

Who's life is it anyway?

We often wonder who we are and what is our place within the universal order. It's important to sit back for a moment and ponder our lives and our ultimate purpose. If we ponder and answer according to what our world dictates, then we find that we are to believe that the focus should be on worldly values.

Worldly values include our focus on monetary gain, social status, physical appearance, momentary and often fleeing pleasure as well as accumulation of material possessions. These are the values which we find through the media and a downwardly spiraling moral decay within society. When we get caught up in this earthly world, we are surely on the wrong path.

Christ reminds us that His message is not of this worldly kingdom but of the Heavenly Kingdom. His message is one which is not temporary but eternal. We all want something better in life, but why not strive for the best?

When we are able to put all that we want into a true Christian perspective, then we are able to see what is right and how to attain that "heavenly" life we should all be seeking. When we try to see things through the eyes of God, then we get a better perspective of our true purpose in life.

Do we understand who we are in the "Big Picture"? In order to do this we have to go back to the beginning. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1). From an Orthodox perspective we understand that it is God who creates, not mankind. God in his infinite power created us and gave us life. We often forget that it is God who gives life. God gives life and God takes life away. When we understand this concept, then we are able to more fully understand our relationship with Him.

What is our relationship with God? Do we understand that all we are and everything we have belongs to God and not to us? As sinful humans are we arrogant to think that what we have is from us? Do we think that our homes, families, jobs, worldly possessions and wealth were created and accomplished by us and only us? Where did we get the talents, brains and graces in order to be worthy of these things? They come from God and only from God.

The precious gift of life itself is from God. He has given us the ability to procreate and procreation takes place at His will and blessing, not ours. Our very life and being comes from God. During the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, one of the prayers states, "Also, O Lord, grant unto them (the couple) children according to Thy will, and the wisdom and strength to raise them as worthy members of Thy Holy Church." It is by God's will that the precious gift of life is given. Who are we to destroy or condemn someone to death? It is only God who can take life away, again by His will.

So if we are able to understand that life itself is a gift from God, our creator, then we must have a cognizant understanding of what our relationship with Him should be. If we truly believe and understand that our very lives are a gift from God, then the question must be, what is my response to this awesome and wonderful gift? Do we truly understand what is incumbent upon us in our relationship?

If I, as a child of God, know that all that I am and all that I'm given is from God, then I must respond to His love by showing appreciation for all of these gifts. The first way that we can express our appreciation is to worship Him through thanksgiving. We must thank the Lord for what He has done for us. The Armenian Church offers us the perfect way to show this appreciation through coming together and celebrating the Divine Liturgy.

At our own baptism, following the Sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation, prior to receiving Holy Communion, the priest takes the infant in his loving arms and approaches the Holy Altar and bows down in place of the infant and prays, "(Child's Name) servant of Christ coming from the state of catechumen to baptism and from baptism to worship, now worships before this holy altar, this holy sanctuary, and the holy font..."

Our first act as a Christian is that of worship. Our perfect response to God's love for us, the perfect way of understanding who's life it really is.

Fr. Aren Jebejian
Pastor

Parish Council Report

As we head into fall, with winter soon to follow, the Parish Council is busy making arrangements for all our year-end events. The Nairi Choir, once again, has taken up the responsibility of planning our annual Anniversary Dinner, scheduled for November 4rd. This year the theme will be French. Also, the Nairi Choir will be organizing the Christmas Party, currently scheduled for December 3rd, details to follow. But one of the most important things starting this fall is the Sunday School.

On September 17, we welcomed back our Sunday School students, and were blessed to see many new faces as well. Father Aren delivered another memorable Children's Sermon, which never ceases to yield at least one memorable quip from the children's pews. But here's the sixty-four thousand dollar question: Do you know the names of all our Sunday School students? And the bonus question: Do you know who their parents are?

Don't be surprised if you don't. It occurred to me as we were starting the year that I don't either! But that's an easy problem to fix. Introduce yourself and ask them. Now, everybody shouldn't do it all at once in one day; the poor kids would be overwhelmed. Take your time. Walk up to one or two you don't know and ask them their name and who their parents are, and equally important to introduce yourself and any connection you have to other members of the Sunday School. Repeat as necessary. Over the course of the year you will get to know them all, and they will get to know you.

And what could be a better way to start the fall?

Charles Demirjian
Parish Council Chairman

ST. GREGORY SUNDAY SCHOOL

What a great year this is expected to be for St. Gregory's Sunday School. Registration for the 2006-2007 Sunday School year began on Sunday, September 17 and was a huge success. Twenty-one children from eleven families were in attendance to participate in a variety of activities to reinforce their Christian education and to commemorate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The eagerness of

the children to greet the teachers and to renew friendships with their fellow students was truly heart-warming.

The students, ranging in age from four to fourteen years, interacted as a unified family, sharing and helping each other as they constructed bread dough crosses to culminate their lesson on the significance of the Holy Cross and the benevolence of our Lord Jesus. It was also rewarding to see the children's remembrance of the proper way to make the sign of the cross— using three fingers of the right hand.



An extra special part of the day was the Children's Sermon that Father Aren traditionally delivers on the third Sunday of each month. The children shared their summer activities with Fr. Aren, and listened as he explained the ceremony of the Exaltation and passed around the blessed basil for the children to touch and smell.

The day ended with a meeting with Fr. Aren and the Sunday School parents as they discussed their concerns and expectations of Sunday School on their children's lives. Our special thanks to the following families for their attendance on this day:

Guy & Martha Adami (Lucia, Eve, Harry);
Chuck & Seta Babikian (Charles, Sarah);
Steve & Liana Boghossian (Sosy, Ani);
John & Kenarr Chiodo (Alex, Francesca);
Parris & Kathy George (Reno);
Brian & Keri Ipjian (Ani, Aidan);
Stephen & Marla Joyner (Emerald);
Arden & Tammy Karian (Kayla, Lenna, Mason);

**Andrew & Lisa Moore (Lauren, Anthony, Sarah);
John & Shooshan Paklaian (Kyle);
Roy & Cynthia Panthier (Cindy, Maria, Alisha,
Roy).**

Sunday School registration is an ongoing process and we are looking forward to the inclusion of the many additional families who have been faithful participants in our program.



Mary Kazarian

Sunday School Superintendent

Are You Looking for Miracles?

"Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!"

In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.' "

Math 27: 39-43

This Gospel passage that you have just read tells us one of those beautiful stories that compose the earthly life and mission of our Savior Jesus Christ. In the Gospel according to Matthew we see the Jews who asked Christ to perform a miracle in order to show them that He is the only begotten Son of God. They asked for a miracle to use as a cornerstone for their faith. They were looking for a miracle in order to believe in Christ, and even when they crucified Christ they were still demanding him to perform it saying, "If you are the Son of God, save yourself, come down from the cross." They didn't realize that Christ's crucifixion, as well as His death and resurrection, was really a miracle, a life-giving miracle.

This passage reminds me of another Gospel story, when the resurrected Lord appears to the

apostle Thomas who said, "Unless I see the scars of the nails in his hands and put my finger on those scars and my hand in his side, I will not believe." This is what human nature was and is. We need to see, to touch something in order to believe. It seems that through today's Gospel reading our Lord is asking us, "Do you believe me, because you see me? How happy are those who believe without seeing me."

These Gospel stories are not just past, but they are alive as ever. Aren't we like those Jews, who were asking for a miracle? Aren't we like Thomas who didn't believe unless he saw and then he said, "My Lord and my God." Like them we all are looking for miracles in our lives, making it a never-ending task.

Miracle... is not our life a big enough miracle for us, aren't we looking for something that we, as Christians, as Armenian Christians, already have, that we already live, without realizing the value and existence of that miracle in our lives? We just need to clean the eyes of our souls, to redeem our souls from the darkness of blindness, and become stronger in our faith in Jesus Christ. Only then we will be able to see something that is invisible, to touch something that is unapproachable, to live and overcome something that is so hard to live and to deal with. We all have lived miracles, and if we believe in them, we will see them. May our Lord help us stop doubting and make us stronger in our faith, heal the blindness of our souls and fill us with His wisdom to be able to see and appreciate everything that is visible and invisible, everything that He has done for us, manifold sinners. Make us worthy to be called His sons and daughters and glorify His name now and always.

"We give you thanks O Lord, our God, with visible light you gladden all your creatures and with the intelligible light of your commandments you have enlightened all who believe in you.

Strengthen us also, O Lord, during this day and times, so that with lightened minds, we may always do what is pleasing to you and attain the eternal good gifts with your saints. Through the grace and mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom befits glory,

lordship and honor now and forever and ever.
Amen."

A Prayer from the Morning Service
From the Editor

St. Gregory's Annual Picnic 2006

St. Gregory's 32nd Annual Church Picnic was held on Saturday and Sunday, August 12th and 13th, on the church grounds. Once again the weather was ideal both Saturday evening and Sunday.

The many months of planning and preparation by the picnic committee and all of the subcommittees resulted in a fest that seemed to run itself as everything fell into place as planned. Although our picnic is the major annual fundraiser for the parish, its success is measured in many non-financial ways. The number of attendees enjoying our Shish Kebob dinners was a record as nearly 1300 dinners were served. The enthusiasm and fun being had on Saturday night by everyone dancing and enjoying the music on a perfect evening was evident by all those who didn't leave when the music ended. The visiting among many old friends, the meeting of new people, the smiles of the children sitting on a pony or winning a prize for playing games are all just part of what our picnic has become to the parish, the Chicago Armenian community and our neighborhood friends. The long hard work of those who cooked and baked was evident by the best ever "sweets table" that provided so much pleasure to the palate.

The "silent auction" provided opportunities and bargains for everyone who found items of interest. The "mini raffle" had more tickets sold than ever before and the "Really Big Raffle" sold out. The successes of these endeavors are a tribute to the efforts and generosity of all those who contributed their time and talents.

The success of our picnic is evident in many ways and is a collective effort of our many volunteers and generous contributors. Although we don't have the final accounting for the picnic, we do know we had record income.

As we reflect on this year's picnic, we recall the countless conversations, our first planning meeting on March 14th, the e-mails that continue as we finalize remaining details and the extraordinary



dedication of all the volunteers who made this picnic the most successful picnic in our history!

Thank You to all!

Armen Zakarian and Craig Koresian
Co-chairmen 2006 Picnic



Our ACYOA Member in Armenia

This summer two members of our St. Gregory ACYOA, Sam Mrofcza and Mark Berberian, visited Armenia working with Habitat for Humanity. We thank Mark for sharing his experience with us.

This summer the ASP trip for the first time was involved with Habitat for Humanity. The trip was a mix between sightseeing and working on homes. Fr. Hovsep, the leader of this year's ASP trip, took us to many sights in and around Yerevan and we had overnight excursions to Lake Sevan and Nagorno-Karabakh. It was great seeing the places I learned about in Sunday school, while at the same time discovering and learning about new places.

We worked at four different habitat locations. We worked with an Oshagan youth group and the people for whom we were building houses. They were so appreciative of us even though our physical labor contributions to the homes were small. While the tasks were moving buckets of sands, plastering, mixing cement, the future residents were so grateful they would be give us tan breaks, lavash breaks, and soorge breaks. Their hospitality seemed to be as overflowing as the pile of sand we were shoveling.

One of my favorite physical tasks was scraping rust off the roof of Fr. Nersess Rooshanyan home next to the Mesrob Mashdotz's burial site. We

had breath-taking views and it was extremely peaceful. While the food the new homeowners gave us was delicious, we had amazing meals everyday. Every meal started with fresh tomatoes and cucumber salad, fresh soft lavash. That alone could have been a meal but the lahmajoon or khoravats or dolma that would follow was equally as scrumptious.

All in all, the entire trip was wonderful. There were great sights, great people, and incredible food.

*Mark Berberian
St. Gregory ACOA Member*

Women's Guild Report

Since the last issue of the Loosavorich, the Guild has been inactive as far as Guild projects, but very active for the past few months - baking, baking,



and baking for our Armenian Fest. The Women's Guild pastry booth is one of the highlights of our Fest and the most popular. We feel this could be our banner year, but we have to face reality as we feel it is time for the younger women of our parish to step forward and give us a helping hand.

Our meetings are held on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. with dinner preceding the meeting. We have found that evening meetings has been more successful than having them on Sundays after church services. If interested in joining us, don't hesitate to call me - 847-437-0845 and I will be delighted to put you on our mailing list.

Remember our retreat is on October 21st!

 **Rose Tootooian**
Corresponding Secretary

Being a Part of a Church Family

In talking to parishioners, encouraging them to be active in church life the question of participation always comes up. It is a fact that personal prayers are imperative to our faith. Participating in church life is about more than personal prayers. Christians, participating in a community of faith is the gathering together of a family.

We are all members of a community, and each of us has unique talents and insights to offer. Sharing these gifts with each other strengthens us in our collective goal. One of the greatest joys of a parish family is to come together and participate.

Regular church participation allows us to become part of a church family who loves and cares for one another. When we love our fellow parishioner in this way, we can celebrate our commitment to one another.

Both individual prayer and interaction with other church members are vital to a Christian's spiritual growth. Meeting regularly with other members is an opportunity to be encouraged in our journey as a Christian.

Participating in church life allows us to help us to minister both to the outside community as well as within the church. Along with communicating with each other in actions and words, we have a responsibility to minister to the other members of our parish family and to offer support and encouragement, a listening ear, and a helping hand. At times we can benefit from having a family to offer these things in our moment of need.

Arnold Koresian
Member of St. Gregory's Reserve Fund Committee

"When He was on the cross, you were on His mind."
"Faith is not belief without proof, but trust without reservations."

STEWARDSHIP

The Stewardship Committee, Charles Demirjian, Arden Karen, Arnold Koresian, and George Nahabedian, is urging all parishioners to take part in the Stewardship Program.

We currently have 37 stewards and our goal is to reach 50 by the end of 2006. Your participation allows the Parish Council to continue with capital improvements and program development. With the increase of the financial resources of the church, we can enhance our programs for Christian education for adults, teenagers and children. Call the church office for a Stewardship Brochure.

We, as a parish, must commit deeply to our Armenian Apostolic Orthodox faith, practice sacrificial giving and exercise stewardship (time, talent and treasure) of our church.

Stewardship Committee



NOTEWORTHY NEWS FROM NAIRI CHOIR

Fall is in the air, and while calendar-wise the year is winding down, the church is in full swing with many events being planned. The Nairi Choir will host a regional workshop on Saturday, November 18, 2006 in our large Cultural Hall beginning at 10:00 A.M. The workshop will be conducted by Mr. and Mrs. David Livingstone (Richmond, Virginia) and Ms. Arpi Kouzouian (Holy Trinity, Cambridge, MA), Rubik Malian (Southfield, MI)—all are members of the Association of Armenian Church Choirs of America. In addition to the workshop, the Nairi choir will be hosting an evening dinner that will honor choir members from the Midwest area with 40 years or more of service in Armenian Church choirs. Everyone is invited to attend this celebration. More details will follow in upcoming Sunday bulletins or you can call the church office if you are interested in attending the workshop and/or dinner.

As I last told you in the last issue of the Loosavorich, choir is looking to have new choir robes made—actually, 2 sets! One set will be for regular Sundays and one set will be for feast days. We have settled on material and now need to find a seamstress. If you know of anyone with the talent who might be able to make the new robes, please contact George Nahabedian (847/967-5649). Of course, this is a paying job.

Speaking of feast days...for those of you who are surprised when you come to church on a feast days (Christmas, Easter, Assumption of the Holy Mother of God, Transfiguration and the Exaltation of the Cross) to find an extra plate collection being taken...there's an extra plate collection taken for the choir! Money collected is used to make donation to the Association of Armenian Church Choirs of America and also goes towards our scholarship fund. The choir is happy to give scholarships to individuals pursuing their deeper knowledge of the Armenian Church. Scholarships in the past have gone to individuals who have attended the various study programs offered by St. Nersess Seminary. The AACCA (Association of Armenian Church Choirs of America) has now begun intense training for your youth so that parishes will enjoy the labors of choir directors and organists. This is the future of our church life and it needs all of our support.

We are beginning to talk about how we can help the Sunday School by setting time aside on a Sunday to teach the children the Divine Liturgy. Artur Petrosyan will be very "instrumental" in leading the children with help from myself. Choir member Michelle Babikian along with Superintendent Mary Kazarian lead the Sunday School worship service on Sunday mornings.



Georgette L. Mrofcza
Choir Director

KIDS KORNER



The Ball of Gold

At one time a rich couple and a poor couple lived next door to each other. The poor people, who had a small child, laughed and had great happiness every day. The rich people had much money but were never happy; no sounds of laughter were heard in their house.

One day the rich woman said to her neighbor, "You are poor; you are hungry. Why is it that you are so happy all the time? Every night laughter fills your

house and spills outside. It even touches us next door.”

The poor woman merely said, “We have a ball of gold. I toss it to my husband, and he tosses it to me. This is what brings us so much happiness.”

“A golden ball?” the rich neighbor asked.

“Yes.”

So the rich woman went home and told her husband that their neighbors tossed each other a ball of gold every evening. This was the cause of their happiness.

“If that is all, that’s nothing,” the husband said. “I’ll have a beautiful golden ball made. Then we’ll toss it to each other, and we’ll be happy, just like our neighbors.” So, he had a beautiful golden ball made. But when the husband tried to throw it to his wife, it was too heavy to lift. When the wife tried to catch it, the golden ball brushed her fingers. Instead of happiness that night, they shed tears and pain.

The next morning the rich woman visited her neighbor again. “Tell me, what kind of a golden ball is it that you have? My husband had a golden ball made for us, but it is too heavy to throw and crushes our hands as we catch it. What kind of a ball is it that does not hurt you but brings happiness instead?”

“Our golden ball is this beautiful child,” the poor woman said. “We toss him to each other, and his joy brings great happiness to us. He is the ball of gold which fills our home with laughter and love.”

So you see, the rich try to find happiness in their wealth, but frequently it is without joy. Real happiness is found in family and children. And in this way, the poor can be richer than the rich.

100 Armenian Tales

“God hears the prayers of those who turn to him in faith and fulfills them according to His will, for the good of all.”

“Faith is the first factor in a life devoted to service. Without it, nothing is possible. With it, nothing is impossible.”

Color Me!



Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

Psalm 34:13-14

Did you know...

There are three major orders in the ranks of the clergy of the Armenian Church; deacon, priest, and bishop. Within each of these orders there are ranks or subdivisions.

Under the order of deacon we find first the stole bearer. He is not ordained but given the stole to use while serving in the Church. The stole bearer may serve at the altar, read the litanies and sing. Second, there is the rank of subdeacon that is conferred by ordination and is a specific rank in the church. Finally, there is the deacon. Only the deacon has the right to present the chalice.

The next order in the church is the priest. In the Armenian Church there are two types: the married priest (Kahana) and the celibate priest (Goosagron Kahana). Priests have the right to perform all services and sacraments except ordination. The celibate priesthood has a number of divisions. The first rank of celibate priest is Apegha, which means monk. The

celibate then usually receives the rank of Vartabed or doctor of the church. The last rank of the celibate priesthood is Dzairakoyn Vartabed. We address married priests as Der Hayr and celibate priests as Hayr Soorp.

The third order is bishop. The bishop has the right to perform all services and sacraments including ordination. Under the heading of bishop fall primates and patriarchs. The primate is the spiritual leader of a diocese and a patriarch usually presides over a historical see. We have many diocese and only two patriarchies, Jerusalem and Istanbul. Under the title of bishop we find the following divisions: bishop and archbishop. We address bishops as Surpazan Hayr.

The highest order in the Armenian Church is Catholicos, the Bishop of Bishops and Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians. He resides in Holy Etchmiadzin, the Mother See of the Armenian Church. Throughout history we have had more than one Catholicate, but they only exercised local jurisdiction. Of these only the Catholicate of Cilicia, who center is Antelias, Lebanon has survived. The Catholicos has the special right to consecrate bishops and prepare the Holy Oil (Muron). We address the Catholicos as Vehapar Der.

There are proper greetings for the Armenian clergy according to their rank. We want to provide you a short guide to those proper forms for greetings.

Greeting Vehapar: When meeting the Catholicos' (Vehapar), greet Him by saying, “Աստուած Օգնական, Վնիսփառ Տէր” (Asdvadz Ognagan, Vehapar Der) which means, “God be Your helper, Your Holiness.”

Greeting Patriarch: When greeting a Patriarch, greet Him by saying, “Աստուած Օգնական Պատրիարք Սրբազան Հայր” (Asdvadz Ognagan Badriark Surpazan Hayr), which means, “God be Your helper, Your Eminence.”

Greeting Archbishop and Bishop: When meeting an Archbishop or Bishop, greet Him saying, “Աստուած Օգնական Սրբազան Հայր” (Asdvadz Ognagan Surpazan Hayr), which means, “God be Your helper, Your Excellency/Grace.”

Greeting Celibate Priest: When greeting a celibate priest, greet him by saying, “Աստուած Օգ-

նական Հայր Սուրբ” (Asdvadz Ognagan Hayr Soorp), which means, “God be Your helper, Father.”

Greeting Married Priest: When meeting a married priest, greet him by saying, “Օրհնեցէ՛ք Տէր Հայր” (Orhnetzek Der Hayr), which means, “Bless me, Father.”

REMEMBER: Immediately after saying the proper greeting we should kiss the clergy's right hand.

Prayers of the Armenian Church

The Armenian Church is a living and praying church. It is a living church, because it is the unity of the Armenian believers in Christ. It is a praying church, because our unity itself is based upon the prayer. An Armenian faithful never starts any daily task without saying a prayer. In this issue we would like to introduce to you the prayer that we usually say when we are to break bread together.

Հաշակնացոյ խաղաղութեամբ ըզկերակուրս,
Jashagestzook khaghaghootiamp uzgeragoorus,
Let us in peace eat this meal,

Որ պատրաստնալ է մեզ ի Տնամէ.
Vor badrasdial eh me zee Deiarneh;
Which is prepared for us by the Lord;

Օրհնեալ է Տէր ի պարգևս իւր. Ամէն:
Orhnial eh Der ee barkevus yoor. Amen.
Blessed is the Lord in His gifts. Amen

(To be continued)

Hokehankisd of Requiem Service

The term *Hokehankisd* is classical Armenian and means the "rest of the soul". This is a church service during which we pray to God that He may have mercy upon the soul of a person who had passed away. Another term commonly used for *Hokehankisd* is *Requiem*. We beseech God to forgive the deceased person's sins committed willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or unknowingly. We ask the Almighty and Merciful God that He may make the deceased worthy of the eternal happiness in God's Kingdom. It is basically a prayer to God beseeching His kindness and love to have mercy upon our beloved one who has fallen asleep and makes him/her worthy of the Eternal Life.

Hokehankisd Services may be requested by more than one parishioner for any Sunday other than the five major feast days (**Daghavars**) in the Armenian Church: Christmas, Easter, Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ, Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God and Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Requests should be made by Thursday of that week in order to facilitate placing the names of the deceased in the Sunday Bulletin. If parishioners give an advanced date, **Hokehankisd Services** are also posted on the bulletin board for the sole purpose to having friends of the deceased know in advance of the date of a **Hokehankisd**; thus giving them an opportunity to attend services. Please contact Fr. Aren or call the church office if you have any questions, special needs, or wish to contribute candles or flowers or sponsor a fellowship in memory of your loved one(s). If you wish to sponsor a fellowship in memory of your loved one(s), please contact **Women's Guild Chairlady, Sandra Hitik at 847-674-2333**.



Reading Holy Bible Together

Bible Study classes have been ongoing for the past several years, meeting on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month. Father Aren conducts the classes. With his extensive education and knowledge, he very ably guides us to better understand the Bible readings.

Over the years, we have completed the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke, the Acts of the Apostles, and are currently reading the letter of St. Paul to the Romans.

Bible Study is a very interesting, educational and spiritually fulfilling experience. We are continually learning about Jesus, the early Christians Church traditions, and historical events. We read together, share our ideas, and have learned a great deal about the teachings of our Church.

We invite and encourage new members to come and learn about our faith together.

Michelle Babikian

NEWS! NEWS! NEWS!

Surprise!! Michael and Gregory Tootooian hosted a party honoring their mother, **Rose**, on the occasion of her 80th birthday. Family and friends

gathered at St. Gregory's for an evening of dining and dancing. It was a "special" evening for a very "special" lady. **HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ROSE!**

HATS OFF to our co-chairs **Armen Zakarian** and **Craig Koresian** for a wonderful and "very profitable" church festival. We are told it was the most successful picnic for our parish. Congratulations to all our "hard workers" for a job well done.

WELCOME HOME: On Sunday, August 20, we had the great pleasure of welcoming back **Deacon Vahe Hovsepyan** as our guest homilist. This time he brought along his lovely wife of one year, **Rou-zanna**. We were honored that Dn. Vahe and

Rouzanna celebrated their first wedding anniversary with us here in Chicago. They were warmly greeted by all parishioners at our fellowship hour following church services, which was hosted by Arnold and Dorothy Koresian.



We must also thank Dn. Vahe and Rouzanna for their

design of our new "Loosavorich Logo". They will always remain a part of the St. Gregory Chicago family. The following is a message we received from them:

Dear Very Rev. Fr. Aren and St. Gregory Parish:

We would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation for your thoughtful invitation and for the wonderful opportunity presented to us, my wife and myself, to visit and pray with you. The St. Gregory parish has a special place in my heart. It has become a home, a loving and caring family for me since I arrived to the United States. It has been more than a year since I have left Chicago and I was very happy to see you in good health and spirit. My wife was very excited to meet you, to see the people whom she had already known from my different

stories. We are very touched by your open-hearted hospitality.

May God bless you and be always with you and your loved ones.

Prayerfully,

Dn. Vahe ad Rouzanna Hovsepyan

JOURNEY FOR HUMANITY: On October 1, on the feast of the Cross of Varag, St. Gregory hosted 6 fellow young Armenians, Deacon Vahe Abovian, Edward Majian, Hasmig Tatiossian, Albrik Zohrabyan, Levon Sayadyan, and Sarkis Nazaryan. As Fr. Aren mentioned in his sermon, they are the “nonviolent freedom fighters” who are participating in the Journey for Humanity, a walk across the country that began in Los Angeles on June 27 and is scheduled to end Oct. 30 in Washington, D.C. Along the way, they are participating in rallies and meeting with elected officials to talk about genocide, including the current situation in Darfur, Sudan. During the Divine Liturgy Fr. Aren asked everybody who were present in the church to pray for our special guests and their mission. After the Divine Liturgy a special prayer was said for our heroes. During the fellowship hour they presented to St. Gregory parish their mission and had a discussion about the current genocides. We pray that our Heavenly Father may give them strengths and keep them safe in their long journey, and bring success to their mission, for their mission for Humanity.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Parishioners are encouraged to become dues paying members and take an active role in the church. The membership dues are \$125.00 per person and \$75.00 for seniors. In order to become eligible to vote at the 2007 Parish Assembly Meeting in January, all parishioners must remit their 2006 dues before December 31, 2006.

NEW ARRIVALS

Nicole and Timothy Kersten were blessed with a daughter, **Mackenzie Kathleen**, born on August 2, 2006. Proud grandparents are Patrick and Kathleen Moore and Tom and Kathy Kersten.

Donna and Michael Brunso were blessed with their fourth son, Mathew Gregory, born on September 14, 2006. Proud grandmother is Agnes Vartabedian.

Keep in Your Prayers

“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” (Matt 21:22)

Jeffrey Alloian
Kathy Burke
Susan Byrne
Arsen Demirjian
Gregory Demirjian
Glenna Cholakian
Marty Hamparzumian
Harry Kent
Mary Kerridan
Grace Klujian
Haiganoush Manoyan
Cynthia Paklaian
Mary Sommese
Nancy Weiss

May God touch them with His healing hand and grant them good health and strong spirit.

Engagement

Congratulations and best wishes to **Tamar Hazarian** and **George Bikoma** on their engagement, Saturday, September 2, 2006. Tamar is the daughter of Fr. Vahram and Yn. Shooshan Hazarian. Very Rev. Fr. Aren Jebejian conducted a ring blessing ceremony.

GUIDELINES FOR BAPTISM

1. A date shall be set for baptism in joint consultation with the Pastor and arrangements must be made three months prior to the sacrament.
2. All baptisms are to follow the Canons of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church. The Sacraments will be explained by the Pastor.
3. All donations are the responsibility of the person involved. It is a tradition in the Armenian Church that the Godparents incur the costs of the church portion of the expenses as well as any participating clergymen. The customary donation to the church is \$150.00 for dues paying members (\$300.00 for non-dues paying members).

4. The gift to the Pastor shall be left to the family's discretion. The fee for the services of a visiting or guest priest is according to the individual wishes of the family (the customary gift is \$125.00 plus travel expenses). A deacon is necessary during the sacrament and the customary gift is \$75.00. If a specific deacon is requested, the Pastor shall be the one to invite him.

5. Before any priest is engaged, the Pastor **must** be consulted. According to protocol of the Armenian Church, the Pastor must be the one to invite any guest clergy. If the guest priest is a member of the Armenian Church he may be invited to perform all or part of the service. In addition to an Armenian Priest, should a priest of a different religious tradition be invited, the Pastor shall decide the appropriateness of his participation. The Pastor will assign to him those portions he sees fit according to the Canons and traditions of the Armenian Church and it should be clear that any priest of a different religious tradition is an invited guest and not a con-celebrant.

6. One of the Godparents (Godmother or Godfather) of the child to be baptized must be a member of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church. Each child to be baptized will have only one Godmother and one Godfather.

7. The Armenian Church has no explicit provisions for a Godmother at Baptism. We can consider a Godmother the person who takes care of the child during the performance of the Order of Baptism by holding the child during the ceremony, and dressing and undressing the child at the prescribed times.

8. The specific items needed for baptism (should be provided by the Godparents) are the following:

INFANTS:

A. A chain and cross for the Neophyte (Newly Baptized). The cross must be Armenian in style. "Crucifix" style crosses are not part of the tradition of the Armenian Church.

B. A **white** outfit to be worn after the Chrismation.

C. One or two large white towels.

D. A "Narod" will be provided by the church.

It is recommended that the Pastor meet with the parents and Godparents at least once, prior to the Baptism, in order to explain the Sacrament.

ADULTS: To be instructed by the Pastor

9. "Infants" and "Adults" will be determined by specific case.

10. Photographs may be taken at any time during the ceremony. Caution should be used by the photographer (or videographer) not to blind the eyes of the Priest, Deacon or any other member of the baptismal party. **At no time nor for any reason** will the photographer ascend the steps of the Altar or be at the Altar itself.

11. A baptism is a sacrament of the Armenian Church and a public service and no person may be excluded from the Church, except where the invited list approximates the seating capacity and if cards of admission have been issued.

12. After the ceremony, because Holy Muron (Holy Chrism) has been used to anoint the child when he/she is bathed for the first week, the bath water should be poured into the soil rather than in a water waste system.

13. If the Pastor, Deacon or other guest clergy are to be invited to a reception, he (they) should be sent an invitation.

For questions about the Baptism service, feel free to contact the pastor or call church office.

APPRECIATION

To the following who donated grapes for the Feast Day of the Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God:

Mr. and Mrs. Sarkis Balian, in memory of Nevart Der Nersessian

Anahed Ohanesian, in memory of Mariam Ohanesian

Varujan and Yeranuhi Caliskan, in memory of Armenuhi, Garabet, Levon & Marta

Jack and Glenna Cholakian, in memory of Kimble, Fundukian and Cholakian families,

Dr. Jeff Wittmus, in memory of Veronica Bedigian

Michelle Babikian

Violet Koresian

Philip and Mary Battle

Helen and Nishan Babikian

Shirley and Harry Paloian, in memory of parents and son.

Thank you to **Mary Kazarian** for donating the large altar candles in memory of her brother Arakel (Rocco) and father Manoog Kazarian

The Parish Council is deeply grateful to **Mathew Klujian & Sons, Inc.** for their efforts and time in cleaning the carpeting in the small hall and stairways. Their commitment to St. Gregory is never-ending.

Thank you to **Ursula Bedrossian, Helen Kuefner** and **Agnes Vartabedian** for donating the basil used for the Blessing of the Four Corners on Sunday, September 17, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

DONATIONS TO THE LOOSAVORICH

We are forever grateful to our donors for a wonderful start for the Loosavorich. May God grant them according to their hearts.

Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Frankian
Mary Hagopian
Maryanne Johnson
Sema Kachigian & Family
Mary Kalenian
Elizabeth Kamajian
Helen Kuefner
Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Koresian
Lueddy Kurkjian
Mr. and Mrs. John Marcantonio
Mr. and Mrs. George Nahabedian
Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Norman
Sara Boyajian Pardo
Steve Tootooian
Rose Tootooian
Joyce Markarian Williamson

We have a grand total of \$1,700.00.

Thank You!!!!

"We often think of great faith as something that happens spontaneously so that we can be used for a miracle or healing. However, the greatest faith of all, and the most effective, is to live day by day trusting Him. It is trusting Him so much that we look at every problem as an opportunity to see His work in our life."

WOMEN'S GUILD BAKE SALE

The Women's Guild will accept orders for the following baked goods:

LAHMAJOON—3 DOZEN LIMIT

CHOEREKS—3 DOZEN LIMIT

KATAH—2 LIMIT

CHEESE BOEREKS (TRIANGLES)—3 DOZEN

PITA BOATS—3 PACKAGES

ROJIK—2 LIMIT

The deadline for accepting orders will be October 29. All orders must be picked up on Sunday, November 19, **FOLLOWING** church services. Please place your order by calling the church office—773-637-1711.

**DON'T MISS OUT ON ST. GREGORY'S
FAMOUS DELICACIES!**



Save the Date

*For St Gregory's
42nd Anniversary Dinner*

Under Paris Skies

NOVEMBER 4, 2006

\$30 / PERSON

Details to Follow Soon

SAVE the DATE

*For St Gregory's Annual
Christmas Party*



DECEMBER 3, 2006

DETAILS TO FOLLOW