

ARMENIAN CHURCH OF THE HOLY ASCENSION

PARISH ASSEMBLY REPORT - JANUARY 1987

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School continues to operate on a team teaching approach with basically two teachers covering each class division. There are four class groups Pre-school, ages 3-4; Primary, ages 5-7 $\frac{1}{2}$; Juniors, ages 8-11; and Seniors, ages 12-16. The Sunday school has grown in number over the course of this year, from the initial nineteen students to a current registration of thirty-one pupils.

The teaching staff for 1986 included Dora V. Garabedian, Superintendent, Maureen Najarian and Salpi Tokatlian, Preschool; Linda T. Cartiglia and Roxy Terzian, Primary; Elsie Chaghatzbanian, Juniors; and Carlotta Garabedian and Lionel Ketchian, Seniors. The Sunday school welcomes Mrs. June Utecht who will assume Pre-school teaching responsibilities during January, 1987. The teaching staff continues to develop their own teaching plans as guided by the current Diocese and Sunday School curriculum and goals. The teachers also continue to meet monthly for curriculum meeting and planning sessions.

The SS meets weekly from 11:15 to 12:15 p.m. Assembly time, 11:15-11:30 includes general worship, a topic of educational benefit presented by the superintendent, and prayer. The remainder of the period is for individual classroom instruction.

The SS is meeting its original objectives to provide an atmosphere where children will learn about and explore the Bible, the Badarak, symbolism in the church, the significance of the Holy Days and feast days, and the applicable Armenian cultural aspects. The students have mastered the initial goal of reciting the Lord's Prayer in English and of making the sign of the cross. We continue the goal to learn the Lord's prayer in Armenian and now, to learn, the Kiss of Peace. Since the Fall of 1986 we have also begun studying the Creed. We have instituted having the classes attend church on a rotating, every-other-week basis for short periods of time.

The SS has had several initial requests honored over the course of this year. Bulletin boards were obtained and are now waiting to be placed in each classroom. The SS has purchased toys and games as well as been recipients of donations of toys and games. These are used as backdrops to keep the students busy and occupied when necessary. In addition, the SS has subscribed to the Diocesan magazines for the students, The Mustard Seed for pre-schoolers, Sunrise for the Primary and Juniors, and Avedis for the Seniors.

The SS has established a Young People's Hour which meets the first Sunday of every month. The children meet with Der Hayr for one-half hour prior to church on that selected Sunday. To name a few highlights, interactions between the priest and the children have included a communion breakfast, meeting with visiting clergy, learning more about Etchmiadzin, the side altars of the church, parts of the church service, the advent season and pastoral greetings.

The 1986 Lenten Season included having the children keep Lenten Denial Folders. The SS forwarded \$67.00 to the Diocese for contribution to their project for the World Hungry. The yearly fundraiser of the Palm Sunday Bake Sale (March, 1986) netted \$360.00. During Holy Thursday services, students participated in the ceremony of the washing of the feet. On Easter Sunday, in addition to attending church, the children celebrated with the Easter egg game. Students received flowering begonia plants on behalf of the SS staff to symbolize the renewal of life through the resurrection.

The SS closed the school year in June with a family picnic outing to Lake Quassapaug on June 14, 1986. A closing ceremony and program with a coffee hour was sponsored by the SS on June 15, 1986. Pupil recognition for attendance was given at this time.

September 14, 1986, the SS reopened with a Super Sundaes celebration as well as sponsoring the coffee hour. Children registered for SS and a \$10.00 fee for the first child and \$5.00 per additional child was charged to assist with the operating expenses. Twenty-seven were registered at this time with new children joining in October to bring the year end total to thirty-one.

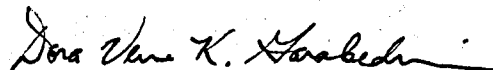
The Senior Sunday School class spearheaded a community service project during the Thanksgiving season with a food drive. Two food baskets, donations from the parishioners, and a \$10.00 gift check were donated to the Department of Social Services of Trumbull. A letter of thanks and recognition was received in return.

During the Christmas season the SS learned a Holiday song in Armenian, made felt Christmas banners depicting scenes from Christs' birth which decorated the church hall, trimmed the Christmas tree with hand made ornaments, decorated the church Hall bulletin board and celebrated the Christmas story with the use of the Advent Wreath.

Future goals and acquisitions of the Sunday School include the following. The Parish Council has been approached with a formal written request to assist in underwriting the SS with a monetary allocation on a yearly basis. The purchases of a tape recorder as well as Bibles are in progress. The Bibles will be given to each SS child at the thrid grade level on behalf of the SS. The teaching staff will be implementing the new Diocesan Curriculum in September, 1987. Mandatory teacher training workshops will be offered May through August of 1987.

The SS maintains a passbook savings account with People's Bank. The opening balance was \$216.23. The closing balance at the end of December, 1986 was \$402.02.

Respectfully Submitted:



Dora Verne K. Garabedian
Superintendent
Sunday School