

## Youth Group Annual Report

### St. Gregory Armenian Church of Binghamton

St. Gregory's Youth Group has now been in existence for over three years and hopefully its roots are firmly implanted in the Binghamton church community.

What started as a group of twenty youngsters, the oldest of whom were of Jr. H. S. age, has now evolved into a group of 25 young men and women, the oldest of whom are ready to embark on a college career. Time flies, children grow, and with growth develop a need for more independence and self-management. With a guiding hand we are trying to meet these needs.

The new slate of officers for 1975 is:

Chairman-	Suzanne Ketchoyian
Vice-Chairman-	Mimi Janian
Rec. Sec'y.-	Beth Garabedian
Corr. Sec'y.-	Ellen Hatounian
Treasurer-	Peter Fattal

Other officers are:

Sergeant at arms -	Kevin Baradet
Photographers -	Gary Rejebian & Armen Dekmejian

In addition to the Lenten Agape Feast and the usual ice skating, miniature golf, and swim session, undoubtedly, the most satisfying event of the year was our June Retreat at the beautiful Thornfield Conference Center in Cazenovia.

Our efficient and well balanced program included a lakeside Worship Service, meditation, movies, discussion sessions led by Father George and special guest Regina Ohanyan, singing, dancing swimming, baseball and volley ball. To add to the full enjoyment of the overnight event five boys and girls from the Troy Youth Group joined us and received a rousing welcome.

After much wholesome fun, new learning experiences, and little

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sleep, parting time became a reality, forcing our youth to leave their new friends with great reluctance. Promises were made for all to attend our church dance in the fall.

Many months of planning, time consuming work and sacrifice went into making our first Retreat a success. (We think it was worth the effort.)

Three fund-raising activities were held to cover the chartered bus expense of \$169.60. Thanks to your support, a total of \$189.00 was raised via raffle, candy sales and bake sale bringing our present balance to \$79.40 without the previous group's escrow fund of \$284.00.

In the fall, as a direct outgrowth of the Retreat our Youth Group hosted 15 boys and girls from Troy who did indeed come to attend our church dance. A lasagna dinner attended by more than 40 kids was given in their honor at the church hall prior to the dance. All of the youth slept in our homes and were gifted with tickets to the dance. The lasagna and <sup>guest</sup> dance tickets were donated by the Rejebian family. After church and breakfast the youths once again parted very reluctantly but not without first eliciting a promise from our kids that they would make every effort to attend their Retreat on Dec. 6th near Lake George. After making many inquiries and much telephoning this did not materialize and all the kids were very disappointed.

At any rate, pen-pal friendships were developed amongst Armenian youths with similar needs and upbringing and there is no doubt that they will find a way to meet again.

In October, a planning session was held. It was decided that we would depart from our requested trial separation of Senior and Junior youths for the time being since our group is too small to separate without loss of morale. Also, as of this year the youngest new members must be in Junior High School. In addition, one activity shall be planned for each month except when planning sessions are necessary.

A Sunday evening hayride followed by hot chocolate and donuts

was our October activity. In November eighteen youths went to a Dusters Hockey game at the Arena. A good time was had by all who attended.

Last month the Youth Group had a service project. They planned and executed a Christmas Tea for their grandparents and senior citizens. For this they wrote invitations in Armenian and English, they baked cookies, decorated tables and entertained their guests with Christmas carols, instrumental solos and Armenian dancing.

This month, 12 youngsters from Syracuse came for an afternoon of bowling followed by a buffet dinner which included pizza donated by the Fattal family in appreciation of the prayers and beautiful Sunshine Basket our kids prepared for her. Despite the fact that the Syracuse and Binghamton youth were unfamiliar with each other, 32 kids quickly became friends and this church hall vibrated to the sounds of dancing feet (American and Armenian) until 10 P. M. with promises of another get-together in Syracuse being discussed.

Soon our group will meet again to plan the new year's social, service and fund raising programs. Along with the self-management theme, we are planning to adhere more strictly to parliamentary procedure and to review and adopt a constitution prepared by Patty Ketchoyian and Linda Misakyan.

The entire Youth Group and I again extend our sincere thanks to Linda, our outgoing Chairman, for her dedication and a job well done. Our appreciation also to Father George and our parent advisors - Grace Baradet, Alice Ketchoyian, Ruth Garabedian and Alice Janian whose support and constant efforts have helped make all of the above possible. Our thanks also to all of you parents who cheerfully <sup>help</sup> supply refreshments and transportation. With your continued cooperation, St. Gregory's Youth Group will become increasingly effective as a binding influence

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on the youth of this parish and will provide a needed social outlet  
within the framework of Christian principles.

Respectfully submitted,

*Marion E. Rejebian*

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Youth Group Director

January 15, 1975