

PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

"As each has a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace, whoever speaks, as one who utters oracles of God; whoever renders service, as one who renders it by the strength which God supplies; in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ". (1 Peter 4:10-11)

By the grace of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we the members of Christ's Holy Church have completed another year of service and dedication to our faithful community. We thank the Lord for the abundance of his blessings bestowed upon us this past year and we continue to pray that our works may produce more fruits during the coming year, bringing glory and honor to God and our Armenian Church.

Every year at the Annual Parish Assembly, we come together as a family working in the vineyard of this earth to assess the harvest of the past year and plan for the future.

The success of our community life is measured not only in terms of material gains but also more particularly in terms of spiritual gratification for a deed well done in the name of our beloved church.

As time passes, our horizons are broadened and our sights intensify. With the help of God in His infinite wisdom and divine inspiration we shall achieve greater accomplishments.

Acknowledgments of Services

We take this opportunity to thank our Deacon Charles Hardy, Sub-deacons Mikael Garoukian and George Kadamian, all Altar Servers and Choir members for their dedication and service to our parish.

To our Choir Director, Diane Vidian, Ass't. Carol Azarian, Organists Janet Cherkinian and Nancy Kaprelian we also extend our gratitude for the sound leadership and care given to inspire our congregation in song and melody at worship.

Also to our Altar Guild and flower committees we offer thanks and to the many individuals who attend to the care and beautification of our Holy Altar with fine linens and flowers.

Needless to say, the Parish Council is also to be commended for their excellence in attending to the spiritual and physical care of our christian family. A pastor's ministry is made fuller with the help, suggestions, recommendations and guidance of his people and in particular with this august body, our Parish Council, who has voluntarily assumed such a duty and commitment to share in that pastoral ministry, we say thank you and pray for their continued commitment.

Worship

The celebration of the Divine Liturgy (Soorp Badarak) is central to all worship in our Church. The Holy Eucharist is offered every Sunday as well as on special feast day commemorations. We feel encouraged with the response of our faithful to the Lord's invitation to his table and pray that many more will come forward to receive Christ as often and as frequently as He calls and invites us. Without the spiritual sustenance of the presence of Our Lord there is no gain nor meaning to material things which are offered to Him.

Our sermons delivered in both Armenian and English are yet another means of satisfying the soul and pray that our community heed the message of our Lord transforming His words into true christian acts and deeds.

The following special liturgies and services were celebrated:

January 5th	Theophany Eve (Wednesday)
January 6th	Armenian Christmas Day (Thursday)
January 8th	Jashou Badarak for Children
January 9th	Blessing of Water
February 10th	Vartanantz - Divine Liturgy (Thursday)

During Great Lent every Wednesday Evening, the Peace and Rest Services were conducted.

March 26th	St. Lazarus Day (Saturday) Jashou Badarak
March 27th	Palm Sunday
March 29th	Service of Wise and Foolish Virgins
March 31st	Holy and Great Thursday
	Vodnlva, Washing of Feet
April 1st	Holy and Great Friday
	Burial of Our Lord
April 2nd	Easter Eve
April 3rd	Easter Sunday
April 24th	Madagh Blessing, Martyrs Day
August 14th	Blessing of Grapes, Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
September 11th	Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
September 18th	Episcopal Divine Liturgy celebrated by H.E. Abp. Torkom Manoogian
November 23rd	Thanksgiving Eve Worship with St. Michael Episcopal Church
December 4th	Instructed Divine Liturgy
December 18th	Congregational Singing of the Divine Liturgy
December 24th	Western Christmas Eve St. Stephen's Eve

Sacraments and rites

Baptisms and Confirmations	4
Adult Confirmations	3
Weddings	5
Funerals	5
Engagement	1

Visiting Clergymen

Throughout the year we have had several clergy visit our church.

- On January 6th Rev. Fr. Untzag Nalbandian celebrated Armenian Christmas Liturgy
Rev. Fr. Zenob Nalbandian delivered the sermon.
- January 6th Rev. and Mrs. John Ambelang of St. Michael joined us for Armenian Christmas celebration.
- February 10th Rev. Frs. Untzag and Zenob Nalbandian joined us for Vartanantz celebration.
- During Holy Week - March 29th-April 1st - Very Reverend Fr. Arshen Aivazian, Dean of St. Nersess Seminary visited our parish and participated in services.
- Deacon Michael Chevian, Director of Recruitment of St. Nersess Seminary was present for the ACYOA Jrs. Sports Weekend.
- September - HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP TORKOM MANOOGIAN made a pastoral visit to our parish on the occasion of our 60th Anniversary Celebration and for the ordination of our young altar servers.
- Brothers from the Cappucin Monastery at St. Rita's visited our church for Badarak on September 25th.
- Also Rev. Fr. Tateos Avakian from Yegheknazor, Armenia visited our parish following the Diocesan Assembly at Palos Heights.

Visitations

Visitations are indeed a vital part of the work of the Lord. Contact with our faithful is an important means of keeping our parishioners close to their church. We have visit well over 175 families during this past year, blessing their homes, sharing in joys, bereavement and offering comforting word of consolation and encouragement as needful.

Visitations to shut-ins, infirm individuals and congregants are everyone's collective responsibilities in the christian community. As pastor we initiate this ministerial duty only to arouse the sense of responsibility and continuity within our total family membership. We pray that our church groups and individuals will personally participate in this act of faith and christian witness experiencing that warmth and joy of Christ we can bring to one another.

Publications

Our parish publications are of two kinds, weekly and monthly. Weekly our "Sunday Messenger" is prepared and distributed to inform our faithful about our faith, celebrations, remembrances (Hokehankisd services)

and on-going and up-coming activities within the community.

Our monthly publication The "Varak" is printed and mailed to church members as well and reports the life of our church in detail and as well serves educationally as a means of reaching our faithful informing them of our church, faith and traditions. We are most fortunate to have presently serving

- Managing Editor . . . Kari Akgulian
- Typists Mary Cherkinian
- Hunazant Hazarian
- Art & Layout. Nishan Akgulian
- Circulation Peter Kazarian

Ecumenical Relations

Presently we are members of two ecumenical groups. We participate monthly in gatherings with the Northside Clergy cluster consisting of Churches in the immediate area. Through our efforts, we have established a Food Pantry at Trinity Methodist Church. This has been done to alleviate the acute problem of hunger that prevails in our city and the many cities of our nation.

We continue our membership in the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation/ Dialogue group which is a greater Milwaukee association of clergy. We continue to meet to foster a better understanding of our two Apostolic Christian traditions. We hosted one such meeting in our parish this past September 8th. Presently, I am the Orthodox representative Co-Chairperson of this group for 1983-84 year.

This year I was asked by the Primate, His Eminence Abp. Torkom and our Diocesan Ecumenical Officer, Fr. Arten Ashjian to represent the Armenian Church and Diocese at a meeting of the National Council of Churches in Chicago. This was held Oct. 12-15 at the Lutheran School of Theology. A report was submitted to His Eminence who will share its content with other Armenian Bishops.

Educational Activities

As pastor we have spoken to various groups about the Armenian Church. We have spoken within our Ecumenical circles and lectured at Marquette University.

Bible Study

We continue to guide our members in our bi-weekly Bible Study gatherings, providing the orthodox teachings and understandings of sacred scripture. We encourage anyone interested in learning about our particular churches teachings, to attend this group. We are encouraged by the number of young adults who have joined the group.

Knowing The Armenian Church

This fall we completed 4 - 2½ hour sessions, lecturing on the history, theology, doctrine, dogma and life of the Armenian Church since her inception in 301 A.D. We were most pleased by the interest and participation of those who attended and were gratified to learn of their desire to continue this program.

community.
mailed to church
in detail and
faithful info
most fortunate

Servers

We have prepared young men to serve at our Holy Altar in various cities and levels. We witnessed joyfully the ordination of sub-deacon George Kadamian and the following young men as Thir acolytes) when our Diocesan Primate Abp. Torkom Manoogian visited in September.

- They are:
- Zaven and Michael Dadian
 - James Hardy
 - Michael Chardukian
 - Thomas and Steven Gengozian
 - Mikael V. Garoukian
 - Marc, Paul and Timothy Torosian
 - Chad Buchaklian
 - David Buchaklian
 - Mark and Matthew Margosian
 - Jason Mikaelian
 - Aram Katerdjian
 - Armen Vidian
 - Andre Tcheordikian
 - Lyle and Larry Dadian - Greenfield
St. John
 - Leif Peterson - South Milwaukee
Holy Resurrection
 - Armen Hadjinian - South Milwaukee
Holy Resurrection

We thank Sub-deacon George Kadamian and Kai Kazarian for instructing the younger boys and preparing them for their service at the altar. Also Deacon Charles Hardy is presently continuing the education of our Senior Acolytes, preparing them for their next level of holy orders in our church.

We are fortunate to have Deacon Charles Hardy, and Sub-seacons Mikael Garoukian and George Kadamian oversee the scheduling and assigning of all our young men who serve our church weekly.

Special Diocesan Appointments

Presently by the Appointment of our Primate, we serve the Diocese as a member of:

1. Diocesan Department of Religious Education
Curriculum Development Committee
2. Curriculum Author and Writer
3. ACYOA Jrs. - Mid-West Regional Co-Ordinator
4. Committee on Department of Youth Ministry
5. Diocesan Co-Ordinator of Altar Servers Training
Curriculum and Study

Fellowship Gatherings

We have organized fellowship gatherings on a weekly basis following the Divine Liturgy. We have invited each church group to sponsor a weekly gathering and have appointed as co-ordinators Rose Kaprelian and Mary Akgulian to assist and guide parishioners who sponsor weekly fellowship. Thus far, we have had a most favorable response and have witnessed that these gatherings are growing weekly.

Parish Schools

Both Armenian Language School and Church Sunday School began their 1983-84 academic years with renewed enthusiasm.

Armenian School - We have appointed a new Board which has and is working in harmony with the staff to keep open our school and keep alive our Mother Language. The students who attend (numbering between 12-15 weekly) have excellent instructors. Yes progress is made in teaching them but we all must do more to arouse the interest and desire of our children to learn Armenian. It is our duty. Not only the language but the Armenian Spirit via our culture, music, literature and arts must be encouraged. If we do not take care now then the entire Armenian character of our church community in years to come will mean nothing to the future generations. We have asked Carol Azarian and Holly Kazarian to instruct cultural activities and these have shown fruitful but the staff of teachers needs our total support and efforts. We ask you as parents and friends to also help keep Armenian, the Armenian church community.

Church School - This year our Co-ordinator Donna Barootian has organized the staff well and is responsibly guiding both teachers and students to an active year of the learning of Orthodox Faith. We added a tenth grade to our curriculum this year and are hopeful that an 11th and 12th will follow. This year tremendous stride in learning our faith through art and music have been made. Both Alice Hazarian as art instructor and Yeretzgin Roberta as music instructor have helped round out the total educational experience our youngsters must have to express themselves and their faith in Christ. We are gratified with the zeal of our teachers and the caliber and expertise they give to educating the young church and continually pray for their successful endeavors.

For Our Youth

During the months of June, July and August 5 of our young people attend the St. Nersess Summer Study conferences which are held at the seminary building in New Rochelle, New York. They were each awarded a \$100.00 scholarship from the parish as applied to their overall costs. We guided the efforts of our ACYOA Jrs as they successfully hosted this year's Mid-West Sports Weekend this past May.

Also as President of the ACYOA Seniors of Wisconsin we attended the ACYOA Assembly and Sports Weekend held this year in Toronto Canada. We were most pleased and proud of our young people who received this year the "A" award, given to the most outstanding chapter within our Diocese. We continue to guide both Senior and Junior groups keeping and maintaining amongst them the harmony and good will.

Avaks Society

We experienced great joy as we honored our senior citizens (Avaks) at a special banquet prior to the Thanksgiving Holiday. All parishioners 70 years of age and over were honored as the pioneers and pillars of the St. Mesrob community. We offered our thanks to them individually and presented them with a special citation and gift on behalf of the entire community. It is our intention to make this an annual event whereby the number of our Avaks will increase and the presence and efforts will all the more be felt and witnessed.

Appreciation

It is again very much in order to thank our Parish Council members, the beacons of light that have guided with God's help and inspiration the St. Mesrob family. Also to our Diocesan Delegates, Auditing and Nominating committees we say thank you for their fine work. For the physical maintenance and care of the church, the Projects committee is also to be commended for their concern and dedicated efforts.

To all parish groups and faithful parishioners, we offer our blessings for contributions made to our church community. Most importantly however, we thank God our Father for granting us the health, wisdom and zeal to sustain the cohesion in our christian family at St. Mesrob. As we enter a new year, we ask for your continued prayers for guidance and inspiration in fulfilling our pastoral ministry to our Holy Church and for the greater glory of God.

"Come let us build the holy tabernacle of light; for therein did light shine forth unto us in the land of Armenia."

Rev. Fr. Garabed Kochakian

Rev. Fr. Garabed Kochakian
Pastor

For 1983