys Basketball Team 1981

*"I remember our Sunday School Assemblies with Yerezgin Rose Hallajian, who always taught our lessons with great enthusiasm and love. Many of us will never forget her pointer on the chalkboard, teaching us not to confuse the words **kez** and **ken** in our offering hymn! Well. . . I never do! And whenever I hear the hymn, I remember our beloved Yerezgin Rose with such great respect. "*  
*(Age 40)*



St. Leon Women's Guild 50th Anniversary April 1979



1981

February 1975  
 St. Leon parishioners celebrate burning of mortgage

November 1975  
 Founding of Senior Citizen Center

Summer 1976  
 Vacation Bible School established

April 1977  
 Ordination of seventeen acolytes by Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate

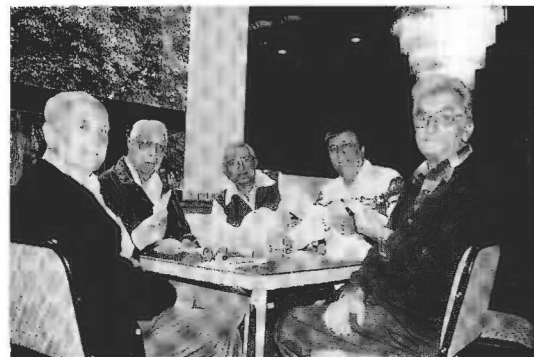
November 1979  
 Girls' basketball team organized

November 1980  
 Ground Blessing of Community Center and ordination of deacons by Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate

1981  
 Care and Share established

November 1981  
 Dedication of Community Center

*"I love Sunday School because we have a lot of fun." (Age 7)*



Senior Citizens 1996



Trip to Diocese 1979



Girls Basketball Team

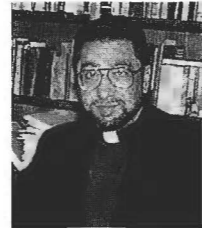


Dedication of Community Center 1981

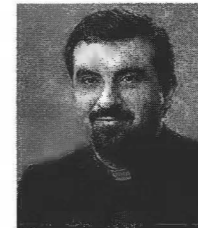


Ordination 1984

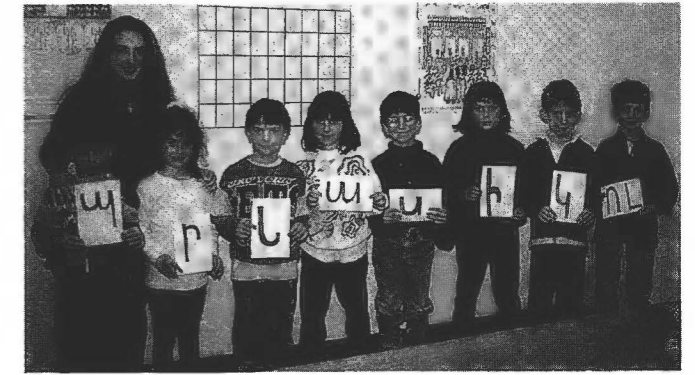
*"I like the songs" (Age 7 1/2)*



1985-92  
Reverend Father Arshen  
Aivazian (pastor)



1993-present  
Very Reverend Father Vahan  
Hovhannessian (pastor)



Armenian School 1995

May 1984  
82nd Diocesan Assembly hosted  
by St. Leon

1984  
Burning of Mortgage of  
Community Center

Fall 1984  
Ordination of Deacons and  
seven acolytes & Blessing of  
Veils of six girls by Archbishop  
Torkom Manoogian, Primate

50th Anniversary of St. Leon  
Parish

December 1990  
25th Anniversary of the  
Construction & Consecration of  
St. Leon Church, Fair Lawn

1991  
Men's Fellowship reorganized

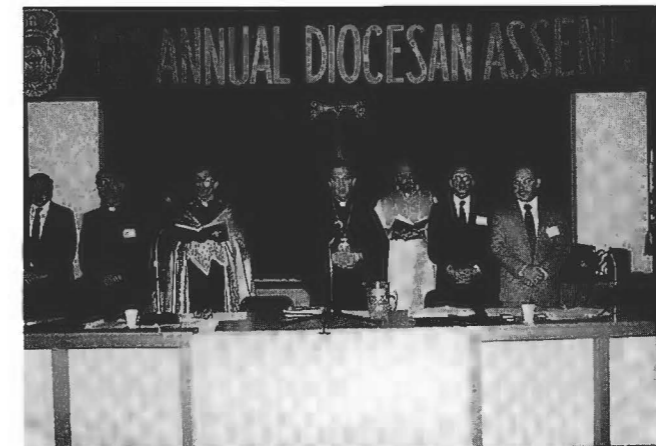
September 1991  
Total parish Christian  
Education and Family Worship  
Divine Liturgy began

*I congratulate you all on your newest accomplishment. The architectural enhancement of the sanctuary and the expansion of the facilities is a dream come true for the entire community. In upgrading the design of the church you have made it a true reflection of traditional Armenian church architecture and you have taken the necessary steps to meet the expanding needs of your parish. I am sure all this was accomplished through the hard work of many individuals and great sacrifices by the entire parish. And now, the moment of celebration has arrived. You can rightfully feel proud. Rejoice and savor the moment. However, do not let this celebration be the end of the process of building the Church. For as much hard work as it took to build and rebuild the physical structure it is harder still to build the spiritual structure of the Church. The task of building the church has reached its conclusion. Now must begin the task of being the Church. The lesson of our past and the legacy of our ancestors is not just to erect edifices that we can boast*

*about. As rightful and deserving the glory of this moment is, it is also temporary and transient. The novelty of a new edifice will soon wear out. The enthusiasm generated by this accomplishment will fade away. Unless everything that this day represents is offered back to God in humility of heart and in action in the life of the community, bound together in love and reaching out to others in compassion and generosity, all will be in vain. The call of our present and the challenge of the future is to constantly rebuild and renew ourselves as living temples of God, to satisfy our thirst and hunger with the life-giving water and the heavenly bread that is our Lord Jesus Christ himself and to regenerate our souls with the indwelling and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.*

*To that end you are always in my prayers.*

*Fr. Arshen Aivazian  
September 8, 1996*



*"When we think about St. Leon,  
we think about praying, about God  
and Jesus, and we feel loved" (Age 6)*



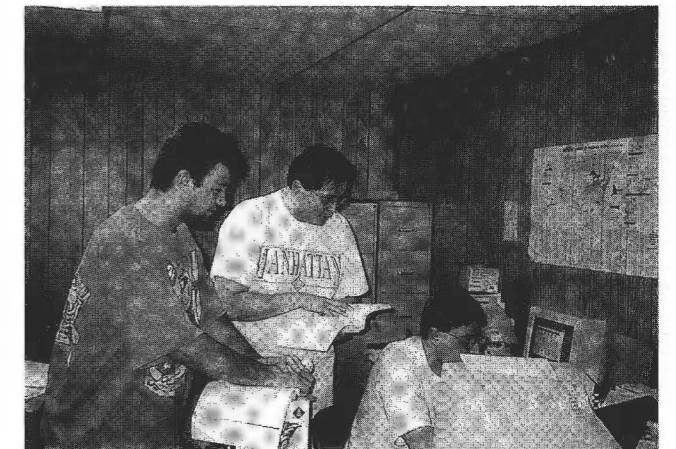
Men's Club May 1993



September 1994



Father Vahan introducing the St. Leon website to the Primate



Installation of Internet Services at S.L.I.C.

June 1993  
Deacons' Training Program established

July 1994  
Six subdeacons and five tbirs ordained by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

March 1994  
Elevation of Father Vahan Hovhannessian to the rank of Vartabed

March 1995  
St. Leon Women's Guild hosted "Women's Saints Day"

September 1995  
National ACYOA Sports Weekend hosted by St. Leon

December 1995  
St. Leon Information Center established

June 1996  
College Connection Network established

August 1996  
St. Leon Internet Services and Website established

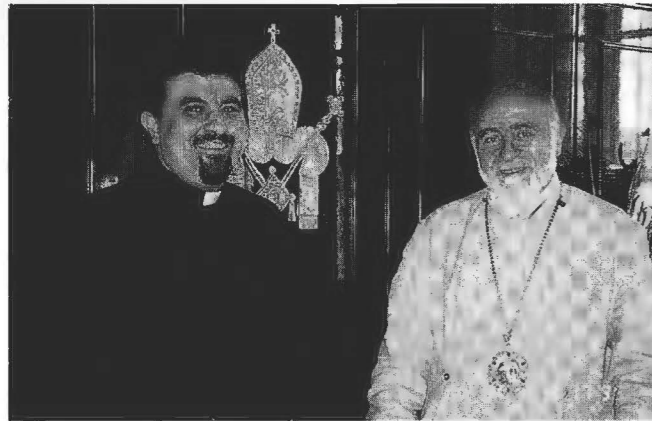
*"I was a young college student in September 1965. My college friends were amazed that I chose to pass up the big Princeton-Rutgers football weekend in order to come home to witness and participate in the consecration of my beloved St. Leon Church. To me, there was no question as to which event was more meaningful." (Age 49)*



Elevation of Father Vahan March 1994



November 1995



Fr. Vahan with His Holiness Karekin I in his office in Holy Etchmiadzin  
September 1995



Food Festival 1995



Altar Servers' trip to Montreal June 1996



Tbir Ordination October 1996

October 1996

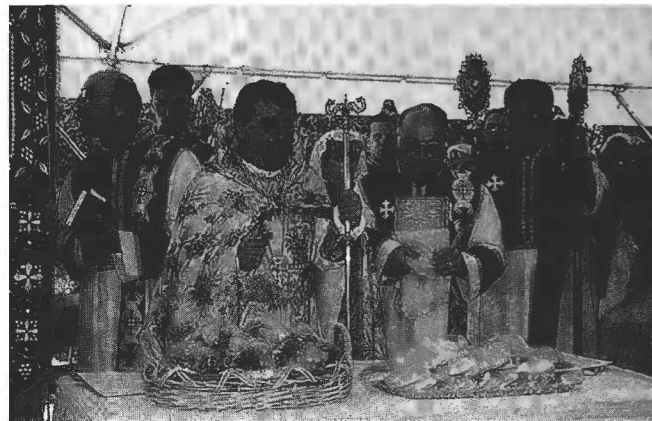
Eight Choir members, two Altar servers and three St. Nersess Seminarians ordained to the rank of Tbir by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

November 1996

St. Leon reconsecration by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

November 1996

Four subdeacons ordained by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate



Blessing of the Grapes for the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary  
1996

*“Another Sunday Morning, I say to myself. ‘It’s time to go,’ my parents call. We get into the car and we’re off. We reach our destination—church. I sigh, as I pull the heavy door open and smell the incense and the aroma of candles. When I look at the windows I see the beautiful stained glass windows with famous saints on each one. An array of colors appear as the sun shines through the windows. It lights up the entire church. We hear the vested priest talking on the red draped altar. The golden colored altar looks like a mini church with golden crosses and candles on it. It holds the picture of Jesus in Mary’s arms. The choir’s angelic voices loudly fill the church. The voices echo. It’s beautiful. This is the perfect place to be on a dreary Sunday morning. I go to a wooden pew and see people meditating and praying. All of a sudden the organ starts playing again, I realize that church is almost over. It will soon be time to socialize with friends.’  
(Age 12)*

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**Decorations**  
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We wish we could have included the names and pictures of all who were responsible for the growth of St. Leon, but lack of pictorial documentation and space prohibited recognition of every member of our parish, past and present.

Any inadvertent omission of a name or photograph does not lessen the invaluable contributions made by these individuals over the years. We thank you for your understanding in this difficult task.

The legacy of these hardworking parishioners will continue through their children and grandchildren who now work for the progress of our beloved church and the strengthening of our Christian faith.

*The Booklet Committee*

It has been said that one generation travels on the achievements of another. We offer humble prayers on the day of this celebration that these historic and glorious years will inspire everyone. May the fellowship of the Holy Spirit remain with the St. Leon family and continue to illuminate the path that its posterity will travel.

From the *History of St. Leon* by Ruth Bedevian



PROGRAM

*St. Leon Armenian Church Reconsecration Banquet*

*November 17, 1996*

PROGRAM

*St. Leon Armenian Church Reconsecration Banquet*

*November 17, 1996*

INTRODUCTION

*Margaret Ajamian*

Co-Chairperson, Banquet Committee

PROCESSIONAL

AMERICAN & ARMENIAN NATIONAL ANTHEMS

*St. Leon Armenian Church Choir*

George Paroonagian, Choir Director

Lucy Dabagian, Accompanist

WELCOME

*Lynn Beylerian*

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*Sarkis Soutanian*

Co-Chairman, Building Committee

INVOCATION

*His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian*

Primate, Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America

TOAST

*E. George Dabagian*

Honorary Chairman, Building Committee

DINNER

REMARKS

*S. Rex Kachigian*

Chairman, Parish Council, St. Leon Armenian Church

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

*Sarita Melkon, Flutist*

Ivy Adrian, Accompanist

ADDRESS

*The Reverend Father Carnig Hallajian*

Former Pastor, St. Leon Armenian Church

MESSAGE

*The Very Reverend Father Vahan Hovhanessian*

Pastor, St. Leon Armenian Church

ADDRESS & BENEDICTION

*His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian*

Primate, Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America