

CHOIR REPORT FOR 1976

During our country's bicentennial celebration, our choir has participated along with the other south side church choirs in a special bicentennial service in February. We joined together in a Thanksgiving service and most recently two weeks ago, our choir was featured during the ecumenical epiphany service singing Khoroot Medz. The choir has kept busy with these extra events in addition to maintaining the performance levels of the past. With the Archbishop's visit heading the past year's occasions for singing, the choir has also participated in Vartanantz, Easter, blessing of the grapes at the picnic grounds, the consecration of our latest icon, the Feast of St. Stephen on December 24th, Armenian Christmas Eve badarak, and choir orhnehk, or blessing of the water, service on Armenian Christmas Day.

We have also had some changes in our personnel, including a new organist. With Kevin McDermott not returning to school last fall and Pauline House moving out of town with her family, we'd ordinarily have a problem. But thanks to Father George's foresight and the interest of Michael Findikyan, we were prepared for those events and now seem all set at organ for the next couple of years. I would also like to note the returning of Rose Ketchoyian to our choir after an absence of over ten years.

In November I represented Binghamton at the Annual Assembly of the Armenian Church Choirs Association held in Detroit. Despite all the committee work and business sessions, I managed to have a good time. Especially moving was the badarak on Sunday with celebrant Archbishop Shnork Kalousdian, Patriarch of Istanbul.

I have been directing our choir for over four rewarding years. I am not sure how long I will remain serving. With graduation from college in May imminent, I am at a crossroads of my life. Bearing these circumstances, this year's goal will be to find and train an assistant choir director for the times I am ill or decide to leave Binghamton. On the whole, I feel I have developed an organized file of services and music that can be referred to and used by any person who chooses to direct.

In conclusion, I am looking forward to another successful year with the choir.

Paul Ketchoyian

