

St. Vartan Voice

The Newsletter of St. Vartan Armenian Apostolic Church

Rev. Fr. Krikor Zakaryan, Parish Priest



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Fr. Krikor Zakaryan

April 2021

He is Risen

Today, I want you to read a story. As you read, I want you to look carefully for some special words. Here are three words I want you to look for: candy, eggs and bunny rabbits.

“On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, (Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James) took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen! Remember how He told you, while He was still with you in Galilee.’” Luke 24:1-6

Did you hear any of those words in our story? You didn’t? I don’t understand. We just read the Easter story. No candy? No eggs? No bunnies? Why not?

The fact is Easter is not about candy. It’s not about colored eggs or bunny rabbits. It’s not even about new clothes, although the Bible tells us that the angels who appeared to Mary and the others were wearing “bright shining clothes.”

These things have become part of our celebration of Easter, and there is nothing wrong with them being a part of our celebration as long as we know what Easter is really all about. Can someone tell me what Easter is all about? That’s right. Easter is really about Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the wonderful good news that He is alive!

When Mary and her friends finally realized that Jesus was alive, do you know what they did? They hurried and told their other friends! And that’s what I would like for you to do too. As soon as you get back home from church after Easter celebration, with every chance you get, I would like for you to start telling people you see these three simple words, “Jesus is risen! Jesus is alive!”

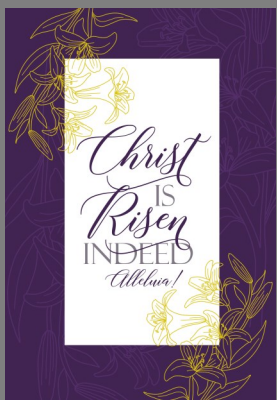
Heavenly Father, today we celebrate the empty grave. We thank You that your Holy Son and our Lord Jesus Christ is not in the grave. He is risen and alive, and because of that, we can have new life in Him. Amen.

Bible Readings

April 4 Mark 16:1-8
April 11 John 1:1-17
April 18 John 2:23-3:12
April 25 John 5:19-30

Easter Greeting

Krisdos Haryav Ee
Merelotz.
Christ is risen from the
dead.
Orhnyal Eh Haroutiunun
Krisdosi.
Blessed is the resurrection
of Christ.



Names for Outreach

If you or someone you know would like to be put on our special Outreach List, please send your name and phone number in to the church office at stvartanoakland@aol.com. We are creating a list of members who would like to receive phone calls and check-ins from Der Krikor or members of the community.



Company Doubles Your Donation

Maximize the impact of your donation to St. Vartan Church by having your contribution doubled or tripled. Many socially responsible companies set aside funds and support employee charitable donations by matching contributions dollar for dollar, or sometimes more.

Commonly known as an employee donation match, the corporate matching gift programs are a perk companies provide to attract, retain and motivate employees, as well as to enhance the companies perceived brand reputation. On average less than 10% of employees take advantage of this company benefit, and charities lose out on millions of dollars.

Check with your employer to see if the company provides this benefit and that St. Vartan Armenian Apostolic Church is included as a nonprofit charity. Companies that match contributions include AT&T, Bank of the West, Gap, Apple, Home Depot, Google, PG&E and many others. If St. Vartan is not listed, you can recommend they be included. Many companies use the same independent organization to evaluate nonprofits. Once you nominate and St. Vartan Church is recognized as a qualified charity by one organization, it becomes available to employees in other companies as well.

Don't miss the opportunity to multiply your contribution with your employer's donation match. Your \$100 can easily become \$200, or your \$250 can become \$500. If everyone takes advantage of this company benefit, you will no doubt have a big impact on the Church and our community.



Parish Council Update

My Faithful and Fellow Parishioners,

As you may have noticed during the Sunday Live Streams, we have welcomed back our parishioners for in-person worship, as allowed by the guidelines set forth by the state and our health officials.

Our doors are open with a limited capacity and we continue to take precautions to ensure everyone's health and safety. Additionally, we will continue to broadcast our services via our website and Facebook in order to provide a means for all parishioners to worship from the comfort and safety of their own homes. However, a process has been put in place to ensure everyone's safety outlined below:

1. Masks are mandatory and required to enter any facility of the Church, regardless of vaccination.
 - a. Should you need a mask one can be provided when you arrive, but please do your best to cover your mouth and nose to protect everyone around you, until one is provided to you.
 2. Hand sanitizer is available throughout the vestibule and Church Hall and available upon request.
 3. All parishioners will need to have their temperature checked prior to entry.
 - a. A temperature sensor will be used to gauge body temperature which will be measured from the side of the temple, as to minimize any direct exposure.
 - b. For those who have a high temperature, we ask that you leave the immediate premises and wait at least 15 minutes before returning for another temperature check.
 - c. If you are still running a high body temperature, we ask that leave the Church premises, as a precaution to those in attendance. Please understand this is not an ideal solution, and is solely in place to protect everyone around us.
 4. We will be recording the names of all visitors as a precaution. We will only use this information to contact you should there be any possible exposure.
 5. Select Church pews have been blocked off to ensure social distancing.
 6. All surfaces are sanitized after each service.
 7. An overflow area will be provided should we reach our allowed limit located in the Church Hall, with a live stream broadcast playing on the TV. Socially distanced chairs have been placed for your safety.
- Thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding during this time.

Gratefully,
Dicko Shahvekilian

Donations

St. Vartan Church Parish Council gratefully acknowledges the following donations:

Endowment Fund In Honor of Don Manoogian joining the Parish Council and Lisa Manoogian joining the Ladies Society Executive Board—Don & Lisa Manoogian

Priest Discretionary Fund—Edward & Armineh Jamgotchian

St. Vartan Voice Newsletter—Sarkis and Anahid Sarkisian

Technology Fund—James and Mihoko Malian

Fr. Mesrob Sarafian Scholarship for Religious Education—Edward Minasian, Don & Lisa Manoogian, Brian & Cynthia Der Matoian

Stewardship

Silver Level—Don & Virginia Tafjen, Carol Rustigian

Bronze Level—Edward Minasian, Don and Lisa Manoogian

In Memory

† **Charles Kezerian**

Jeanne Capurro, Hasmig & Anto Cingoz (Technology Fund), Harry & Carol Dokouzian, Nora & Harvey Hanoian, Arlene & Vartan Hovsepian, Aaron & Kelly Kaplan, Nelly & Arka Kargodorian, Elise & Ralph Kazanjian, Don, Lisa and Mathew Manoogian, Linda Gozurian McMahon, Edward Minasian, Barbara Morjig, Carol Rustigian, Joan Sarafian, Marlene Tolegian, Jerald Tusan, Jindoian Family, Evelyn C. Boyd, Ralph & Pat Kermoian, Don & Virginia Tafjen, Stuart & Caroline Arakelian, Sarabian Family, Alberta Bedoian, Sandi, John, Trent & Alex Capurro, Nairi & Serop Samurkashian, Chris & Lucy Yaldezian, Sylvia Alexanian, Kristian & Edward Minasian, Suzanne & Edward Vasgerdsian, Ketefian & Acopian Families

† **Vartouhie Geokdjian**

Linda Berberian

† **Edith Piroumian from Watertown Massachusetts**

Adik Mardirossian

ENDOWMENT FUND

In Memory

† **Charlies Kezerian**

Pete & Pat Barsamian, Harold & Bonnie Koojoolian, Jack & Tammy Papazian, Harry Sherinian

† **Rafik Sarkissian**

Edward & Armineh Jamgotchian, Charles and Ophelia Menzigian

News From Our St. Vartan Family

Condolences

St. Vartan Announces the passing of **Dennis Moltz** on March 5, 2021. Our condolences to his wife, Rosette, Moltz (Ajemian); his sons, Andrew and Christopher; and his grandson, Christopher.

Khanoot Korner

Thank you for continuing to support our St. Vartan Ladies Society through your Khanoot purchases. March was a banner month for us with spicy lamajoon leading sales and selling out within 10 days! We are restocking and excited to get back in the kitchen. (Clear a spot in the freezer for a box of our famous cheese beoreg!)

There are two pickup days this month: Saturday, April 10 and April 17 in the church hall between 11am and 2pm. Pre-orders only. Please phone me at 408-247-3772 (leave a message if you get the machine, and I'll call you back) to place an order. Looking forward to hearing from you. -Kristian Minasian

Here is what's available this month:

Armenian Cookies — \$10/ dozen

Bulghur — \$2/ pound

Gata w/Khoritz — \$15/ dozen

Lamajoon — \$10/ half-dozen

Spicy Lamajoon — \$10/ half-dozen

Sm. Cheese Beoreg — \$40/ 2-dozen

Sou-beoreg — \$18/ 6-piece tray

Easter in Jerusalem: Epitome of Faith

For a true, believing Christian, Easter is the most meaningful time to visit Jerusalem, the city where Jesus the Son of Man lived and taught and suffered, died and rose again in triumph. At any other time, the city lies warily somnolent amid the political turmoil gripping the Holy Land, playing gotcha with the coy phantom of peace - the luxury and the longing of every single person living in the Old City (and of people of goodwill around the world).

Few have any illusions peace will be attainable within their lifetime. But they never cease to hope, their belief bolstered by an unwritten understanding between Arabs and Jews that Jerusalem must not become a free-for-all.

But for every political initiative that heightens these expectations, there inevitably ensues a counter measure that dampens them. Jerusalem is sacred to the monotheistic religions (Christianity, Islam and Judaism), and each in turn acts to safeguard its holy places.

For the followers of these religions, every age-old ritual and tradition is carved in rock and no deviation is conceivable. Where such a travesty has occurred, the consequences have often been bloody. Witness the outbreak of the second Palestinian uprising following a controversial visit to the Dome of the Rock (one of Islam's holiest shrines) by former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

For the various Christian denominations in Jerusalem, the question of holy site control, and the nature and timing of the rites conducted in them, have always been a bone of contention, but it has been possible for the churches to keep a tenuous peace and come to an understanding of mutual interests, despite occasional flare-ups, thanks in great measure to a set of principles and guidelines first promulgated around 1850.

All Christian churches have bound themselves over to acceptance of this "status quo" which encapsulates a pledge made over 150 years ago by the ruling potentate, Turkish Sultan Abdul Majid, and which "defines, regulates and maintains, without change, the proprietary rights in the Holy Places granted exclusively to the three major Christian rites - Greek, Armenian and Latin Catholic—thus making the Armenian Church equal in stature to the Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches despite its relatively small size," according to the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Occasionally, the principles are flouted, often with bloody results as clergymen trade blows within sacred precincts, in full view of disbelieving pilgrims and tourists. Things become particularly touchy during the Holy Fire ceremony commemorating the resurrection of Christ.

The ceremony takes place within the traditional tomb of Jesus Christ in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Christendom's most venerated edifice.

"We believe that on this day, the Holy Fire descends from heaven and lights up the lamp within the Tomb of Christ, thereby symbolizing the resurrection of Christ and his victory over death," the Armenian Patriarchate notes. It calls this "descent of fire from heaven" one of the greatest miracles of Christianity.

The material part of the ceremony, acceptance of the holy fire, is conducted within the aedicule of the Holy Sepulcher, which consists of two chambers, the Angel's Chapel and the Holy Tomb Chapel. In accordance with centuries-old practice, at the highlight of the ceremony, the Greek Patriarch and the Armenian Patriarch, or their representatives, enter

the Holy Tomb, kneel down in front of the Tomb, and witness the miracle of the descent of the Holy Fire, together. The Holy Fire is then transferred by the Greek and Armenian celebrant to other members of the Eastern Churches through two windows located in the wall of the Angel's Chapel - and finds its way around the world as pilgrims light up candles, lamps and torches from it.

Fire brigades are always on standby in case a fire breaks out - but there has not been a fire within living memory. "That in itself is a great miracle," as one Armenian priest observed.



St. Vartan Armenian Apostolic Church

Stewardship Program

Everything we have is a pure gift from God. Giving something back to God out of gratitude is what the Church calls Stewardship. Stewardship involves receiving God's gifts gratefully, cultivating them responsibly, sharing them lovingly with others, and returning them with increase to God. We all have unique stories and so we cannot make equal gifts, but each of us is invited to make equal sacrifices.

We hope St. Vartan Church has made a difference in your life. There would be no St. Vartan without the dedication, commitment, and generosity of our parishioners. Your willingness to share something of what God has given you with our Church is important to us.

Why is there a need for a Stewardship Program in our church?

We need to establish and maintain a predictable income to meet our annual operating expenses. This program will supplement the annual minimum dues and major fundraising efforts.

Who can participate in the Stewardship Program?

Participation in the Stewardship Program is open to any individual or family. You can be a Steward without being a voting member, but we encourage you to be a voting member and also participate in the Stewardship Program.

What is our goal for the year?

In order to meet our operating expenses and carry out our parish projects and objectives, we urge parish members, supporters and friends to be Stewards of the church.

How do I become a Steward?

Complete and return the Stewardship Program Form. Steward Membership is a yearly commitment. Financial pledges can be adjusted at the request of the members at the beginning of each calendar year.

St. Vartan Armenian Apostolic Church 2021 Stewardship Pledge Form

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

My Stewardship Pledge for 2021 is \$ _____

Stewardship Donation Method: Cash Check Card

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Name on Card _____

Amount per Charge \$ _____ Months # _____

Signature _____

Please Check the Level Suitable for You

Platinum Stewardship \$5,000 or more

Gold Stewardship \$3,000 – \$4,999

Silver Stewardship \$1,000 – \$2,999

Bronze Stewardship \$500 – \$999

365 Day Stewardship \$365

Steward \$240

Please return this completed form to the Church office at 650 Spruce Street, Oakland, CA 94610. Make check payable to St. Vartan Church. You can also pay online via credit card at www.stvartanoakland.org

Please check this box if you wish to remain anonymous.

“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” Hebrews 13:16

Support St. Vartan Armenian Apostolic Church

Shop at smile.amazon.com and AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of eligible purchases to your favorite charitable organization—no fees, no extra cost.

Log in to AmazonSmile and choose St. Vartan Armenian Apostolic Church as your charity, or log in directly to:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/94-2565758>

Altar Flower Sponsorship

If you would like to donate funds for altar flowers for a specific Sunday, please notify the church office at stvartanoakland@aol.com. Suggested donation—\$35.

On-Line Bible Study with Fr. Krikor at 7 pm

Wednesday, April 7

Thursday, April 15

Wednesday, April 21

Wednesday, April 28

for Zoom code, register at

<https://www.stvartanoakland.com/events>

St. Vartan Armenian Apostolic Church

Rev. Fr. Krikor Zakaryan

Schedule of Holy Week Services, 2021

Palm Sunday, March 28

Morning Service 10:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy and Sermon 10:30 a.m.

Opening of the Doors &

Service of Antasdan (in the parking lot)..... following Badarak

Holy Thursday, April 1

Divine Liturgy—Memorial of the Last Supper 10:30 a.m.

Washing of the Feet 6:00 p.m.

Service of Betrayal and Passion of Our Lord 7:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 2

Service of the Burial of our Lord 6:30 p.m.

Holy Saturday, April 3

Reading of the Scriptures 6:00 p.m.

Divine Liturgy 6:30 p.m.

Holy Easter, Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, April 4

Morning Service 10:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy 10:30 a.m.

New Sunday, Merelots, April 11

Morning Service 10:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy 10:30 a.m.

Requiem Service — Following Badarak

***Christ is risen from the dead.
Blessed is the Resurrection of Christ.***

Requiem Service – Hokehankist

A Requiem will be said for the souls of the departed on Merelots Sunday, April 11. Those who would like to have the names of their departed loved ones included, should contact the church secretary by April 8 at stvartanoakland@aol.com or 510-893-1671.

Easter Yughakin

It is customary in the Armenian Church to provide Yughakin, especially around the feasts of Christmas and Easter. This practice dates as far back as the time of Moses in the Old Testament. Yughakin in Armenian means "price of oil". Each local church community would donate money specially earmarked towards the purchase of oil, which in turn would keep the lanterns burning and ultimately the doors of the Church open.

At this season of Christ's resurrection let us remember and continue the custom of Yughakin, so we can keep our "oil-burning lanterns" always burning and our doors always open at St. Vartan. Please be generous to the Church in observing this ancient Armenian custom.



Ladies Society Featured Recipe of the Month

Madzoonov Gargantag Madzoon Cake

This is a very old recipe...enjoy with your tea or coffee.

1/2 lb. butter (room temperature)

1 1/2 c sugar

3 eggs

2 1/2 c flour

1tsp. baking powder

1tsp. baking soda

1tsp. vanilla

1 c. madzoon (yogurt)

1/4 tsp. salt

Topping and filling mixture

1/2 c sugar

1tsp. cinnamon

1/2 c walnuts or pecans

Blend butter, cups of sugar and eggs. Add all dry ingredients and madzoon and mix. Spray Bundt pan with cooking spray. Pour 1/2 of the batter in pan and sprinkle with topping mixture. Pour remaining batter and sprinkle with remaining mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour.

Paree Aghorjag

St. Vartan Wish List

St. Vartan Church is requesting donations to the St. Vartan Church Technology Fund to upgrade our aging technology, including upgraded security equipment and a multi-media projector. You can donate to the Technology Fund on-line at stvartanoakland.com or by mailing a check into the church office.

**St. Vartan Church Ladies Society
Mother's Day Drive-Thru Luncheon**



**Saturday, May 8, 2021
Noon to 2 p.m. Pick-up
\$25.00**

**Gourmet Chicken, Pilaf, Bulgur Vegetable Salad,
Dessert, and one (1) Raffle Ticket**

Raffle: Four (4) \$50.00 cash prizes!

**Tickets randomly drawn by our Fr. Krikor on May 7th, and
presented to the lucky winners at pick-up**

**Please reserve your luncheon(s) by mailing your
check (payable to St. Vartan Church) to:**

**Nelly Kargodorian, 420 Casa Via, Walnut Creek,
CA 94598 – (925) 930-7749 – moug42@gmail.com**

***All purchases must be pre-ordered and pre-paid by
Tuesday, April 27th – no exceptions . Thank you!**

St. Vartan Armenian Apostolic Church
650 Spruce Street
Oakland, CA 94610

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The St. Vartan Voice

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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: Dicko Shahyeghilian
Parish Assembly Chair: Nataline Jindoian
Choir Director: Armena Petrosova
Organist: Araks Aghazarian
ACYO Chair: Silva Jindoian
Sunday School Superintendent: Karen Mener
Ladies Society Chair: Suzanne Abnous
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.

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