

## YOUTH GROUP

St. Gregory Armenian Church

Binghamton, New York

For the past five years the St. Gregory Youth Group has played an active and vital role in the life of the church. Established to fill the need for a fellowship group for the youth of the community, it also offers its services to the church whenever needed. Its membership consists of twenty-five Junior and Senior High School students who try to get together at least once a month for an organized activity. This year's calendar includes various worthwhile activities.

- Oct. The season was begun by sending letters and home-made cookies to their youth group friends who had gone off to college. (Very few of our youth remain in the area during their college years.)
- Nov. Hockey Game at the Arena.
- Dec. Annual Christmas Tea and Musical Program for our much loved Senior Citizens.
- Jan. Bowling with Presbyterian Church Youth Group.
- Feb. Ice Skating and Pizza Party following religious education class.
- Mar. Special Lenten Worship Service geared to youth followed by buffet dinner.
- Apr. Armenian Cooking Lesson - Kadeyif. The youth made eight trays of kadeyif to sell at their annual Palm Sunday Bake Sale which was a tremendous success.
- May Plans are being made for hosting the Mother's Day Dinner. The youth plan to learn how to cook Lule Kebab and Pilaf. A "Mother of the Year" will be honored at this event.

June For the past two years our Youth Group has hosted a very successful overnight in conjunction with our Annual Church Dance. Last year, Troy, Syracuse and Irvington, N. J. youths were invited to stay at their homes. A total of sixty beautiful Armenian kids got together for dinner, dancing, worshipping and Sunday Brunch. Plans are in the making for another similar event. We have had successful Retreats at this time in past years but scheduling has been a problem recently.

Our Youth Group has been financially independent since its inception thanks to innovative fund raising activities by the youth. Although we feel that our organization has been highly effective in achieving its objectives as evidenced by positive results which we are beginning to see after five years of existence, there has been a strong feeling that far more leadership and direction should have been forthcoming and should be forthcoming from the Diocese. There should be more sensitivity to the needs of the extremely critical 13 - 17 year old age group during which period lasting patterns and relationships are often established. At eighteen years of age most of our youth leave Binghamton for colleges where often few Armenians are enrolled. Unless these youths have been reached in a positive way during their adolescent years, the church will inevitably lose a vital segment of its population in future years.

Respectfully submitted,



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