

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Church Chicago, Illinois 1997

Reverend Deacon Aren Jebejian and members of St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Church of Chicago:

1997 was a year of challenge and hope for the parish of St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Church of Chicago. Our main focus was to continue our efforts to keep our Church community active through the year without the presence of a full time parish priest. Our most important concern and goal was to pursue a full time permanent parish priest.

On June 12, 1997, I became the Parish Council Chairperson for the first time. The responsibility of running a parish without a parish priest is very difficult. I was fortunate to work and serve with a competent parish council consisting of the following members:

Mr. Charles Babikian - Vice Chairperson
Mr. Garrick Abezetian - Treasurer
Mr. Steve Tootooian - Assistant Treasurer
Mr. Gregory Tootooian - Secretary
Mrs. Zabelle Abezetian
Mr. Harry Paloian

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. George Nahabedian, Diocesan Delegate, for his support throughout the year. I would also like to recognize Ms. Violet Koresian, our Church Secretary, for her hard work, assistance and help.

The Parish Council held regular monthly meetings during the year 1997, and also took part in the picnic meetings which were held.

The Divine Liturgy was celebrated by visiting Clergy on a regular bi-monthly basis throughout the year. All the major Feast Days of the Armenian Church were observed including the Holy Week services. We wish to thank all of the visiting Clergy who were with us this year, Reverend Father Haik Donikian, Reverend Father Vahram Hazarian, Reverend Father Garabed Kochakian, Reverend Father Haroutiun Dagley, Reverend Father Mardiros Chebian and Reverend Deacon Aren Jebejian.

Three Lenten services and dinners were held on Friday evenings during the Lenten period.

We hosted an ALLARC sponsored program entitled "Armenian Wonderland" on Saturday, April 5th, for Sunday School students from Illinois and Wisconsin. Attendance for this program was excellent at 55 children between the ages of 3 and 15, who took a one-day religious and cultural tour to Armenia.

The Parish Council sponsored the annual Mother's Day Brunch on Sunday, May 11th, for all the mothers in the congregation.

The annual Armenian Fest, which was held on August 9th and 10th, was the most successful picnic to date. We would like to thank everyone who volunteered their services in making this such a great success as this is the church's major fund raising event.

We hosted a Midwest Regional Diocesan meeting on Saturday, October 4th, and welcomed His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, clergy and delegates from the Midwest parishes.

We celebrated our 33rd Anniversary on Sunday, October 5th, with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy by Reverend Father Garabed Kochakian, Chancellor of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, and a luncheon and program.

On Friday, October 10th, we welcomed the members of the Midwest Clergy for a series of lectures on the great Armenian Church Fathers.

On Wednesday, November 5th, we sponsored a "Night at the Races" at Maywood Race Track.

Two groups of our parishioners attended the Midwest premiere of the play "Nine Armenians", direct from New York, on November 2nd and 9th.

On Sunday, November 23rd, we honored Reverend Father Haik Donikian, on the 40th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood with a luncheon at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

Our annual Christmas Party was held on Sunday, December 7th, at the Green Dolphin Street Restaurant for an evening of good food, music and Christmas carols.

Over the past several years, we have witnessed a need to increase the electrical power available in the Church especially during the summer months. However, over the past several years, nothing materialized past the preliminary stages of obtaining bids for the services needed. During the year 1997, the parish council realized that we must act immediately on this matter. Therefore, we met with electrical contractors, received bids and decided to go ahead with the task. This updating will increase the electrical power available to 400 amps. The electricians would begin their work as soon as the appropriate permits and materials are obtained and should begin in January 1998.

The Cultural Hall was rented 13 times during 1997. Our thanks to Ms. Violet Koresian for all her efforts in arranging the rental of the hall.

The most important concern facing us was the pursuit of a full-time permanent parish priest and we expressed our concerns to His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian in a special meeting we had with him in October 1997. We were very pleased that in December, 1997, His Eminence and the Diocesan Council approved the appointment of Reverend Deacon Aren Jebejian to be the Deacon in Charge of our parish. His ministry will begin on January 2, 1998.

The Parish Council wishes to extend its heartfelt thanks to Rev. Father Haik Donikian, Rev. Father Vahram Hazarian, the Deacons--Charles Babikian and John Paklaian, the Choir members, our Diocesan Delegate Mr. George Nahabedian, the members of the Women's Guild for all their support and assistance all through the year, the Sunday School teachers, the Picnic Committee, the Auditing Committee, the Nominating Committee, Reserve Fund Committee, the Loosavorich staff, all the volunteers who served on the various committees, and faithful parishioners for their service to the Church.

I would again like to thank the members of the Parish Council, Ms. Violet Koresian and all others who have contributed to the parish in 1997.

On behalf of the Parish Council I would like to thank the Church organizations and faithful members who have worked diligently throughout the years without a full-time parish priest to keep our Church and Community active. We are in a very fortunate position with the appointment of Reverend Deacon Aren to begin the New Year 1998 with a strong and vibrant spiritual leader and we look forward to a bright and fruitful year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,



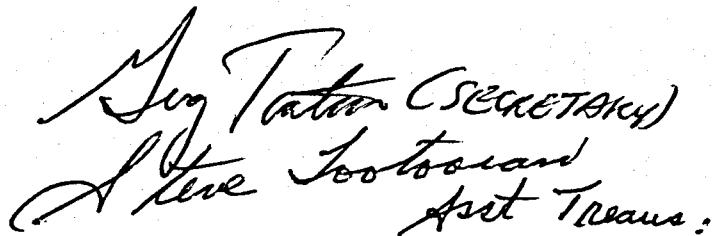
Michelle Babikian
Parish Council Chairperson



VICE-CHAIRPERSON



Treas.



(SECRETARY)
Steve Teetsorian
Asst. Treas.