



YETTEM ՄԳՆՍ

Հրատարակուիլիս Եղեմի Ս. Աստուածածիկ Քայաստանեայց Եկեղեցւոյ
A Publication of St. Mary Armenian Church Yettem, California
Rev. Fr. Mashdots Keshishian, Parish Priest

March 2023

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GREAT LENT IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN

The mystery of the Great Lent is embodied in the essence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Christ opened before the path leading to light and righteousness. Therefore, as we prepare to enter the 40-day spiritual journey of the Great Lent, let us, as devout faithful of the Armenian Apostolic Church, pray, fast, and devote time for daily scriptural readings in order that we may emerge enlightened and renewed, a grace bestowed upon us by the Almighty. By adhering to the canons of the Armenian Church, we emulate Christ – Love’s Greatest Teacher.

Undoubtedly, we live in such a world where we are in dire need of prayer and fasting in order that we may self-examine ourselves and fulfill the promise to transform our lives into the Living Gospel.

Beloved faithful, in our message we present to you works that had been published throughout the years specifically for the Great Lenten Journey in hopes that they will accompany you and serve as a spiritual resource as we embark on a journey with Christ who will lead us to light and everlasting life.

We also present to you three thoughts, which allow us to comprehend God’s greatest gift of life through the creation of mankind and the concept of time for which we out to be thankful.

MAN

“Man, after God, possesses the greatest power, the lever of strength, the spring of movement (action), the mover of waves.”

“Man ceases to be the creation of God when he forces to live within the boundaries of material possessions.”

(Continued on the back page)

Parish Notes

CONDOLENCES

On behalf of our St. Mary Parish, we offer our condolences to the family of John Arsen Sempadian including his mother Yn. Elizabeth Sempadian, his nephew Kimo Sempadian, and nieces Tarani and Sara Sempadian. John was the eldest son of the late Rev. Father Artoon Sempadian and Yn. Betty Sempadian. He entered his eternal rest on January 30, 2023. A Home Service was held on Friday, February 10th at the Whitehurst Chapel in Fresno. The burial will be in San Francisco.

Also, on behalf of our St. Mary Parish we wish to extend our sympathy to Madeleine Zahigian (nee Aslan) and family on the recent passing of **Edward Zahigian** on Thursday, February 16th. Edward is survived by Madeleine, their son Danny, and grandson Danny and his brother Richard Zahigian (wife Elaine) and sister Norma Alexanian (husband George). Condolences are also expressed to the Aslan families. **Services** will be held here at **St. Mary Yetem** on **Friday, March 10th at 10:30 AM** with a memorial lunch following in Visalia. **Burial** will be at the **Visalia Cemetery** at **1:30 PM**.

DONATIONS

Richard Asadoorian and Barbara Cowan
Eugene and Yvonne Kandarian donated in
memory of Greg Davidian on the second
anniversary of his passing.

ALTAR FLOWERS DONATIONS

February 12th

The Reba Ananian Family
in memory of their mother Reba, and their
grandmother, Haiganoush Ananian

HOKEHANKIST REQUESTS

February 12th

Reba Ananian
five years after her passing,
Haiganoush Ananian
twenty-five years after her passing,
requested by the Reba Ananian Family

HOKEHANKIST DONATIONS

(January 23, 2023 – February 19th)

January 29th

For Repose of Basil Perch's Soul

The Basil Perch Family

February 12th

For Repose of Reba Ananian's Soul

Michael and Joy Ananian

ADDITIONAL CHRISTMAS

YUGHAKIN NAMES

Charlie and Elizabeth Ananian

Arthur Hampar

Richard and Lillian Safrazian and Family

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council's next meeting will be held
via Zoom on **Thursday, March 16th at 6 PM**.

IN APPRECIATION

Thank you to ***Darren Ananian*** for pruning the
Pomegranate tree east of the Armenian cross located
on the corner of the church parking lot. We are now
able to clearly see the beautiful cross once again.

BIBLE STUDY

Our **Bible study class** has been **moved to
Friday, March 3rd** via Zoom at **7 PM** **this month
only** due to Souper Supper and the Lenten
Service. Bible Study is normally held on the **first
Wednesday** of **each month**. If you have
questions, call Der Mashdots at the church office.

WAYS AND MEANS

The Ways and Means Committee next meeting will be
held via Zoom on **Thursday, March 2nd at 7 PM**.

SOUPER SUPPERS

Soup will be served at **5:30 PM** followed by a
40-minute service in the church. All our invited
to attend. We already have some volunteers to
sponsor the soup and bread but could use a few
others. If you can help out, call the church office.

Wednesday, March 1st

Wednesday, March 8th

Wednesday, March 15th

Wednesday, March 22nd

Wednesday, March 29th

WOMEN'S DAY OF PRAYER

Several members of our St. Mary Ladies Society came together in fellowship at the Majarian Hall to join a presentation held at the Cathedral in Burbank on February 22nd. The topic of the presentation was "Sharing God's Love through the gift of Empathetic Listening."

ARMENIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES

Armenian Language classes will be held via Zoom on **Tuesday, March 7th** and **Tuesday, March 21st** at **7 PM**. Call the church office if you would like the link.

BULLETIN SPONSORSHIP

If you would like to sponsor either the weekly bulletin for a minimum donation of \$25 or the monthly bulletin for a minimum donation of \$250, please call the church office at (559) 528-6892.



Every donated vehicle helps keep our doors open at St. Mary Yettem. For more information, contact Linda Farsakian-Wall at 559-786-1419.

RAFFLE

Our **second and third drawing of 2023** will be held on **Sunday, March 5th**. The drawing will also be streamed on Facebook. Thank you to our Ways and Means Committee for this great fundraiser for our church.

PAYPAL

You may access PayPal through the St. Mary Yettem website (www.stmaryyettem.org) by clicking on the "Donation" button on the bottom of the Home Page. You may donate for general donations, yughakins, hokehankists, pledges, membership dues, in lieu of flowers, or pay for altar flowers you have ordered on behalf of the church.

SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sunday School meets on the **second and fourth Sundays** of each month at **11:00 AM** September-June.

ST. MARY MEMORIAL WALL

The St. Mary Memorial Wall was started in 2001 and has been a huge success. The original Wall is completely filled. **Two new columns** will be **added soon**. This will make room for an **additional 96 names** at a **donation of \$250/name**. Contact Jim Soxman: ph. (559) 623-2390 or email: jimbeasoxman@sbcglobal.net

WEEKLY EMAIL UPDATE

If you would like to have your email address added to our weekly update email blasts, please call the church office or email sonya@stmaryyettem.org.

Our Annual St. Mary Yettem Parish Assembly Meeting has been rescheduled for Sunday, March 5th following Lenten services. A light lunch will be provided by the Parish Council.

HELPING OUR YETTEM NEIGHBORS

This past weekend of February 25th and 26th, the Yettem and Seville areas experienced severe flooding prompting Tulare County Fire officials to suggest voluntary evacuations for residents whose homes were affected.

We were asked by the county if emergency responders could use our church parking lot as a temporary base for emergency crews. Avenue 384 was closed off in both directions at Road 144 (the road just east of church) and Road 132 (Ben Maddox) from Saturday at noon to Sunday. Our lot was also used for residents to come and fill sandbags to keep water from entering their homes and for work crews to create barriers along the irrigation ditch. Our church was not in danger of flooding. Water continued to flow down the ditch from higher elevations even after the rains subsided.

Church services were canceled because of the road closure. County officials expressed their appreciation for our cooperation.



ST. MARY ARMENIAN CHURCH

March 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Souper Supper at 5:30 PM Lenten Service at 6 PM	2 Ways and Means Committee meeting via Zoom at 7 PM	3 Bible Study Class via Zoom at 7 PM	4 St. Cyril Patriarch of Jerusalem Ladies Society meeting in the Majorian Hall
5 3 rd Sunday of the Lent (Prodigal Son) Annual Parish Assembly Meeting 12 Noon 2 nd & 3 rd Raffle drawings	6	7 Armenian Language Class via Zoom at 7 PM	8 Souper Supper at 5:30 PM Lenten Service at 6 PM	9	10	11 St. John Patriarch of Jerusalem
12 4 th Sunday of the Lent (Steward) Sunday School Children's Sermon	13	14	15 Median day of Lent Souper Supper at 5:30 PM Lenten Service at 6 PM	16 Parish Council meeting via Zoom at 6 PM	17	18
19 5 th Sunday of the Lent (Judge)	20	21 Armenian Language Class via Zoom at 7 PM	22 Souper Supper at 5:30 PM Lenten Service at 6 PM	23	24	25 St. Gregory the Illuminator Commitment to the Pit
26 6 th Sunday of the Lent (Advent) Sunday School	27	28	29 Souper Supper at 5:30 PM Lenten Service at 6 PM	30	31	



Sunday Schedule:

Sunrise Service (Matins) 9:45 AM
Divine Liturgy 10:15 AM

Office Hours

**Tuesday – Friday
9:30 AM to 2:30 PM**

Father Mashdots can be reached at:

559-528-6892 – Office
559-528-6897 – FAX
818-293-9098 - Cell



St. Mary Ladies Society Meeting
~PROGRAM~
VARTANANTS

The Battle of Avarayr (Ավարայրի ճակատամարտ [battle]) was fought on 2 June 451 (wiki), 26 May 451 (Yeghishe), on the Avarayr Plain in Vaspouragan, a province of the ancient kingdom of Armenia in southeastern Turkey and northwestern Iran. The battle was between a Christian Armenian army, under Sparabed [General] Vartan Mamigonian, and Sassanid Persia. It is considered one of the first battles in defense of the Christian faith. Although the Persians were victorious on the battlefield, the battle proved to be a major strategic victory for Armenians, as Avarayr paved the way to the Nvarsak Treaty of 484 AD, which affirmed Armenia's right to practice Christianity freely.

The battle is not even mentioned in Persian history accounts. It is seen as one of the most significant events in Armenian history. It was a bloody clash between two unequal forces: 66,000 poorly equipped Armenians against 300,000 well-trained and well-armed Persians. It lasted from sunrise to sunset, one day. The mortal remains of the commander of the Armenian forces, Vartan Mamigonian, and 1035 of his followers were strewn on the battleground. Vartan Mamigonian is considered a national hero and has been canonized by the Armenian Apostolic Church.

Yeghisheh's *History of Vartan and the Armenian War* describes the heroism of the Armenian people of the fifth century. It is his eye-witness story. Yeghisheh was a vartabed, one of the youngest pupils of St. Sahag (Catholicos) and St. Mesrob Mashdots.

The book describes everything leading up to and beyond that fateful day. During one attack, Yeghisheh notes one good fighter roared like a lion and attacked like a wild boar. His name was Arshavir.

There was a traitor, Vasag. The Persians told him he was the rightful king, but he even embezzled taxes intended for the Persians. He had his uncle assassinated. He was eventually thrown into a dungeon. Yeghisheh writes that he died like a dog. No Armenian ever names his child Vasag.

Ghevont Yerets* is remembered as the priest who, on the night before the decisive battle against the Persians, assembled the Armenian troops on the battlefield and baptized those that not yet been received into the Church. St. Ghevont then celebrated the Divine Liturgy and distributed Holy Communion to every soldier. (*Yerets երեց means priest. Gunig Geen կնիկ կին means wife/woman. Priest's wife = Yeretsgin երեցկին.)

The Persian religion was Zoroastrianism. It contains both monotheistic and dualistic elements, dualistic meaning good and evil, light (sun, fire) and dark. Ahura Mazda is the benevolent deity, Ahriman, the destructive spirit.

There were many letters between the Persians and Armenians leading up to the battle. The Persian king demanded and tortured the Armenians to become Zoroastrians. The Grand Vizier sent a long letter in which he writes "*Be it known to you that every man who dwells beneath the heavens and holds not the Mazdean religion, is deaf and blind and is deceived by the devils of Ahriman.*"

Eighteen Bishops answered this epistle. In Yeghisheh's book, their letter takes up over seven pages. The powerful conclusion is well-known to us:

"From this faith no one can shake us, neither angels nor men; neither sword, nor fire, nor water, nor any, nor all other horrid tortures. ...

Our bond of faith is ... with God to Whom we are indissolubly bound and from Whom nothing can detach and separate us, neither now, nor later, nor forever, nor forever and ever."

Mari Louise Menendian



Sponsored by the
Ways and Means Committee

Palm Sunday

BAKE SALE &

FARMERS MARKET

After Church Services

Sunday, April 2, 2023



Choreg *Simit* *Nazook*
Gata *Kataifi* *Bread Sticks*

Plus many more Homemade Baked Goods

****SUPPORT the Ways and Means****

Bake Sale—Donations of any Armenian Baked Goods or Specialty Desserts will be accepted the day of the Bake Sale.

Fruits & Vegetables—Do you have a garden, fruit tree(s) in your backyard or access to any fruits or vegetables?

Your donation of fruits and/or vegetables would be greatly appreciated to sell at the Farmers Market!

Text or Call Judy Skaff—(559) 799-1198



Saint Mary Yettem ACYO

Annual Easter Luncheon

Sunday, April 9, 2023

Immediately following church services in the Majarian Hall

'Filet' Beef Kebab

Salad, Pilaf, Green Beans, Cheese Borag,
Armenian Bread, Dessert and Beverages

Adults: \$22 per adult

Children 10 and under: \$15 per child



For Reservations:

Call the Church Office—(559) 528-6892 •

E-mail—lunches@stmaryyettem.org

Reserved Seating is available with your advance payment

Fill out the bottom portion (front and back) and
send with your payment by Tuesday, April 4, 2023 to:

ACYO—936 W. Hemlock Avenue, Visalia, CA 93277



ACYO Easter Luncheon—Reservations with Advance Payment

NAME _____ Phone # _____

_____ Yes, I will attend the ACYO Easter Luncheon.

Adult Ticket(s): _____ @ \$22 = \$ _____

Children Ticket(s): _____ @ \$15 = \$ _____

My check is enclosed Payable to St. Mary ACYO for \$ _____

A table of Eight (8) can be reserved—if more seats are needed on the table please specify.

Please list the people you are paying for
and/or would like to sit with on the back of this paper.

Are you lucky?? Tricky Tray Basket Raffle

“Unique, Fun and Useful” items
will be available to try your luck!

\$15.00 for 26 tickets

If you would like to donate a basket for the Tricky Tray

Please Call/Text/E-mail — Lauren or Ani Valencia

Lauren—559-349-4647 • Ani—559-779-7705

laurenvalencia@mail.fresnostate.edu • anivalencia19@gmail.com

-OR- bring your item(s) the day of the luncheon!

- Basket Ideas -

Movie Night

Coffee Lovers

Dinner Out on the Town

Cross/Religious

Gift Cards

Bakers Delight

Princess/Barbie Items

Cars/Tractor Items

Armenian Treasures

Easter Luncheon—Table #1.

1. _____

5. _____

2. _____

6. _____

3. _____

7. _____

4. _____

8. _____

Easter Luncheon—Table #2.

1. _____

5. _____

2. _____

6. _____

3. _____

7. _____

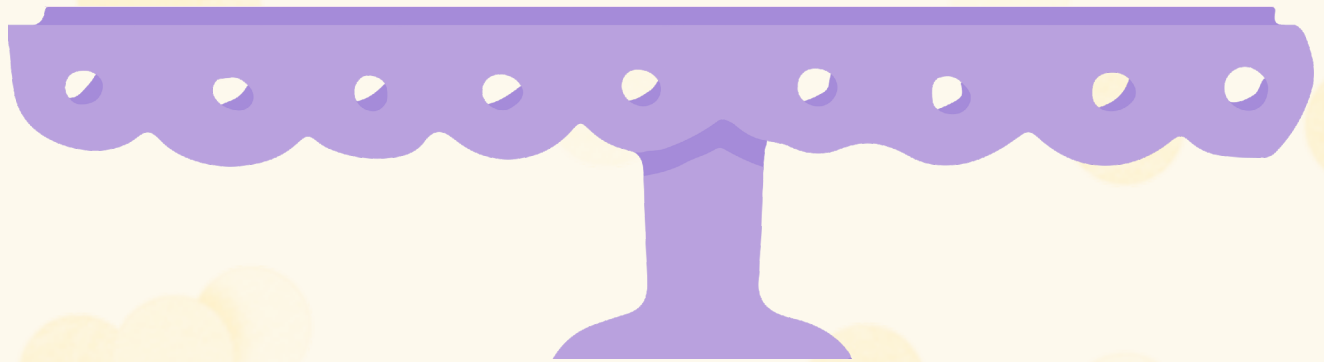
4. _____

8. _____

Yettem Social Hyes

Easter Sunday

BAKE SALE



After Church Service
Sunday April 9, 2023
St. Mary Yettem Social Hall

Please Come and Support our
Fund Raiser! There will be
Homemade Armenian Baked
Goods

Syrian Armenian Assistance

During the course of history there are times that demand us to **extend our hands to our brothers and sisters in need**. The 7.8 magnitude February 6 earthquake, with its epicenter in Turkey, killed at least 360 in Aleppo, Syria, and wounded hundreds of others. As of February 9, over 3,162 people were reported dead in Syria. Right now, **Syrian Armenians** are living in difficult times **deprived of** basic living conditions – **food, water, utilities and more**. Please **open your hearts** and consider **making a donation** to the Armenians of Syria. **Checks** can be **made out to St. Mary Armenian Church** with “**Syrian Armenian Assistance**” on the **memo line**.





Ladies Society Paint Night - February 11, 2023



(Continued from the front page)

“Man, whoever he is, wherever he may be, is not the owner of his life. He is life’s steward. My life belongs to God. What belongs to me is the way I choose to live my life. I decide how much I value and appreciate it, for it is my sole responsibility to give an account of my life to God. And every one of us, whether an individual or a nation must give an account to God, the Giver of life.”

“Life is God’s radiance in us.”

Karekin I Sarkissian

131st Catholicos of All Armenians

TIME

Preserve and cherish time. Remember well that it is not subject for retrieval. The perfect juxtaposition of man, life and time is the revelation of our existence for the glory of God.

The Great Lent, therefore, is the perfect opportunity to stand before a mirror to witness our own reflection. If we stray from God’s path, then we ought to remain true to our Christian calling.

Archbishop Hovnan Derderian

Primate

February 1, 2023



St. Mary Armenian Church
P.O. Box 367
Yetter, California 93670
Return Service Required

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
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