

Սուրբ Երրորդութիւն Հայաստանեայց
Առաքելական Մայր Եկեղեցի
Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Mother Church
Զայն Voice

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The St. Louis Bible - The Pantocrator, God the Son, as the Creator of the universe.

2226 Ventura Street • Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 486-1141 Office; (559) 486-1939 Fax
www.holytrinityfresno.org

We wish all of our
Amazing fathers a
Happy Father's Day



I thank the Lord for the father
He gave me. I'm so blessed I
honor God and my dad for
their daily love and joy.

Լեզուներով խօսելու շնորհքը

Մարդկային պատմութեան ընթացքին Աստուած մարդը հարստացուցած է գանազան շնորհքներով, որպէսզի մարդուն միջոցաւ ու անոր ըմբռնողութեան սահմաններուն մէջ ան կարենայ ըմբռնել Աստուծոյ զօրութիւնն ու իշխանութիւնը:

Երբ թերթատենք Հին Կտակարանը, այնտեղ կը տեսնենք թէ Աստուած իր ընտրեալներուն գանազան շնորհքներ պարգեւեց. ինչպէս օրինակ, Յովսէփին՝ երազներ մեկնաբանելու շնորհքը, Մովսէսին՝ գանազան հրաշքներ կատարելու շնորհքը, Սամուէլին՝ մարգարեութեան շնորհքը եւ այլն: Այս բոլոր շնորհքներուն նպատակն էր համոզել ժողովուրդները եւ մանաւանդ Իսրայէլի ժողովուրդը, թէ Աստուած ամենազօր ու ամենազեւ է. Ինչպէս նաեւ, Ան Իսրայէլի փրկութիւնն է:

Իսկ Նոր Կտակարանին մէջ մենք կը հանդիպինք այն իրողութեան թէ Աստուած մարմնացաւ եւ մեր մէջ բնակեցաւ: Ան իր առաքեալներուն սորվեցուց թէ մենք որպէս Աստուծոյ զաւակներ ինչպէս պետք է Աստուծոյ կամքը կատարենք, Ան նաեւ իր առաքեալներուն միջոցաւ բոլորիս սորվեցուց, թէ ինչպէս պետք է սիրենք եւ ներենք զիրար: Քրիստոս իր անձը գոհեց, որպէսզի բոլորիս մեղքերն ու յանցանքները ներէ: Ան իր յարութենէն եւ համբարցումէն ետք իր խօստումը կատարեց, առաքեալներուն դրկելով միխթարիչը՝ Սուրբ Հոգին, որուն միջոցաւ Սուրբ առաքեալները քաջութեամբ քարոզեցին Քրիստոնէութիւնը:

Կորնթացիներուն ուղղած առաջին նամակին 12-րդ գլխուն մէջ, Պօղոս առաքեալ կը խօսի Սուրբ Հոգւոյն Ծնորհքներուն մասին, որոնց կարգին կը դասէ նաեւ լեզուներով խօսելու շնորհքը:

Սակայն ի՞նչ էր լեզուներով խօսելու պարգևը:

Ա.- Առաքեալները այս շնորհքը ստացան, որպէսզի Քրիստոնէութիւնը քարոզէն աշխարհի չորս կողմերը: Անոնցմէ շատերը ձկնորսներ ու պարզ արհեստաւորներ էին, ուստի միայն երբայերէն լեզուն գիտէին: Սակայն Սուրբ Հոգւոյն այս պարգեւին շնորհիւ, անոնք կարողացան երթալ աշխարհի չորս կողմերը եւ Քրիստոնէութիւնը քարոզել ժողովուրդին. իւրաքանչիւրին իրենց լեզուով:

Բ.- Երբ Պօղոս առաքեալի Կորնթացիներուն ուղղած առաջին նամակին 14-րդ գլուխը լաւապէս սերտենք, այնտեղ պիտի հանդիպինք առաքեալին «Անձանօթ լեզուներով խօսողը մարդոց չէ որ կը խօսի» եւ «Լեզուներ խօսողը միայն ինք կ'օգտուի, մինչդէռ Աստուծոյ պատգամները հոչակողը ամբողջ եկեղեցիին շինութիւն կը բերէ» Խօսքերուն (2-րդ եւ 4-րդ համարները):

Այս խօսքերով, Պօղոս առաքեալ կու գայ մեզի փաստելու այն իրականութիւնը, թէ լեզուներով խօսելու շնորհքը անձին հոգին հարստացնող շնորհք է եւ ոչ թէ եկեղեցիին շինող ու գորացնող: Այսօր դժշախտաբար ունինք շատ մը «եկեղեցիներ», որոնք կը հրապարկեն թէ իրենց հաւատացեալները լեզուներով կը խօսին եւ այդ պատճառաւ կ'այլպանեն բոլոր անոնք որոնք այդ շնորհքը չունին: Այսպիսի մարդիկ կամ «հաւատացեալ»ներ ստախօսներ են եւ կը ծաղրեն Աստուածաշունչ մատենաբ:

Ուստի զգոյշ ըլլանք եւ պահպանենք մեր ընտանիքները, ընկերներն ու ջրջանակը:

The Gift of Speaking In Tongues

From the beginning of the ages, God has given the gift of miracles to His chosen individuals to make people believe in His Devine power, authority, and absolute dominion on earth and over the heavens.

In the Old Testament, we read about God's gift to Joseph of explaining dreams and wisdom. Also, we can read about the fact that God granted Moses lots of abilities to show the Jewish people His almightiness. Also, we know that God granted the ability of prophecy to Samuel, to make the Jewish people be aware of their works and acts. There are so many people and narratives in the Bible that show us about God's gifts to people.

At the age of Christianity, God showed Himself as a human and lived among us. Jesus Christ taught His disciples how to make God's will done on earth, how to love one another and how to forgive each other. He sacrificed himself to cleanse our sins and transgressions, and after his resurrection and ascension He kept his promise by sending the Holy Spirit to His disciples, who granted them the ability of speaking before the kings and the governors without having fear and, the ability of performing miracles and most importantly the ability to spread the Joy of our Lord Jesus Christ worldwide.

One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit was the Gift of speaking with tongues. While Speaking about the gifts, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, and exactly in the 12th chapter, Paul the Apostle speaks about the verities of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. One of those gifts, is the gift of speaking with tongues.

Speaking with tongues back at that time meant two things.

I.- In order to spread the Bible worldwide, the apostles needed to know more than one language; in other words, the apostles needed to know the Greek language besides Hebrew, because they wanted to spread the Light of our Lord Jesus Christ all over the Roman empire, where the people use the Greek language. As you know, they were fishermen and they did not know Greek. God granted them the ability of speaking the language of the people to invite them to the knowledge of the true God, by their own language. And we know that the apostles went all around the world to teach Christianity to the gentiles and the Jews.

II.- When we read the first epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, especially when the Apostle speaks about the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit, we see the gift of speaking with tongues in those gifts. Referring to this subject the apostle says, 'For anyone who speaks in tongue does not speak to men but to God' (I Cor. 14:2) and after a bit he also says 'He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself' (14:4).

By saying these words, Saint Paul the apostle wants to tell us through the Corinthian people that it is right that speaking with a tongue is a gift from the Holy Spirit, but this gift is personal and not congregational. Today we have lots of "churches" who pretend that they are speaking in languages. Those churches are trying to prove the apostle wrong, because in their opinion he who speaks in a tongue has the spirit in him, and he who does not speak is not even close to God. Those men who show up speaking tongues in front of a crowded people are showing off, and the truth is they are trying to make fun of the Bible, because the gift of speaking in a tongue is a personal gift as we mentioned; it is a gift that makes the person talk to God, but these people are pretending that they are speaking to God in front of the public.

Dear Parishioners,

Summer is here and shelter in place will be a phrase we will never forget and hope never have to do again. The reopening of the church will be soon as we await directions from our Prelacy. Once we reopen there will be church guidelines that we will need to follow to assure we all remain safe. We will keep you posted as the plans are unveiled.

I want to thank those listed below who donated to the hall remodel project. With our church financials being set back by not having any events or church services the board has decided to start the remodel in July of 2021. This will give all of us time to get back to normal both personally and our church family. We are optimistic that the project will begin next summer. If we were to get a large donation to fund 50 percent or more in the next couple of weeks, then we could begin this summer.

Jasmine is planning our VBS summer Bible Program for our kids; stay tuned for the details. We are not certain on the status of our picnic weekend that we normally have at the Armenian Home. I can assure you that we are anxious to get events going and we will start as soon as possible.

Thank you to all who have served on the altar and those on Facebook who have helped us to "Take the Church to the People." It has been successful in keeping us all informed.

May God Bless us All and keep us safe as we go through summer.

Thank you to our Hall Remodel Donors

| | |
|---|---|
| Patricia Abrahamian & Family <i>(I/M Mother Isabelle Abrahamian)</i> | Paul & Margaret Hokokian Scott & Linda Jura |
| Alan & Michele Asadoorian | Harout & Tanya Kalajian |
| Angel Basmadjian | Edward & Marian Koroyan |
| Jack & Alberta Bedoian | Sharon Krikorian |
| Garbis & Maida Bezdjian | Hamo & Carine Lalehzarian |
| Veronica Boolootian | Tania Martell |
| Harry Buchaklian | Charles Mosesian |
| Bob & Cherye Caire | Pauline Ohanessian |
| I/M Vernon Poochigian | Rose Ohanessian |
| Stephanie H. Caprelian | James & Linda Parnagian |
| Anna Terzian da Silva | Gladys Peters |
| Michael & Barbara Doehring | Dr. Randy & Kathy Shahbazian |
| Sonya Gage | Arminee Shishmanian |
| Massis Garabedian | Marsha Bazoian Smith |
| Nabil & Asma Garabet | <i>(I/M parents Eddie & O'Shea Bazoian and son Craig Smith)</i> |
| Krikor & Lucy Geyoghlian | Harold Tufenkjian |
| Mike & Annette Gulian | Azniev Vartanian & Family |
| Ashot & Armenoui Hagopian | Gary Vartanian |
| Arthur Hampar | Stan, Jr. & Carrie Zulewski |
| Bob & Dorothy Juskalian | |

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to Stephanie Stockdale and Ghaith Saggaf on the birth of their twin babies, daughter **ANNAH** and son **ZAHID**, born on Tuesday, February 4, 2020. Also, we congratulate big brother Noah and sister Eden, grandmothers Kathryn Kevorkian-Stockdale and Amal Sabri. All family members and relatives are full of joy for these blessings.



Congratulations to Paul, Jr. and Gabbrialla Khatchadourian on the birth of their son **HAGOP GEBBRIAL KHATCHADOURIAN** on Wednesday, February 19, 2020. We also congratulate sister Alexandra, grandparents Boghos & Osana Khatchadourian and Henrick & Alicia Guyterz.

BAPTISMS



On Saturday, April 18, 2020, **ALEX VARTAN BAGDASARIAN** received the Sacrament of Baptism. We congratulate his parents Nicholas and Christina Bagdasarian, godparents Hagop and Mary Djaridjian, siblings Gina Evans and Mary Djaridjian, grandparents Sam & Debby Bagdasarian and Seta Madoyan. Alex is the grandson of the late Vartan Madoyan. *We congratulate Little Alex for reaching this milestone.*

Men's Society Catering
is offering for sale appetizer-size
cheese berags, 24 for \$10.
Please call Ruby at 439-3319
to place your order.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:11-13

God created us and has plans for each one of us. He is a sovereign God. He never intends to harm us. Nothing happens without His permission, Lamentation 3:37, Matthew 10:29-31. Also, no matter what we face in life, God allows them and He is in control.

During life trials many think that God is testing us to see what we will do and where we are in faith. God is omniscient. He knows our past, present, and future. He knows everything and knows us better than we know ourselves. He allows tests to draw our attention so we see and know where we are in faith. God’s thoughts and ways are much higher and beyond our comprehension. Isaiah 55:8-9.

Sometimes God shares with us and reveals His thoughts and plans. Yet, He will not reveal everything or give us an explanation. God wants us to trust Him completely and not partially.

Proverbs 3:5-7 says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and turn away from evil.”

Every believer goes through life trials. They are spiritual training by our Heavenly Father to strengthen our faith. Proverbs 3:11-12 + Hebrews 12:5-9. Moreover, God works in us to prepare us for higher levels of faith and allows more opportunities to serve Him. James 1:1-8.

No one likes to go through trials and hardships. We are humans and we, the believers are not immune to pain. Oftentimes we ask God why? We also pray to God and ask Him to take away the trials and God understands that. Rather, we need to ask Him, God what are You telling me through this trial? What do You want me to do? Ask Him to increase your faith and give you spiritual wisdom. Surrender to Him and ask His will to be done. Luke 22:42

Throughout the Bible, God talks to us and provides everything we need. We need to read and study the Bible more. We also need to get closer to God through prayers. More importantly, listen to Him. As a result, we will be able to shift our focus to His point of view, understand and recognize His will, and align our thoughts to His. 2nd Timothy 2:16.

Our battle is with evil and not with God. Ephesians 6:12, 2nd Corinthians 10:3-4+17-18, for Jesus won the battle against evil on the cross and gave us victory. Colossians 2:13-15, 1st John 5:4-5. Romans 8:28 says “And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.”

Remember, one of Jesus’ definite and encouraging promises is in John 16:33 “I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.””

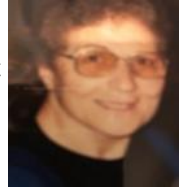
God bless you and be with you all

FUNERAL SERVICES



Funeral services were held for **SIRANIK GHARIBIAN** on Monday, May 4, 2020 at Yost & Webb Funeral Home. Interment was at Forrest Lawn North Hollywood. Our sincere condolences to her son Vahe Gharibian and her extended family and friends.

Graveside services were held for **OSSANNA BOGHOS PROUDIAN** on Tuesday, May 5, 2020 at Masis Ararat Armenian Cemetery Our sincere condolences to the Kortian, Proudian, Santikian and Adourian Families.



Graveside services were held for **EUGENIE HERMINE TOROYAN VARTANIAN** on Friday, May 15, 2020 at Masis Ararat Armenian Cemetery Our sincere condolences to Vartan, Arda, Raffi, Armen and the Vartanian, Bayrakdarian, Toroyan, Ayyazian, Jierian, and Tufenkdjian families.

MEN'S SOCIETY

Submitted By: Richard Bedoian

Hello from the Holy Trinity Men's Society. The last few months have been very hard for our group as we have only been able to meet one time this year. Our Annual Palm Sunday Breakfast had to be canceled for the first time in over 50 years.

As President, I have called to reach out to many of our members as have others in our group. We hope and pray we will be able to meet very soon and have a great dinner and rekindle the personal relationships we have developed over the years. Watch out for an announcement of when that will be in the near future.

We hope all members are doing well and staying safe in these uncertain times. Please reach out to either the church office, myself or any other member if you are in need of any assistance.

On a sad note, our members extend our heartfelt sympathy to Bob Tusan and his sons Jerry and Robert for the loss of his wife and their mother, Frances, recently. A wonderful person we will all miss!

Stay safe and we hope to see you soon!

The Fence Man

There was a large group of people gathered. On one side of the group stood a man, Jesus. On the other side stood another, Satan. Separating them was a fence running through the group. The scene set, both Jesus and Satan began calling to people in the group. One by one, each having made up his or her own mind, went to either Jesus or Satan. This kept going for a time. Soon enough, Jesus had gathered around him a group of people from the larger crowd, as did Satan.

One man joined neither group. He climbed the fence that was there and sat on it. Jesus and his people left and disappeared, and so too did Satan and his people. The man on the fence sat alone. As this man sat, Satan came back, looking for something which he appeared to have lost. The man said, "Have you lost something?" Satan looked straight at him and replied, "No, there you are. Come with me." The man said, "But I sat on the fence. I chose neither you nor him." Satan said, "That's okay, I own the fence."

Message: God has told us through his prophets that we are free to choose between good and evil. We may choose liberty and eternal life by following Jesus Christ. We are also free to choose captivity and death by following Satan. "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters." - Jesus in Matthew 12:30

Get Well Soon!

The Pastor and the Board of Trustees wish to express to all church members who are ill and not feeling well, (listed or not listed below) a speedy recovery.

Sharon Krikorian

ՀՈԳԵՀԱՆԳՍԵԱՆ

Պաշտօն պիտի կատարուի.....,

Յունիս 7

ՍԻՐԱՆԻԿ ՂԱՐԻԲԵԱՆԻ մահուան բառասունփին առիթով, խնդրանքով՝ գալկին Վահե Ղարիբեանի: *Այս առիթով Ս. խորանին ծաղիկներ կը նուիրեն:*

Յունիս 14

ԷՏՈՒԸՐՏ ՊԱԼԱՃԱՆԵԱՆԻ ԵՒ ՌՈԶԱ ՊԱԼԱՃԱՆԵԱՆԻ մահուան 25-րդ տարելիցին առիթով, խնդրանքով՝ Րուպի Պալանեանեանի եւ Ընտանիքին: *Այս առիթով Ս. խորանին ծաղիկներ կը նուիրեն:*

Յունիս 21

ԱՐԴԸՐ ՎԱՐԴԱՆԵԱՆԻ մահուան 26-րդ տարելիցին առիթով, խնդրանքով Ալիս Վարդանեան եւ Ընտանիքին: *Այս առիթով Ս. խորանին ծաղիկներ կը նուիրեն:*

HOKEHANKIST

Will be said for.....

June 7

SIRANIK GHARIBIAN on the 40th day of her passing, requested by her son Vahe Gharibian. *Altar flowers are donated in their memory.*

June 14

EDWARD BALADJANIAN AND ROSA BALADJANIAN on the 25th year of their passing, requested by Ruby Baladjanian and Family. *Altar flowers are donated in their memory.*

June 21

ARTHUR VARTANIAN, a longtime church and Men's Society member on the 26th year of his passing, requested by the Alice Vartanian Family. *Altar flowers are donated in his memory.*



In loving memory of Arthur Vartanian, beloved son, brother, uncle, husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather on the 26th year of his passing. In honor of Father's Day and in celebration of a life so beautifully lived. Years may come and go but your memory and infinite love for our family will never be erased. Thank you for blessing us with such a wonderful life. We will see you again in heaven where you are waiting for us always. "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Psalm 91:11

In Loving Memory of Joseph Sahakian (Dad) upon the 8th year of his passing. The Philip and Susan Sahakian Rivas Family honor his memory, spirit and continuous influence each and every day.

Warm greetings from the Holy Trinity Ladies' Guild! We hope your summer is off to a good start. These definitely are challenging times and we hope you're staying safe. We miss seeing all of your faces.

Our guild President, **Evelyn Hamamjian**, continues to reach out to members through phone calls. Faith and friendship are more important now than ever.

While our events continue to be on hold, Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church has increased their social media presence. Are you following the church on Facebook? If not, please do. In addition to church services being streamed Sundays on Facebook, you'll also see special posts honoring this year's Graduates and Father's Day. In May, I had the honor of interviewing each of the eight-living past Mother of the Year recipients, all of which are also members of our Ladies' Guild. You'll find the articles published here, in this month's Voice. I hope you enjoy learning more about: **Iris Sahatdjian, Virginia Sarabian, Vars Gaston, Diana Shirin, Hasmig Aaronian, Rosemary Minasian, Sophia Mekhitarian** and **Sossie Djabrayan** and their contribution to our church and community. For those of you that liked and commented on the Mother's Day Facebook posts, thank you for your involvement.

Prior to the pandemic, our Ladies' Guild cooks were busy preparing for the April Deliveries and Palm Sunday Bake Sale. The cancelation of those events left our freezer full of kufta and baked goods.

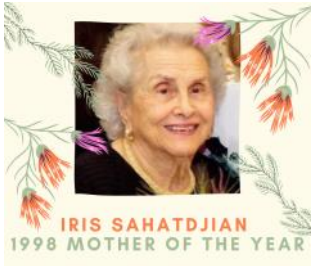
Last month we began selling the items via phone orders. You all kept **Mary Ekmalian** and **Patty Torosian** busy! We sold out! Mary took the calls and Patty delivered the orders. A little over \$3,500 was raised, which includes some thoughtful cash tips and even a dozen home raised organic eggs! There was even an order placed from San Diego. It was packed in ice and shipped overnight. In total there were 39 orders. A huge thank you to each of you!

The Ladies' Guild would like to thank the following women who helped cook/bake the items:

- The Kufta team headed by **Beverly Bargamian** and **Madeline Kachadooran**
- The Almond Cookie team headed by **Susie Parnagian** and **Mary Belemjian**
- Mary Belemjian** for the persimmon bread, date/fig breads & simit
- Mary Ekmalian** for the almond gatah, cheese berags & simit
- Elaine Hanoian** for the banana breads
- Barbara Mortanian** for the tourshi
- **Patty Torosian** for her shakar lokhum

The following items are available on a per-order basis: cheese berags, tourshi and shakar lokhum. Please contact Mary at 310-291-3550 for more information.

Iris Sahatdjian 1998 Mother of the Year



There have been countless memorable days in Iris Sahatdjian's long life, but none stand out as much as her 1947 wedding to her late-husband Sarkis at Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church.

"I will never forget the day of my wedding," she says. "It was very memorable for me."

Iris grew up in Mexico City. Her parents knew the Sahatdjian family from when they both lived in Erzurum prior to the Genocide.

When she came to Fresno in 1946, Holy Trinity became not just her church, but a place that brings her joy.

"Holy Trinity is my church and it will always be," she says. "It means the world."

Iris' children Victor, Margaret and Billy were baptized at Holy Trinity, attended Sunday School and remain active today.

"My children are very faithful to the church," she says.

Over her 70 plus years with the church, Iris has helped with countless hokejashes, bazaars and banquets. She says her signature spinach soufflé was always a big hit and that she enjoyed being part of the souboreg cooking team.

Iris served as president for both the Trinity Guild and Ladies Aid. She, along with her husband, also were involved with the founding of the Fresno Armenian Community School, now known as Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School.

When she was named Mother of the Year in 1998 she says she was "very surprised" and "very pleased." But she added that "every mother is a mother of the year."

Iris enjoys spending time with 12 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

On Sundays you can find her at church in the same pew sitting with her daughter.

Iris gets emotional thinking about how much her church, faith and Armenian heritage mean to her.

"I'm proud to be Armenian," she said with tears in her eyes. "We are survivors."

Virginia Sarabian 2009 Mother of the Year

Here's a fun fact about Virginia Sarabian, the retired registered nurse still has an active license, just in case she's ever called back into duty.

She worked at Valley Medical Center for 24 years and loved it.

The Modesto native went to a Baptist Church as a child because there wasn't an Armenian church nearby. When her father died, her family moved to Fresno. She couldn't believe that there were so many Hyes at her high school.

In 1956, when she married her late husband Sark, they almost couldn't get married at Holy Trinity.

"There had been a fire at the church," she says. "We were married by candle light and with a pump organ. It was something to remember."

When Virginia's sons, Michael, David and Charles were children, she became active in Sunday School and was the chairwoman. She along with several of her Sanger girlfriends joined the Trinity Guild, now called the Ladies' Guild, when they were in their early 30s. She was president of the guild twice and was the chairperson for the kitchen remodel in the early 1980s, which was a huge undertaking that she remains very proud of.

"We raised the money for it," she says. "We had a lot of kufta dinners."

Virginia has cooked a lot of meals in the Holy Trinity kitchen. Her famous bulgur pilaf was a staple at church Family Nights.

"I enjoy cooking," she says. "It makes me feel good."

One person who enjoyed her cooking was Karekin I, the former Catholicos. During one of his Valley visits she helped serve him and his team an All-American meal of hot dogs, chili beans and apple pie.

"They just loved it," she chuckled. "They were tired of shish kebab."

Virginia got to know Karekin I so well, she took him to Barnes and Noble and to get a new pair of eye glasses.

When Virginia was named Mother of the Year in 2009, she says she knew something was up because all of her family was at the luncheon.

"I had to act surprised because I was suspicious," she said with a laugh.

Virginia enjoys spending time with her seven grandchildren. This summer she will become a great-grandma. She loves seeing her family take an active role in the church.

"It's the backbone of our family," she said. "Holy Trinity had been good to us and we've been good to it."



Vars Gaston 2013 Mother of the Year



Pilaf. It's a staple of any good Armenian meal. Church's take pride in their pilaf making. It can get pretty competitive.

If you think Holy Trinity dishes out the best pilaf in town, you have Vars Gaston to thank for it.

She, along with her good friend Ruby Baladjanian, have been in charge of browning the vermicelli for the church's pilaf for many years.

"It's a lot of work, but it's good work," she says.

The Holy Trinity kitchen is Vars' second home. You can find her there two to three times a week. She's very involved in church catering.

In fact, cooking for the church has always been a family affair. Vars' late husband Mihron and son David have dished out thousands of meals over the years. From church picnics to banquets, they've been there.

Vars was born in Waukegan, Illinois. That's just outside of Chicago.

"There were a lot of Armenians there," she said. "I'm very proud to be Armenian."

In 1951, Vars and Mihron moved to Fresno. They got involved in Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church right away.

Vars sang in the choir and her three children: Leslie, Lisa and David were baptized at the church.

"I was brought up in faith," she says. "It means everything to me. Without my faith, I would be lost."

Vars worked as a surgical nurse at Valley Children's Hospital for 18 years. Despite her busy work and family life, she always made time for her church.

She's a longtime member of the Trinity Guild, now called the Ladies' Guild, and spent five years as president of the organization.

"I've made a lot of friends," she says. "Some are still with us, but many are not."

One of Vars' favorite things to bake with the Ladies' Guild is the large coil gata. She says it's not easy to make, but it tastes great.

On Sunday's you can find Vars sitting up front during church services with her traditional head veil. She's often wearing a gold cross that was given to her by the former Catholicos Karekin I when he visited Fresno.

In 2013 when Vars was named Mother of the Year, she says she was honored.

When asked what else she wanted to share with readers of this article Vars said, "Just be yourself and be truthful to God. Without your God and religion, you are nothing."

Diana Shirin **2014 Mother of the Year**

If you walk into the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church office on any given day, there's a good chance you'll see Diana Shirin.

She works on church mailings, is in charge of dues, sets up for banquets and many other important tasks. One would assume she's on the church payroll, but Diana is simply a hardworking and dedicated volunteer.



“I feel like I'm helping and not just being stagnant,” she says. “I feel productive. I don't know what I'd do with my time, if I didn't volunteer at church.”

In the late 1940s, Diana and her family moved to Fresno from Detroit. They got involved in Holy Trinity right away. Her father was an Arch Deacon and Choir Director. Diana attended Sunday School and was a Youth Group Officer.

“I've been a Christian all my life, she says. “It's very important.”

Diana and her late husband Richard raised their children Cynthia and Roger in the church.

When her children were young she became involved with parent/teacher faculty for Sunday School and joined the Trinity Guild, now the Ladies' Guild, which she remains active in today. She's a current office holder and has previously co-chaired the annual bazaar.

Diana says she draws a lot of inspiration from her husband who held leadership roles with both Holy Trinity and the Fresno Chapter of the Triple X Fraternity.

“Him being active, kept me going,” she says. “I take an active part in everything. I don't just go to socialize.”

Diana is a retired teacher. She taught Kindergarten, mostly at Dailey Elementary. In 1999, she was a finalist for the Excellence in Kindergarten Teacher award, something she's very proud of.

Another thing Diana is proud of is her grandchildren. Her granddaughter Kaylee Hanks is a Pastor in Oregon. Diana watches her services online each week. Her grandson Riley lives in Fresno and she enjoys spending time with him.

When Diana was named Mother of the Year in 2014, she almost didn't go to the luncheon. In fact, it's because of that, that the church changed the policy and now tells the Mother of the Year recipient they're being recognized ahead of time.

“I didn't think I was worthy of it,” she says. “I was very surprised and honored.”

Hasmig Aaronian 2015 Mother of the Year



It's not uncommon for Fresno Armenians to hear stories of Old Armenian Town. For Hasmig Aaronian, it's not a story, she lived it.

She was born in 1924 and grew up first on L Street by Emerson School and then at a home diagonal from Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church, where Selland Arena is today. The family later moved to a home on Ventura between 2nd and 3rd.

"It's really changed a lot, but the church looks the same," she says.

Hasmig's parents were both from Bitlis, but married in Fresno. She says she's proud to be 100% Bitlisi.

Growing up in a neighborhood full of Armenians was very memorable.

"We just enjoyed each other," she says. "It was a sweet and innocent time."

Hasmig says kids would sit outside and play jacks. They learned embroidery. "It was really a lot of fun."

Holy Trinity played a huge role in Hasmig's upbringing. She'd walk to church to attend Sunday School and take part in Youth Group.

She's always had a love for opera and has been a member of the church choir since she was a teen. Hasmig remembers the days when the choir was very large and led by the legendary Armenian composer Krikor Kalfayan. They called him Prof, sort for professor.

"I think what really stands out is Prof and Prof's music," she says of her favorite church memory. "It was the most beautiful music you ever heard."

Hasmig gets teary-eyed thinking about it. "I really miss his music," she says, with emotion in her voice. "The voices that came out of the choir were great."

Hasmig married her late-husband Aaron and together they raised their three children Karen, Rick and Randy in the church.

"My faith means everything to me," she says. "He is my strength. I know he is watching over me 100%. He is my Lord and Savior."

Through the Trinity Guild, now called the Ladies' Guild, Hasmig says she's made lifelong friends while helping with bazaars and assisting with kufta making. She still attends meetings regularly alongside her sister Queenie Marsoobian.

Hasmig likes to keep busy because it helps keep her thinking young. She worked many years for Fresno Unified's Transportation Department and left an impact on the people she came in contact with.

Hasmig loves making memories with her six grandchildren. Soon she'll be a great-grandma.

In 2015, when she was named Mother of the Year, she couldn't believe it. "It was an absolute shock," she says. "I've been blessed."

Rosemary Minasian 2016 Mother of the Year

If you Google the definition of the word sunshine it says it means cheerfulness and happiness.

Rosemary Minasian was the Sunshine Lady for the Holy Trinity Ladies' Guild for many years. She took her job to spread joy seriously.

"Everyone would go home laughing after the luncheon meetings because almost always she had a couple of funny jokes to say," Nazik Arisian says while reminiscing about Rosemary. "She would put Armenian names to the characters in her jokes which made everyone like them even more."

Rosemary and her late-husband Marty moved to Fresno in 1950 from Syracuse, New York. They joined Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church and married there.

Rosemary and Marty raised their children: Daniel, David and Alicia at the church.

Faith has always played a large role in Rosemary's life. She loves being a student of the Lord.

For many years she attended Saturday Armenian School. She was proud to be not only the oldest student, but also the star student.

"Before she came to school, she would go to a coffee shop where she would boast about her grades," Arisian says.

Health difficulties unfortunately now keep Rosemary at home. Attending church on Sundays is one of the things she misses most.

"Every Sunday, she would be in the pew she had picked to be her spot," Arisian says. "She would literally take several buses to come."

Rosemary lives with her son Danny. She's very proud of her two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

When she was named Mother of the Year in 2016, it was a proud and joyful day for all.



Sophia Mekhitarian 2018 Mother of the Year



Sophia Mekhitarian's life changed forever in 1949. That's the year her family came to America. She was born in Russia. Her parents ended up there after the genocide. The family spent five years living with other Armenians in a Displaced Persons Camp in Germany, the result of World War II.

In camp, Sophia grew up watching Armenians work hard labor, but she also witnessed them celebrate their culture. At night when the work was done, they'd cook, sing songs and dance.

"Being Armenian means everything to me," she says. "It's not a me situation, it's a we situation." Her family was among 50 families who came to Fresno with the help of restaurateur and philanthropist George Mardikian.

Sophia says Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church was the only local church to welcome the families with open arms. She, along with her two brothers and sister, attended Sunday School. Sophia joined the choir and played the piano and danced during special events. She also got involved with AYF and the American Red Cross Juniors. "I learned about the importance of service at a young age," she says. "Community involvement has been big my whole life."

Sophia taught 24 years in Clovis Unified as a resource teacher and was principal of the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School. "As a Christian we do God's work first," she says, of her work in education and the community.

At Holy Trinity, Sophia is a former Board of Director and served as superintendent of Sunday School three times. She's taught Sunday School and has been involved with Saturday Armenian School. She currently chairs the church's Book Club. From 2001-2003, Sophia was the President of the Trinity Guild, now called the Ladies' Guild. It's a time in her life she's very proud of.

"We were very successful," she says. "My board was fabulous. Everyone pitched in." During her time as the guild's president, attendance at meetings jumped. She says it wasn't unusual to have 100 people attend. She had children come in and perform. She helped organize fashion shows, the annual bazaar and other fundraising events.

Sophia called on her daughter, Susan Parnagian, to organize lunch deliveries. They continue to this day. The church cooks and delivers hundreds of lunches to businesses, while also providing meals to folks in need, like residents at the Fresno Rescue Mission. "That was a highlight," she says. "We got the entire church community involved."

Family is at the center of Sophia's life. Her daughter and son, Karney Mark, grew up in the church. She's very proud of her granddaughters Kayla Kalamkarian and Krista Parnagian. She's now enjoying being a great-grandma to Kayla's son Aram. "I love it," she says of being a great-grandma. "That kid is an angel."

Sossie Djabrayan 2019 Mother of the Year

On Easter Eve and Christmas Eve families gather in the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church social hall for a special meal.

Sossie Djabrayan loves to look out from the church kitchen at all the happy faces.

“This parish comes to these events with their family,” Djabrayan says. “It touches me every time.”

Sossie has become very involved in church catering over the last 20 years. While the Easter Eve and Christmas Eve banquets are her big events, you can find her in the kitchen just about any time a meal is being served.

“It’s kind of a second home for me,” she says. “The people I work with in catering are amazing. I really like the closeness that we have. It’s nice to work with people who are dedicated.”

Sossie moved to Fresno in 1978 from Lebanon. Her sister Sona Vartanian became active at Holy Trinity right away.

Sossie would help at the church from time to time, but during her early years in America was busy raising her children, Sabine and Nareg, with her husband Vartan. She spent nearly three decades with Fresno Unified. Teaching science at McLane High School and working in Special Education for the district.

It was through her career in education, that Sossie met Sophia Mekhitarian. Sophia encouraged Sossie to become more active in Holy Trinity.

She joined the Trinity Guild, now called the Ladies’ Guild, and served as president and secretary. She says her involvement brought her new friends and the opportunity to follow Jesus’ example of being “humble, caring and to provide for others.”

“I think being humble is very important,” she says.

Sossie is also an active member of the Armenian Relief Society. She’s served as president and is currently helping fight the COVID-19 pandemic by sewing facemasks for hospital workers and those in need. She’s made 250 masks so far.

Sossie believes her work ethic comes in part from being Armenian.

“I’m very proud of my heritage,” she says. “Our genes are old. We are ancient people. We’re smart. We’re hard working.”

When Sossie was named Mother of the Year in 2019, she says she was honored.

“It was something I didn’t expect,” she says. “I was so surprised.”



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ՅՈՒՆԻՍ—2020**

1. Հոովմայեցիս 1:1-17; Մատթէոսի 7:28-8:4
2. Հոովմայեցիս 1:18-25; Մատթէոսի 8:5-13
3. Հոովմայեցիս 2:2-11; Մատթէոսի 8:18-27
4. Հոովմայեցիս 2:12-24; Մատթէոսի 8:28-34
5. Հոովմայեցիս 2:25-3:9; Մատթէոսի 9:1-8
6. Երեմեայ 1:1-10; 38:1-13; Բ. Պետրոսի 2:9-22; Մատթէոսի 2:16-18
7. **Ա. զկնի Յոզեֆալքստեան: Սկիզբն յարութեան կիրակէից եւ յաշատակ եղիայի մարգարէին.**
Գ. Թագաւորաց 18:29-46; Դ. Թագաւորաց 2:1-15; Յակոբոս 5:16-20; Դուկասու 4:25-30
8. Սրբոց կուսանացն Յովիսիմեանց
Առակաց 31:29-31; Եսայեայ 61:10-62:3; Հոովմայեցիս 15:30-16:2;
Մատթէոսի 10:26-33
9. Սրբոց կուսանացն Գայիանեանց
Առակաց 1:20-23; Բարուբայ 4:36-5:4; Բ. Կորնթացիս 6:16-7:1;
Յովիաննու 16:1-5
10. Հոովմայեցիս 3:19-31; Մատթէոսի 9:9-15
11. Սրբոցն՝ Յովիաննու Կարապետին եւ Սթանագինեայ Եպիսկոպոսին
Առակաց 15:21-26; Եսայեայ 22:20-25; Ա. Պետրոսի 5:1-7;
Մատթէոսի 11:2-14
12. Հոովմայեցիս 4:1-12; Մատթէոսի 9:27-34
13. Սրբոց Յօրն Մերոյ Գրիգորի Լուսաւորչին Յիշատակ Ելանելոցն ի Վիրայէն
Իմաստութեան 5:1-8; Եսայեայ 60:20-61:7; Երրայեցիս 13:17-21;
Մատթէոսի 19:27-29
14. **Տօն Կարողիկէ Եկեղեցւոյ Ա. Էջմիածնի**
Առակաց 9:1-6; Զաքարեայ 3:7-4:9; Երրայեցիս 9:1-10; Յովիաննու 10:22-30
15. Սրբոցն՝ Մանկանցն Բեթղեհէմի
Առակաց 29:2-7; Եսայեայ 18:7; Երրայեցիս 2:14-18; Մատթէոսի 2:16-18
16. Սրբոց կուսանացն Նունեայ եւ Մանեայ
Երզ Երզոց 8:14-24; Եսայեայ 27:11-13; Ա. Պետրոսի 5:8-11;
Յովիաննու 12:24-26
17. Հոովմայեցիս 4:13-22; Մատթէոսի 10:34-42
18. Սրբոց Իշխահացն՝ Սահակայ եւ Յովսեփայ եւ Վկայիցն Սարգսի եւ Բագոսի
Առակաց 6:1-5; Եսայեայ 33:5-8; Հոովմայեցիս 8:18-27; Դուկասու 21:12-19
19. Հոովմայեցիս 5:12-21; Մատթէոսի 11:25-30

DAILY BIBLE READING

JUNE 2020

1. Romans 1:1-17; Matthew 7:28-8:4
2. Romans 1:18-25; Matthew 8:5-13
3. Romans 2:2-11; Matthew 8:18-27
4. Romans 2:12-24; Matthew 8:28-34
5. Romans 2:25-3:9; Matthew 9:1-8
6. Jeremiah 1:1-10; 38:1-13; 2 Peter 2:9-22; Matthew 2:16-18
7. ***First Sunday after Pentecost (Beginning of Sundays of Resurrection)***
1 Kings 18:29-46; 2 Kings 2:1-15; James 5:16-20; Luke 4:25-30
8. Sts. Hripsimiank
Proverbs 31:29-31; Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Romans 15:30-16:2;
Matthew 10:26-33
9. Sts. Kayaniank
Proverbs 1:20-23; Baruch 4:36-5:4; 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1; John 16:1-5
10. Romans 3:19-31; Matthew 9:9-15
11. St. John the Baptist
Proverbs 15:21-26; Isaiah 22:20-25; 1 Peter 5:1-7; Matthew 11:2-14
12. Romans 4:1-12; Matthew 9:27-34
13. St. Gregory the Illuminator—Deliverance from the pit
Wisdom 5:1-8; Isaiah 60:20-61:7; Hebrews 13:17-21; Matthew 19:27-29
14. ***Second Sunday after Pentecost—Feast of Holy Echmiadzin***
Proverbs 9:1-6; Zechariah 3:7-4:9; Hebrews 9:1-10; John 10:22-30
15. The Holy Children of Bethlehem
Proverbs 29:2-7; Isaiah 18:7; Hebrews 2:14-18; Matthew 2:16-18
16. Sts. Nooneh and Maneh the Virgins
Song of Songs 8:14-24; Isaiah 27:11-13; 1 Peter 5:8-11; John 12:24-26
17. Romans 4:13-22; Matthew 10:34-42
18. Sts. Sahag and Hovsep the Princes and Sts. Sarkis and Pacchus
the Martyrs
Proverbs 6:1-5; Isaiah 33:5-8; Romans 8:18-27; Luke 21:12-19
19. Romans 5:12-21; Matthew 11:25-30
20. St. Nerses the Great and Bishop Khat
Wisdom 2:23-3:8; Isaiah 57:15-16; Hebrews 13:7-9; Matthew 10:16-22
21. ***Third Sunday after Pentecost (Eve of the Fast of our Holy Father St. Gregory the Illuminator)***
Isaiah 1:2-15; Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 12:1-8
22. St. Epiphanius of Cyprus and St. Babylas
Wisdom 8:7-10; Nahum 1:7-9; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Mark 6:45-52
23. Sts. Constantine the King and his mother Helen
Proverbs 16:9-17; Baruch 3:31-4:4; 1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 7:1-10

ԱՄԷՆՈՐԵԱՅ ԱՍՏՈՒԱԾԱՇՈՒՆԶԻ ԸՆԹԵՐՑՈՒՄՆԵՐ
ՅՈՒՆԻՍ—2020, Շաբ.

20. Սրբոցն՝ Ներսիսի մեծին հայրապետին մերոյ եւ Խաղայ եպիսկոպոսին
Իմաստութեան 2:23-3:8; Եսայեայ 57:15-16; Եբրայեցիս 13:7-9;
Մատթէոսի 10:16-22
21. *Երբորդ Կիրակի զկնռ Յոգեգալըստեան*
Եսայեայ 1:2-15; Հռովմայեցիս 6:12-23; Մատթէոսի 12:1-8
22. Սրբոցն՝ Եպիփանու Կիւրացոյն, Բաբելայ հայրապետին եւ երից
աշակերտաց նորին
Իմաստութեան 8:7-10; Նաուումայ 1:7-9; Ա. Կորնթացիս 12:4-11;
Մարկոսի 6:45-52
23. Սրբոցն՝ Կոստանդիանոսի թագաւորին եւ մօրն նորա Յեղիմեայ
Առակաց 16:9-17; Բարուբայ 3:31-4:4; Ա. Տիմոթէոս 2:1-7;
Ղուկասու 7:1-10
24. Հռովմայեցիս 7:1-11; Մատթէոսի 12:9-15
25. Իմաստութեան 6:11-21; Բ. Կորնթացիս 6:1-10; Յովհաննու 16:1-5
26. Հռովմայեցիս 7:12-25; Մատթէոսի 12:15-21
27. Գիւտ նշխարաց Ա. Գրիգոր Լուսաւորչի
Իմաստութեան 4:7-15; Միքիայ 7:7-10; Գործք Առաքելոց 20:22-32;
Յովհաննու 10:11-16
28. *Չորրորդ Կիրակի Յոգեգալըստեան*
Եսայեայ 1:21-31; Հռովմայեցիս 7:25-8:11; Մատթէոսի 12:38-45
29. Իմաստութեան 3:1-8; Եսայեայ 48:16-17; Բ. Տիմոթէոս 3:10-15;
Յովհաննու 15:11-16
30. Սրբոցն՝ Դանիէլի մարգարէին եւ երից մանկանցն՝ Սեդրաբայ, Միսաբայ եւ
Աբեղնագովի Դանիէլի 2:1-49; Եբրայեցիս 11:32-40; Մատթէոսի 24:9-15

DAILY BIBLE READING
JUNE 2020, Con't

24. Romans 7:1-11; Matthew 12:9-15
25. Wisdom 6:11-21; 2 Corinthians 6:1-10; John 16:1-5
26. Romans 7:12-25; Matthew 12:15-21
27. Discovery of the relics of St. Gregory the Illuminator
Wisdom 4:7-15; Micah 7:7-10; Acts 20:22-32; John 10:11-16
28. ***Fourth Sunday after Pentecost***
Isaiah 1:21-31; Romans 7:25-8:11; Matthew 12:38-45
29. Wisdom 3:1-8; Isaiah 48:16-17; 2 Timothy 3:10-15; John 15:11-16
30. Sts. Daniel the prophet and the three young men—Shadrach (Setrak),
Meshach (Misak) and Abednego (Apetnakov)
Daniel 2:1-49; Hebrews 11:32-40; Matthew 24:9-15

Ս. Երրորդութիւն Հայաստանեայց Առաքելական Մայր Եկեղեցի
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Հոգ. Տ. Աշոտ Արք. իսախատութեան – Rev. Fr. Ashod Khachadourian
E-Mail: moseskhachadourian@gmail.com

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00AM-4:00PM
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Evelyn Hamamjian, *Chair* 559-284-3620C

MEN'S SOCIETY

Richard Bedoian, *Chair* 559-264-7734H

ADMINISTRATION

Nazik Arisian 559-486-1141W
Administrator
nazik@holytrinityfresno.org

Lisa Der Simonian 559-486-1141W
Bookkeeper
lisaterzian@gmail.com

Diana Shirin 559-486-1141W
Volunteer Coordinator
rich03di@comcast.net

Nareg Apkarian 559-486-1141W
Office Assistant
nareg24@gmail.com

CHOIR

Shoghik Papoyan Aladjian, 277-0888H
Director 304-0888C
Serpouhie Messerlian, *Chair* 298-0445H

ORGANIST

Naira Shahsouvorian 323-0457C

SUNDAY SCHOOL

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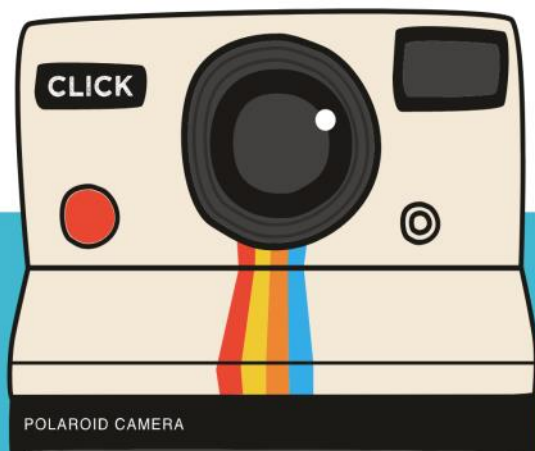
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