

PASTOR'S REPORT 1994

One of the major spiritual themes of 1994 was "Reaching Out" to others to share the love of Christ through our actions and prayers. One of the major themes of 1995 will be Christian witness. Witness is simply sharing with others how the Lord helps you, loves you and cares for you. We will continue on our path of growth in Jesus Christ in reaching out, in love and in witness.

I have been here for one and a half years and I consider it a privilege and "godsend" that I am here at St. Mesrob. Thanks to the Lord, previous pastors and our work together, much has been done. However, much is still undone or is still in process. The Church is not yet considered a place to regularly gather in worship by the majority of those who consider themselves parishioners. Much is yet to be done with the various youth age groups. But, together with the newly hired youth coordinator, Meline Grigorian, I know that great strides can be made in youth ministry.

Fr. Yeprem's Pastoral Ministry

All the statistics are based on 48 weeks which takes into consideration being out of town for Diocesan meetings, Hye Camp and vacation

Pastoral Home Visits 4 visits per week (190)

My visits usually have a purpose. I do not simply visit people to make social calls. The purposes, to name a few: Shut ins, bereaved, pre-baptism, illness, home blessings, elderly and many other special pastoral reasons.

Visits to hospitals and nursing homes are of primary importance in the Christian ministry and I hope that you are also considering it important in your Christian discipline. I averaged 2.5 visits a week (119), visiting 3 patients (140) per week.

Teaching Ministry

This has been a real joy for me. I enjoy discussing the Faith, sharing ideas, teaching and learning.

Bible Study met 26 times. My aim in Bible Study is to teach people how simple and straight forward the message in the Bible is. We then enjoy sharing ideas and reactions.

Religious Study met 24 times. This group discusses issues in the Church and in contemporary society.

Bible Fellowship meets monthly from September through June. We discuss the challenge of keeping the faith in an ever changing world.

Acolyte training conducted 29 times. We have a growing and enthusiastic group of young people desiring to serve the altar.

Vacation Bible School was held July 6 and 8, with a presentation on Sunday, July 10. The theme was Noah's Ark and how God loves his creatures, especially us. Alice Hazarian, Pam Kazarian, Amy Burmeister, Claudia Kalinoski and many adult and teen volunteers made these days a real blessing to the children and church.

The Midwest Third Annual Retreat was hosted by St. Mesrob, September 30 and October 1. The 34 participants discussed the Mission of the Armenian Church.

Hye Camp (7 days) Fr. Yeprem was the Religious Director.

Lenten Educational Series - Focus on the Family

Three programs were presented on Sundays of Lent: Media Literacy; Christian Parenting; Power in Parenting the Young Child.

Wednesdays of Lent- After the services, meditations were given.

Fall Educational Series

Five programs were presented on Sundays in the Fall Contemporary Moral Issues, Abortion; Bob Kann - Storyteller; Remnants of Armenia Past (Nick Akgulian); Wrestling with Angels (on prayer); Preaching Mission to Armenia (Haig Tcheurekdjian).

Ordinations

During a pastoral visit from our Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, March 7, several of our youth were ordained to the rank of "Tbir" (Acolyte). Aaron McGraw, David Barootian, Michael Barootian, Eric Buchaklian, David Johnson, Heidi Kadamian, Matthew Nersesian and Michael Rasmussen.

Meetings

St. Mesrob organizational meetings - 136 (2.8 per week)
Regional meetings - 10
Diocesan meetings - 2

Functions

St. Mesrob related functions - 54
Regional functions - 8

Baptisms - Seven

Danielle Linnea Vidian, Marina Elizabeth Kaprelian, Talene Gabrielle Dadian, Simon Rose Akgulian, Grace Elizabeth Bedoian, Alexandra Martha Topalian and Marissa Lauren Mahnke.

Marriages - Five

Randall Madey and Nancy Mikaelian; David Marggraf and Kari Akgulian; Dane Richeson and Elizabeth Chobanian; Jeffrey Smith and Jodi Korakian; David Burmeister and Amy Barootian.

Funerals - Five

Evabelle Chiaussky; Ben Kamakian; Inga Peterson; Tod Mikaelian; Adriene Mikaelian.

Other aspects of Ministry

The "Varak" is published and mailed out every other month and the weekly "Messenger" is handed out to those attending services.

I visited the Waukegan Parish five times to perform Divine Liturgy and conduct educational programs.

A Christmas Eve Dinner for the fire victims of Douglas Terrace was organized by Charley Roy.

I am involved in various community activities such as the Racine Clergy. I also give talks to various community groups (Rotary, Jerstad School, et. al.)

Special Thanks

I would like to recognize all those who keep the Ministry going so well: Deacon Charles Hardy and all of the servers for their diligence and dedication; Margaret Dadian, our Choir Director, and all the faithful choir members; Lauren Chalekian, Sunday School Superintendent, and the staff, for their committment to the Word of God; Mary Cherkinian and Claire Kadamian who keep the administrative aspects of St. Mesrob functioning so well; the Parish Council, under the Chairmanship of Thomas Gengozian, for their hard work, concern and care in leading this parish.

A Sad and Joyous Event

In August, we learned of the passing of our Chief Patriarch and Servant of Jesus Christ, Catholicos Vasken I. Having led the Armenian Church through the Communist "imprisonment" of the Armenian people, he died. But before his death, he left his mark on the Armenian Church by means of his building and renovation work and his general spiritual guidance. His passing is both a sad and joyous event. Sad, because we have lost our leader; and joyous because he goes to the "Chief Shepherd", Jesus Christ. We pray that the Holy Spirit select a good and worthy successor.



Fr. Yeprem Kelegian
Pastor