

St. Vartan Church  
650 Spruce Street  
Oakland, CA 94610

Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
OAKLAND, CA  
94615  
PERMIT NO. 2273

*The St. Vartan Voice*  
newsletter is published once a month by St. Vartan Armenian Church.  
The deadline for all articles is the fifteenth of each month.

Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate  
Rev. Fr. Krikor Zakaryan Parish Priest and President of All Church Organizations  
Parish Council Chair: Nazaret Jindoian  
Parish Assembly Chair: David Ojakian  
Choir Director: Artin Der Minassians  
Organist: Araks Aghazarian and Ida Mazmanian  
ACYO Chair: Joseph Apkarian  
Sunday School Superintendent: Janef Yeghissian and Karen Mener  
Ladies Society Chair: Marlene Tolegian and Arlene Hovsepian  
Cultural Society Chair: Liz Ojakian  
Hokejosh: Nora Hanoian  
Newsletter Editors: Arlene Hovsepian and Rachel Harger  
Church Secretary: Rachel Harger  
Altar Flowers: Carole Chang  
Church Custodian: Wartkes Hagopian

Divine Liturgy Service—Sundays 10:30 a.m.  
650 Spruce Street, Oakland, CA. 94610  
Phone (510)893-1671  
Fax: (510) 893-2102  
Email: stvartanoakland@aol.com  
Website: www.stvartanoakland.org



# St.VartanVoice

The Newsletter of St. Vartan Armenian Apostolic Church  
Rev. Fr. Hovel Ohanyan, Parish Priest

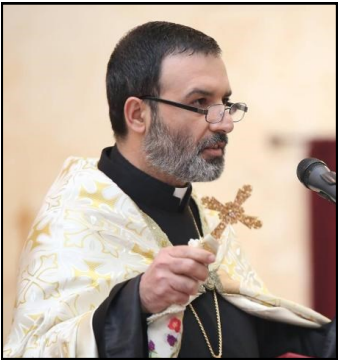


Սուրբ Վարդանի Ձայն

Ս. Վարդան Հայ Առաքելական Եկեղեցւոյ Պաշտօնաթերթ

March 2020

## “God is Good, Life is Good...” By Fr. Hovel Ohanyan, continued from February issue



I came to you ten and a half years ago at a time of both deep sorrow and financial challenge in our parish. The passing of the beloved pastor, and the embezzlement of the church funds almost destroyed the peaceful life of our church community. And I prayed to God day and night to grant me His Heavenly Wisdom and for strength to bring comfort and stability back to my new church and our new home. As many of you reminded me over and over: I had big shoes to fill. Today, after ten and a half years, looking into your faces, I can humbly say that I have striven to fill those shoes and even to enlarge them. Being a priest (especially in the Armenian Church of the Diaspora) is a serious Calling. My main goal in this community was to be in the breach, standing between the flock and whatever would seek to prey on them. My position was to be where Christ placed Himself. I have done the best that I could and was able to do. I woke up each new day glorifying God and trying to become a better priest and a worthy servant of God, so that I might lead you all to where Christ would have us to go and to be. I have tried to bridge you with our Savior. Well, sometimes I was called “a sad priest”, because I did not tell enough jokes in the church.

Sometimes I received nasty letters and hate-emails, but I took them as a personal blessing, because those who made problems for me and for us (willingly and unwillingly, knowingly and knowingly), left a great treasure with me: a life experience and great patience, which will help me in my future ministry serving God. Sometimes people complained about my sermons which actually gave me great confidence that they got the message and the truth of God caused them to think more carefully about themselves. As the Anglican bishop Thomas Nicolas says: “People often get upset when you teach them what is in the Bible rather than what they presume is in the Bible.” And today, I want to confess that I am the happiest priest in the entire Western Diocese, because I preached from the pulpit of our church not what people wanted to hear but what they needed to hear. Thank you for helping me to be honest in preaching the truth of God and serving you according to God’s Will. Your faithfulness and your great faith have been a gift to me in all the trials and tribulations we have endured together.

My beloved brothers and sisters, I came to you ten and a half years ago with many interests, and you have encouraged me and conceded the time I have spent away from the parish: from my education in Berkeley for my master’s degree in theology to participation in many board and committee meetings; from pilgrimages to Motherland Armenia and to the Holy Land to participation in local and outside organization’s events. From our own Diocesan programs to local ecumenical and interfaith gatherings with other church leaders. I hope that these other ministries outside of our church have made me a better priest. Thank you for supporting these opportunities. Your encouragement has been a true gift to me.

I came to you ten and a half years ago as a young priest, a minister of the Holy Sacraments, and you have opened the doors of your hearts and your homes in

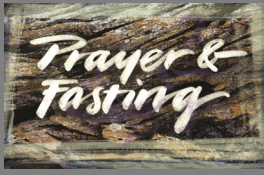
### Bible Readings

March 1 Matt. 5:38-48  
March 8 Luke 15:1-11  
March 15 Luke 16:19-31  
March 21 Luke 18:1-8  
March 29 Matt. 23:1-12

### Lenten Prayer

Loving God,  
During the sacred season of Lent, bring me closer to you. Prepare a place in my home and heart for silence and solitude, so that I may rediscover the grace of a prayer-full life.

Enlarge my heart so that I give to those in need, and in so doing, rediscover the grace of gratitude and generosity. Help me to fast from those things that threaten the well-being of body and soul. Amen.





front of me as I have baptized young and old; as I have celebrated God’s forgiveness and healing strength; as I have witnessed the union of Holy Matrimony; as together we celebrated Soorp Badarak (Divine Liturgy) and received the precious Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ every Sunday; and yet sadly, as we have also presided over many funerals, as we have buried our beloved church and family members. You have welcomed me into your homes so that I may perform Home Blessing services; I have visited you in the hospitals, convalescent and nursing homes, and even in jail. I have welcomed you into my office, into the sanctuary, at Starbucks, on the streets, in restaurants and parks, at special events, engagements, weddings and baptism celebrations, birthdays and graduation parties, and at the end, at Hokejash. For any priest, this is the greatest gift: to be able to share your lives in times of both joy and sorrow as a reminder of the presence of Christ our Lord Who is always among us. To be sure, I reached out to my faithful people and shared the love and the word of God with them and comforted them with the graces of the Holy Spirit. To be sure, I have done whatever my Lord commanded us to follow in the Gospel according to St. Matthew: “For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to Me... Amen! I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me” (Matt. 25:35-36;40). Thank you for this sacramental ministry: being able to walk the Christian journey with you has been a gift and a true blessing to me.

*“I encourage you, brothers and sisters, to continue to open your hearts in love, to persevere in prayer, to serve the needy ones, and to let the peace of Christ dwell in your hearts.”—Fr. Hovel*

I have tried to be a loving and caring priest for each and every Armenian living in the East Bay, and I have tried to do my best to make our East Bay Armenian Community more united and stronger. We ought to be proud of our Armenian heritage and identity, keep our Christian faith, our God-given language, our ancient culture, and love one another. In all our differences (political, cultural, etc.) always remember that Armenian identity comes first, that we are the children of the same nation, God’s chosen nation, God’s own nation. The Armenian nation has gone through many trials, faced genocide and communism, lost the majority of its motherland, but won the battle of Sardarapat and liberated our beautiful Artsakh. We Armenians, we have to be together and we have to stay united especially in the Diaspora. Because when we are together, we are strong. Do not choose to leave your Armenian Church and community because you do not understand or speak the Armenian language. Do not leave, but stay, and keep your Armenian soul and spirit, “hoki yev voki”, strong and alive, the spirit of St. Vartan, St. Mesrop Mashtots, the heroes of the battles of Avarayr and Sardarapat, the spirit of Khrimian Hayrik and Garegin Hovsepian, the spirit of the Armenian soldiers protecting the borders of our small and beautiful Motherland Armenia. With that spirit, our forefathers came to this country and built our churches and schools, because they knew that without that spirit our nation would be lost a long time ago. Keep your Armenian spirit and our nation will have a bright future.

More than anything, know that you have been a blessing to me and my family during these ten and a half years, as I am confident you will be for your next pastor as well. I encourage you, brothers and sisters, to continue to open your hearts in love, to persevere in prayer, to serve the needy ones, and to let the peace of Christ dwell in your hearts. As it is written through the Prophet Isaiah (60:2): “Darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; but upon you the Lord shines.” Keep on being the light that you have been for me, and the world will know that God dwells among us. And I pray that you might use that gift to become the light of Christ in the world. To be that light, we must become holy – as the Lord says in the Scripture: “Be holy because I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). Holiness must be the goal of our lives as followers of Christ: it means being whole in everything we are, so that there is no division between what we say and what we do; so that the faith we profess is put into action through the lives we lead; so that the love we have received from God is returned in the love we show to both God and neighbor. This, then, is my final charge to you: Be holy, just as the Lord our God is holy.

Be holy in the way you show hospitality, when you welcome fellow human beings as you welcome Christ, when you show as much love to strangers as you do to friends; for in doing so, some have unknowingly entertained angels (Hebrews 13:2, citing Genesis 18). So be holy in showing hospitality.

Be holy through your life of prayer, seek out times of silence when the noises of this world can give way to the tiny whispering sound that is the voice of God. For it is in silence that we can hear the plans God has in store for us. Be holy in prayer and silence. (1 Kings 19:11-12 and Psalm 46:10a)

Be holy in the way you proclaim God’s Word, whether it is convenient or inconvenient. Learn the truth through Scripture and the Church, and lovingly share that truth with everyone you encounter. Because the love of God, and the truth of the Gospel, is not just for us – it is for the whole world. But who can call on the Name of the Lord unless they believe; and who can believe unless they have heard; and who can hear unless there is someone to preach? So, you must proclaim the Gospel yourselves, in words and in actions.

Be holy, brothers and sisters, in the way you live, so that every action is done with love, a selfless love, a Godlike love, which strives to make others happy, which puts the needs of others before your own, which replaces

pride with humility and envy with generosity. Let your love be sincere; abhor what is evil, hold on to what is good (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Love one another with the love of Christ, always being ready to sacrifice yourselves for each other. Anticipate one another in showing honor and respect. Remember what I said to you over and over: God entrusted His Divine Image to each one of us. When we honor each other we honor the Image of God. If possible, live at peace with all. Our world today is often filled with hatred and fear, with self-centeredness and isolation. But faith and fear cannot occupy the same space. And, in the end, love always wins. “If I have the gift of prophesy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:2). Love should be the answer to all the questions and misunderstandings, to all the concerns, worries, and struggles. Love should be the foundation of our faith in serving God. Be holy in showing love to one another.

Be holy in your celebration of the sacraments, especially the Holy Badarak. “For I have continued to hand on to you what I have received, that on the night before He died, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said: “This is my body.” In the same way, He took the chalice and said: “This is my blood; Do this in remembrance of me.” As often as you receive the Body and Blood of Christ, Holy Communion, you proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes” (First Corinthians 11:23-29). There is nothing we do as a community of faith that is more important than the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, Soorp Badarak. Please, never be late, Christ is waiting for you every Sunday to share His heavenly joy and His Great Banquet with you. If you continue to make the Eucharist the center of your lives as individuals and as a parish, then the love of God will transform this community in wondrous ways which we cannot imagine. Be holy in your celebration of the sacraments.

Finally, brothers and sisters, be holy in welcoming your new pastor. Whoever he may be, he will continue the work of the Lord, just as I hope that I have done here. Please, do not compare your new pastor with the former pastor, and never look for the old one in your new priest. Christ says in the Gospel of St. Mark: “No one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins” (Mark 2:22). Open your hearts to him and his family as you have opened them to me and my family; love him, as you have loved me; nurture him, as you have nurtured me; and pray for us both, that the Name of the Lord may be glorified in our lives and in our ministry.

*“While I am leaving you, there is One who remains constant: Jesus Christ.”—Fr. Hovel*

While I am leaving you, there is One who remains constant: Jesus Christ. Jesus has been here from the beginning when our forefathers moved to the East Bay and decided to build this House of God, and Jesus Christ will be with you “always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20). If, through the power of the Holy Spirit, you allow Jesus to guide you and our St. Vartan Armenian Apostolic Church, then our congregation will always have a mission and a bright future. It may not look like the church we have today. There may be difficult decisions which need to be made. But a passion for our Lord and Savior will see you through all your future trials. This passion guided the forefathers of our church, a passion which allowed them to navigate through their own trials. They managed, persevered, and flourished, and they passed this great legacy of our church to us and into our care.

“Be holy,” says the Lord, “because I am holy.” It is hard to leave you, but as I said in the beginning of this farewell note, change is inevitable and all of us have to adjust to it. Just remember what I said over and over. “Life is Good, God is Good. Love one another, honor one another, respect each other, and care for each other, and always remember that God Loves You. Neither priests nor these beautiful buildings are the church, but you and your assembly in the Name of the Lord are the True Church.”

May the God of peace Himself make you perfectly holy, and may you entirely be preserved blameless for the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, may keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).



Fr. Hovel’s last Sunday at St. Vartan Church was January 19.



### Daughters of Vartan Tea

The Daughters of Vartan, San Francisco Chapter, Araxi Oytan, presents its Annual Spring Tea on Saturday, March 21, 11:30 am-2:30 pm. We are excited to announce our guest speaker is Beth Rustigian Broussalian, who will be speaking about her role as founder and executive director of Homeland Development Initiative Foundation-USA. The event will be held at the John Marukian Hall at St. Vartan Armenian Church.

Interested guests are invited to join the event. Please contact Hasmig Cingoz for more information and reservations, hasmig.cingoz1@gmail.com.



On January 12, at the behest of Fr. Hovel, Archbishop Hovnan Derderian elevated Dn. Vartan Berberian and Dn. Vahe Mener to the position of Archdeacon for their many years of dedication and service to St. Vartan Armenian Church.

### The House of the Lord

On Super Bowl Sunday, February 2, Anastas Vashavsky was the only St. Vartan Sunday School student who attended Badarak and accepted communion. The next Sunday, Fr. Vazken Movsesian honored Anastas for his commitment, presenting him with an Armenian Cross from Armenia for his faith and desire to be in the House of the Lord.



### Hye Camp Scholarship Offered

The St. Vartan Ladies Society are sponsoring one full Hye Camp Scholarship to a St. Vartan Sunday School student. If you know a student who would like to attend the Western Diocese Hye Camp in Dunlap, CA this summer, please have them write an essay entitled:

*"I want to go to Hye Camp because..."*

The essay should be 250 words or less and must be received by March 10, 2020. You can mail or email the essay to the church office, labeled Hye Camp Essay.

St. Vartan Armenian Church  
650 Spruce St.  
Oakland, CA 94610  
stvirtanoakland@aol.com

### Hye Camp Schedule

Week 1—July 12-July 18  
Week 2—July 19-July 25  
Week 3—July 26-August 1  
Week 4—August 2—August 8



### Upcoming Events

|   |                    |                 |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|
| Fr. Vasken Movsesian Celebrates Badarak             | Sunday, March 1    | 10:30 am        |
| St. Vartan is Polling Location for Primary Election | Tuesday, March 20  | 7 am—8 pm       |
| World Day of Prayer at Calvary in San Francisco     | Saturday, March 7  | 11 am           |
| Fr. Krikor Zakaryan's First Badarak                 | Sunday, March 8    | 10:30 am        |
| Parish Council Installation                         | Sunday, March 8    | 10:30 am        |
| Daughters of Vartan Tea                             | Saturday, March 21 | 11:30am—2:30 pm |
| ARS Ereouni Lenten Luncheon                         | Sunday, March 29   | After Church    |

RISE!  
TAKE YOUR MAT AND WALK

---

# WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

---

Guest Speaker Jonelle Kazarian

**Saturday, March 7, 2020, 11:00am**  
**Calvary Armenian Congregational Church**  
**725 Brotherhood Way, SF**  
**Luncheon after service**  
**Donations \$10**

For reservations, please contact  
 Nanor Sadakian (650) 773-3662  
 Elaine Kapjian Pitt (415) 515-3890  
 Hilda Basmajian (415) 816-4453  
 Theresa Bezdikian (408) 568-9888  
 Marlene Tolegian (925) 785-9300

**Thank You St. Vartan Holiday Food Drive Donors**  
 The food bank thanked St. Vartan: "Thank you, St. Vartan Armenian Church, for hosting a successful food drive for Alameda County Community Food Bank. Because of you, 152 pounds of food will be distributed across our county to neighbors who need our support."



Spring Begins March 19, 2020





**In Honor of Fr. Hovel Ohanyan**—Nora and Harvey Hanoian, Don and Lisa Manoogian (Ladies Society)  
**In Honor of Don Manoogian's Birthday**—Don and Lisa Manoogian (Ladies Society)  
**St. Vartan Voice Newsletter**—Virginia Avakian  
**Yughakin**—Robert Kachadoorian, June Demerdjian, Michael Sanossian  
**In Honor of Jack Bousian's 100th Birthday**—Edward Minasian, Don, Lisa and Matthew Manoogian  
**Endowment Fund**—Rick and Nancy Kurkjian  
**St. Vartan Multimedia Projector Fund**—Alene Rudy, Don and Lisa Manoogian

**† Richard Demirjian**  
Richard and Judy Sharafian  
**† Ed Godoshian**  
Richard and Judy Sharafian

Please sign up to sponsor flowers for a Sunday in 2020. This is a great way to honor a loved one or to celebrate a birthday or anniversary. The donation chart is located on the bulletin board in the church hall entryway.



## Berch and Janis Balaban

The oldest Armenian Lenten traditions hardly allowed for the consumption of any food at all. Indeed, the Armenian Church sometimes refers to Lent as Aghouhatzk, meaning “salt and bread,” because at one time these elements were the only permitted foods. Over time, Lenten rules have changed to allow any food that does not derive from animals (meat and milk, e.g.). Alcoholic beverages were also forbidden. These rules were based on the Biblical principle that many human vices proceed from eating and drinking.

A graphic featuring the word "Lenten" in a large, dark blue, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, the word "Lunch" is written in a white, sans-serif font inside a brown bowl. The bowl has blue and white horizontal stripes and sits on a blue plate. A blue spoon is positioned behind the bowl, pointing towards the top right.



### Ladies Society Update

Our February 13 joint luncheon with St. John Ladies Society was another great success! Please check the photos to see how much fun we had with a delicious luncheon prepared by Gail Kezerian, Caroline Arakelian and their committee of Sandy Capurro, Sylvia Gozurian, Nelly Kargodorian, Elo Markarian, Hilda Mener and Kristian Minasian. A very special thank you to the barbecue crew, Bob Kezeran and Steve Donikian. Many thanks to everyone for making this yet another memorable St. Vartan event.

Please see the enclosed flyer announcing the World Day of Prayer on Saturday, March 7. This year's event will be held at Calvary Congregational Church beginning at 11 am, followed by luncheon after the service. Please RSVP to Marlene Tolegian, 925-735-6321 for tickets. Deadline to respond is March 2

Food Festival workdays will begin soon. Please watch for the calendar in upcoming newsletters and church bulletins.

Membership Chair, Sylvia Gozurian, has been very busy and has added three new members to our Ladies Society. A warm welcome to Ana Apkarian, Hasmig Cingoz and Ann Papazian Cowan.



### St. Vartan Church Parish Assembly

The St. Vartan Armenian Church Annual Assembly was held on January 26, 2020 under the leadership of interim priest, Fr. Vazken Movsesian. The meeting commenced after a delicious lamb shank luncheon, prepared under the leadership of Nataline Jindoian. It was announced at the meeting that Fr. Krikor Zakaryan will be St. Vartan Church's new priest. He will celebrate his first Badarak on March 8, 2020.

David Oajakian was elected as chairman for the 2021 Parish Assembly meeting. Scott Nakashian was elected vice-chair and Edward Jamgotchian was elected secretary. New parish council members elected for a first term include: Rick Kurkjian, Suzanne Diers, Nicole Vaserdsian, Hagop Tatoian, and Zaven Kanneian. Ara Azizian and Arto Yagjian were elected to their second term on the parish council. They join continuing council members Mark Henesian, Hilda Mener, Paul Ohanesian and Dicko Shahvekilian.

Jack Isaacs, Harry Sherinian, Angel Azizian, Ara Azizian and Greg Tcherkoyan will represent St. Vartan at the Diocese Assembly. Alternates are Kim Bardakian and Zaven Kanneian. Don Manoogian will join the Endowment Fund Committee and Ron Ojakian will join the Stone Committee. Nazar Jindoian was elected to the Audit Committee.





Parish Council Update

On Monday, January 20 the Parish Council (PC) accepted the recommendation of the nine member Parish Priest Research Committee (PPRC) for Fr. Krikor Zakaryan to become the next parish priest of St. Vartan Armenian Church. The PC was unanimous in their decision and promptly submitted the request to Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese.

Archbishop Derderian confirmed the assignment of Fr. Krikor Zakaryan to our Church, extending his heartfelt congratulations and well wishes. Highlighting Fr. Krikor’s experience and qualifications, Archbishop Derderian expressed his confidence for the opportunities this assignment provides. To learn more about Fr. Krikor, please read his biography in the adjacent pages.

As announced in the recent Church email, Fr. Krikor will celebrate his assignment’s first Badarak at St. Vartan Armenian Church on Sunday, March 8.


Thank You to our interim priest

During the six week transition period after Fr. Hovel Ohanyan’s return to Armenia and the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, we were fortunate to have Fr. Vasken Movsesian assigned as the interim priest. We express our gratitude for Fr. Vasken’s commitment to travel weekly and celebrate the Divine Liturgy with us, as well as attend the General Assembly meeting on Sunday, January 26. His dynamic and vibrant personality was well received and will be missed.

New PC members

We congratulate the new Parish Council members elected at the General Assembly. The first PC meeting will be Wednesday, February 19 (after this newsletter’s content deadline) when they will confirm their assignments. The installation and blessing of the PC will take place after Badarak on Sunday, March 8. Please join us in congratulating them on their new assignments.

Religious Jokes  
Wedding White

 A little girl finally got to attend a wedding for the first time. While in the church, the girl asked her mother: “Why is the bride dressed in white?” The mother replied to the girl: “because white is the color of happiness and it’s the happiest day of her life today.” After a little bit, the girl looks up at her mother and says: “But, then why is the groom wearing black?”

Marriage and Coffee

Shortly after tying the knot, a young married couple started arguing over who should make the coffee. Being a good Christian woman, the wife went to the scriptures for her answer. She said that the Bible specifically stated that men should be the ones to make the coffee. Puzzled, the husband asked her where in the Bible it said that. Very confidently, the wife opened up her Bible and said: “It’s right here—HEBREWS.”



Solomon’s Temple

Where was Solomon’s temple located? – On the side of his head. Duh!

Adam and Eve

After having children, Adam and Eve started getting a lot of questions from their kids about why they no longer lived in Eden. Adam has a simple answer for this: “Your mother ate us out of house and home.”

The Sunday School Lesson

During a Sunday school lesson, a child learned about how God created human beings. The child became especially focused when the teacher explained how Eve was created from Adam’s ribs. Later in the week, the boy’s mother saw him lying down on the floor, so she asked him what was wrong. His reply was priceless: “Mom, I have a pain in my side—I think I’m getting a wife.”

Boaz and Ruth

What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth? Answer: He was Ruthless.

The Kindergartner

A Kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom as the children drew pictures. The teacher would occasionally walk around and see each child’s artwork. As she approached one little girl who was working especially hard, she asked what the drawing was. The little girl told her: “I’m drawing God!” “But sweetie,” the teacher replied, “no one actually knows what God looks like.” Automatically, the little girl continued drawing and said: “Well, they certainly will in a minute!”



Biography of Fr. Krikor Zakaryan  
New Priest of St. Vartan Armenian Church



Rev. Fr. Krikor Zakaryan was born on November 29, 1977, in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Manuk and Elena Zakaryan. Fr. Zakaryan received his primary education at the “Dimitar Blagoev” school in Plovdiv. He continued his education at the “Victoria and Krikor Tutundjyan” Armenian school in Plovdiv and graduated in 1992.

In Plovdiv’s “Knyaz Alexander Battenberg” secondary school, Fr. Krikor Zakaryan studied biology, humanitarianism and French. He graduated in 1995. As one of the finest students of the French language, Fr. Zakaryan was selected to travel to France on an educational tour.

From 1997 to 1999, he served in the Bulgarian army. Because of his exemplary service, Fr. Zakaryan was promoted within the ranks of the army.

In 2003, he was admitted to the “Alex and Marie Manoogian Seminary” of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem. His dedication to the seminary and his high marks earned Fr. Zakaryan numerous awards. He graduated from the seminary with excellence in 2007.

Fr. Krikor Zakaryan received his Fourth-Degree Acolyte of the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church from His Beatitude Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem and was ordained to the Diaconate by His Eminence Archbishop Nourhan Manoukian. With his strong vocal abilities, Fr. Zakaryan received vocal training from Mr. Setrak Erganyan, a well-known composer. Fr. Zakaryan often sang as the soloist in the choir. Fr. Zakaryan has written spiritual/religious articles which have been published in Bulgaria and in Jerusalem.

On August 5, 2007, Fr. Krikor Zakaryan married Miss Anoush Yazadzhian in Bulgaria. They are blessed with two daughters.

In 2008, he was invited as a Priesthood-Candidate by His Eminence, Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America. On August 10, 2008, he was ordained to the Diaconate by the Primate in the La Canada Armenian Church.

Fr. Zakaryan served at St. Vartan Armenian Church in Oakland, California, prior to his appointment as the Deacon-In-Charge of the Armenian Church of the Desert in Rancho Mirage, California.

Rev. Fr. Krikor Zakaryan was ordained and consecrated to the Priesthood on October 13, 2009 by His Eminence, Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America. The Rev. Fr. Krikor Zakaryan celebrated his first Divine Liturgy on Sunday, November 8, 2009 at the social hall of the Armenian Church of the Desert in Rancho Mirage.

During his pastorate, the sanctuary of St. Garabed’s was built and completed. The Consecration of the Sanctuary took place on Sunday, January 7, 2012. On April 26, 2013 the Altar of St. Garabed was consecrated, both by His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian.

The Rev. Fr. Krikor Zakaryan completed his Masters Degree in Theology (Major – “Ministry, Leadership and Service”) in 2014 at Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA. Fr. Zakaryan also completed a Youth Ministry Certificate program at Fuller Seminary, Pasadena, CA in 2017. At the present time Fr. Zakaryan is also involved as a Religious Advisor for the Diocesan Christian Education Council (CEC), Camp Committee and Camp Board, serving the youth (ages 0 to 17) on a diocesan level.

Rev. Fr. Krikor Zakaryan served as the Parish Priest of St. Garabed Armenian Apostolic Church of the Desert from 2009 through February 2020.

His first Sunday celebrating Badarak at St. Vartan Armenian Church will be March 8, 2020.



Our St. Vartan Church organizations would like to upgrade the video projector we use for many of our events. Our current projector has served us well for over 15 years, but its incompatibility to connect to several brands of laptops is a problem. A new permanent Multimedia Projector upgrade installed in our church hall would increase our digital capabilities and simplify its operation. If you are interested in donating to this purchase, please send your check to the church office and memo the donation: Multimedia Upgrade. Thank you!

March 8, 2020 —Daylight Savings Time Begins. Set Your Clocks Forward.

