

## Pastoral Report 1982

The Holy Eucharist was celebrated nearly every Sunday except for two days because of ice-storms. I don't recall taking a vacation although I am allowed four weeks and those Sundays the Blessed Sacrament was celebrated for the spiritual edification and comfort of us all. Spiritual messages and homilies were delivered on those days and on other occasions whenever the occasion called for it, sometimes being in two languages. There were numerous private meetings with individuals for instruction or consultation. And also numerous visitations to the sick be it to their homes or at hospitals. These services were not confined to our membership but to non-members as well.

During 1982 the following number of marriage and baptismal sacraments and funeral services were held.....

5 marriages; 3 funerals; and 6 baptisms

Whatever time I had for myself was given to reading and studying of material pertinent to my pastoral service. This, in fact, covers all subjects and fields since we see and experience the hand of God through Christ in all things.

The following is a summarized reporting of some of my activities during 1982 pertaining to my duties as Pastor and Administrator and also that which I did outside of those duties which I believed would be of benefit to the church community.

- presided over meetings of our church organizations and coordinated their activities
- assisted in the publication and mailing of the Sevan Newsletter and other circulars.
- took care of the necessary correspondence in Armenian and English.
- handled the purchasing and procurement of office and church supplies
- handling of the monies received during the week and 'in lieu of flowers' donation for the Treasurer. Many times when there was no Parish Council member attending a funeral the 'in lieu of flowers' donation would have been left in the plates if I hadn't attended to the matter.
- contacted the Church Stewards for our Stewardship Program through which \$1,300.00 was realized this year.
- attended the Diocesan Assembly and gave a report with our representatives.
- ordered Altar flowers when requested and took them to the sick or bedridden when the donors had no need for them.
- took charge of the borrowing of books from our church library and aided those who needed information for their school papers on our religion and history. The average length of a book withdrawal was about two months and it was only after many reminders that they would be returned.
- arrangements for the ceremonies on Armenian Christmas and also for a family to sponsor the dinner held on that day.
- had the liturgical and other books needed for our services rebound and in most cases the original donor bore the cost of this expense.
- from January until April attended meetings called by the Jewish Christian Council of Richmond for a Holocaust Commemoration held at the state Capitol at which the Governor spoke. I was called to give the invocation.
- made arrangements for Bp. Papken Varjabedian to celebrate, preside and speak at our Vartanantz Day Commemorative Celebration
- preparations for Lent and Holy Week with their services and proper decor.

- correspondence for the procurement of choir robes, sanctuary pictures and frame and the frame for the Lenten crucifixion picture
- made the payments for the choir robes that we had received.
- closed the account which was for the church windows and later the oil paintings for the church sanctuary.
- composed the calendar of events for the Joint Executive meeting held in February.
- made arrangements with the Armenian Assembly in Wash. D.C. and local television stations to have the film, "The Forgotten Genocide", shown and also the interview the Primate, Arachnort Surpazan on the program concerning Gomidas Vartabed. We were unsuccessful in our efforts to have the Primate's interview shown.
- Arrangements for a Martyr's Day Program and Dinner
- organized and participated in the ACYOA's Martyr's Day Blood Drive at the Richmond Blood Bank Center
- had pictures developed and articles sent to the Diocesan and other Armenian newspapers about the Governor's proclamation concerning Armenian Martyr's Day and also on the Mount Ararat painting painted and donated by Haig Jamgochian
- made arrangements for pictures <sup>to be taken</sup> of the interior and exterior of the church and had their slides together with information concerning our church sent to the Diocese to be used in the Diocesan calendar.
- problems encountered with the Richmond Newspapers concerning an article on the Genocide and subsequent letter to "Letters to the Editor" from the Armenian Assembly which the newspaper eventually agreed to print
- represented our church community at the ordination of a priest at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral and the banquet that followed.
- held several Religious Study Groups on the teaching of the Badarak
- made the proper arrangements for the 'Blessing of Grapes' service
- took care of the Educational Fund account whose monies are used to encourage persons to attend seminars such as that held for the youth at St. Nersess Seminary each summer.
- began a Cultural Fund from a donation <sup>sent by</sup> a couple living in Kansas City, Missouri. It was through a personal contact and correspondence that this was made possible. The monies were combined with the Educational Fund and it is now called the Cultural-Educational Fund.
- made arrangements to have a joint sponsorship of a cultural program with the Virginia Commonwealth University's Music Department at which Sahar Arzruni was to have attended. Because of cuts in state funds by the Governor we weren't able to have this event last year but will endeavor to have it this year.
- spoke on Armenian history at the Jewish Community Center
- attended meetings and participated in the service as our church's representative at the annual Thanksgiving Day service which we participate in with seven other religious communities
- organized and gave the explanation of the cultural display during the Food Festival Days
- made arrangements for the program on our Church Name-Day celebration which was postponed until Armenian Christmas because of inclement weather.
- made arrangements with the Salvation Army to have the food taken which would ~~be~~ otherwise have spoiled to be given to the needy
- celebrated the Blessed Sacrament service at Midnight service on the Eve of St. Stephen which is on Christmas Eve according to the western church calendar.

-purchased and installed a pair of tube candles.  
-held practises and gave instruction to participants in the processions on the Feast of the Cross and the Children's Processional March on Palm Sunday

We are hopeful of implementing a Membership Drive during 1983. There have been many meetings and serious discussions by the Membership Committee on this important subject. Proper preparations is essential before the drive begins. Our aim will be to bring new memebers to the membership roll and by that increase the revenue for our treasury. But most impartantly this will permit us to give more of our energies toward spiritual and educational matters which is sorely needed and also stength<sup>n</sup>the ties amongst the members of our church family with each other and with our Creator.

*Rev. Arsen Perseus*