



YETTEM ԵՌԵՄ

Հրատարակութիւն Եղեմի Ս. Աստուածածին Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցւոյ
A Publication of St. Mary Armenian Church Yettem, California
Rev. Fr. Mashdots Keshishian, Parish Priest

June 2021

Why Did Jesus Die on the Cross?

If asked why Jesus had to die on the cross, most Christians today would immediately answer, “To pay for my sins.” Jesus certainly paid the price for our sins, but it might surprise some reader to learn that this wasn’t the way Christians would answer this question for the first thousand years of Church history. The main reason Jesus died on the cross, according to this earlier view, was to defeat Satan and set us free from his oppressive rule. Everything else that Jesus accomplished, including paying for our sins, was to be understood as an aspect and consequence of this victory.

This earlier understanding of why Jesus had to die is called the *Christus Victor* (Latin for “Christ is Victorious”) view of the atonement. In my estimation it captures the profound beauty of the New Testament account better than the view that focuses exclusively on what Jesus did for us.

The *Christus Victor* motif is strongly emphasized throughout the New Testament. Scripture declares that Jesus came into this world to “drive out the ruler of this world” ([Jn 12:31](#)), to “destroy the works of the devil” ([I Jn 3:8](#)), to “destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil” ([Heb. 2:14-15](#)) and to ultimately “put all his enemies under his feet” ([I Cor 15:25](#)). Jesus came to overpower the “strong man” (Satan) who holds the world in bondage and to work with his children to “plunder his house” ([Lk 11:21-22](#)). He came to end the reign of the cosmic “thief” who seized the world to “steal and kill and destroy” the life God intended for us ([Jn 10:10](#)). Jesus came to earth and died on the cross to disarm “the rulers and authorities” and make a “public spectacle of them” by “triumphing over them on the cross” ([Col 2:15](#)).

Beyond these explicit statements, there are many other passages that express the *Christus Victor* motif as well. For example, the first prophecy in the Bible foretells that a descendent of Eve (Jesus) would crush the head of the serpent ([Gen. 3:15](#)). The first Christian sermon ever preached proclaims that Jesus in principle conquered all God’s enemies ([Ac 2:32-36](#)). And the single most frequently quoted Old Testament passage by New Testament authors is [Psalm 110:1](#) which predicts that Christ would conquer all God’s opponents.

The Incarnation of the Son of God fulfilled God’s original dream of uniting himself to humanity to acquire a bride and co-ruler. But it’s clear from the *Christus Victor* motif we’ve just examined that, because of our rebellion, the Incarnation also involved a rescue mission that included a strategy for vanquishing the powers of darkness.

Parish Notes

CONDOLENCES

On behalf of our St. Mary Parish family, we wish to extend our deepest sympathy to Abe and Sandra Kizirian and Family on the recent passing of their grandson, Richard Kizirian, Jr. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Kizirian family.

ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS

May 2nd – Mike and Judy Skaff in honor of Judy's parents, Richard and Alice Dudukian's wedding anniversary.

May 9th – Myron and Debbie Sheklian and Family in memory of Myron's sister, Marguerite Sheklian.

May 16th – Jerry and Julie Poochigian. Thank you, Jesus for always doing everything for us and thank you for all your blessings.

May 16th – Rose Marie Margosian, the Pilavian Family and the Peters Family in memory of George Margosian.

HOKEHANKIST REQUESTS

May 2nd

Richard Dudukian

Eleven years after his passing
Requested by Mike and Judy Skaff

May 9th

Marguerite Sheklian

Six years after her passing on May 7th
Requested by Myron and Debbie Sheklian and Family

Sark Davidian

Twenty-three years after his passing
Requested by Margie L. Davidian

May 16th

George Margosian

Two years after his passing
Requested by Rose Marie Margosian, the Pilavian Family and the Peters Family

HOKEHANKIST DONATIONS

(April 26, 2021 – May 23, 2021)

For Repose of Richard Dudukian's Soul

May 2nd – Mike and Judy Skaff

For Repose of Marguerite Sheklian's Soul

May 9th – Myron and Debbie Sheklian

For Repose of Sark Davidian's Soul

May 9th – Margie L. Davidian

For Repose of George Margosian's Soul

May 16th – Rose Marie Margosian, the Pilavian Family, the Peters Family, Lucille Margosian, Karon Penny, and Evelyn Crowder, John and Sharon Kaprielian

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Hartune Neffian and Diane Kochian in memory of their parents, Harry and Lillian Neffian.

C.D. Simonian Insurance Company in memory of David Simonian.

BAPTISMS

May 1st

Mila Yahnian

Daughter of Kevin and Aida Yahnian
Godfather, Daniel Hairabedian
Godmother, Mikelle Hairabedian
Grandparents, Bryan and Renee Yahnian
Grandparents, Sako & Sonig Sorfazian
Great-Grandparents Sark and Sylvia Yahnian
Great-Grandparents Edda Sorfazian, Freeda Shekerdeman, and George & Linda Sorfazian

Layla Yahnian

Daughter of Kevin and Aida Yahnian
Godfather, Kevin Yahnian
Godmothers, Nina Yahnian
and Christina Sorfazian
Grandparents, Bryan and Renee Yahnian
Grandparents, Sako & Sonig Sorfazian
Great-Grandparents Sark and Sylvia Yahnian
Great-Grandparents Edda Sorfazian, Freeda Shekerdeman, and George & Linda Sorfazian

EASTER YUGHAKIN LIST

There was an error in the May bulletin and additional names have been added to the Easter 2021 Yughakin list.

Sarkis and Hasmik Enfiedjian
Charles and Lori Sarabian

PARISH COUNCIL CORNER

On May 7, 2021, our elected St. Mary Yettem representatives met via Zoom for the annual Diocesan Assembly meeting. Following the Diocesan Assembly, parish priests and parish council chairs from throughout the Diocese met for an additional session.

At that meeting a set of PROPOSED Revised Bylaws, which are intended to allow for a simplification and reorganization effort of the Western Diocese's operations, properties and parishes were presented. At the direction of the Diocesan Council, the Committee is circulating these draft documents with a request for comments prior to the end of June. I have posted a link to these documents on our webpage at www.stmaryyettem.org. A Fall 2021 Special Diocesan Assembly Meeting is to be scheduled to allow detailed discussion regarding the Revised Bylaws. A two-thirds (2/3) vote approval of the voting members at the Special Diocesan Assembly Meeting will be required to set in motion the adoption of these Revised Bylaws.

In summary, the changes proposed provides for an overall reorganization separating the management of the Western Diocese into THREE distinct types of organizations, each of which will be set up as nonprofit religious corporations:

1. All consecrated properties, which traditionally have had their title transferred from Parishes to the Western Diocese, will be held by the Property Management organization. The Property Management Bylaws will be ratified by the Diocesan Assembly prior to the reorganization. Our Yettem consecrated properties will be leased for a \$1/year from this organization.

2. All operations at the Western Diocese level, including management of ordained clergy assigned to and throughout the Western Diocese, will be conducted by the Diocese Operations organization. The Diocesan Operations Bylaws will be ratified by the Diocesan Assembly prior to the reorganization.

3. All operations at our individual St. Mary Parish level, including management of any Parish employees or independent contractors, will be conducted by our Parish Council and organizations. We will be developing our own set of Bylaws. The initial draft of these Bylaws will be as ratified by the Diocesan Assembly. Our parish will continue to be responsible for payment of our parish priest and secretary, building insurance, maintenance and any relevant property taxes that may arise. We have already obtained our own 501c3 non-profit status and are registered as a nonprofit religious corporation with the State of California.

Between now and our annual St. Mary Parish Assembly meeting in February of 2022, your parish council will be busy drafting a set of our own parish bylaws that will govern our operations under this new plan. If members of our parish have questions about this process, you are encouraged to contact me.

*Myron Sheklian
Parish Council Chairman*

LADIES SOCIETY NEWS

Get ready! Hot Dog drive thru is back, Saturday, June 5, 11:30 – 1:00 at the church. Five dollars (\$5) buys you a hot dog, chips, 2 cookies, and bottled water. Additional hot dogs are \$1.00 each.

To kick it up a notch, we are having a Jail 'n Bail Fundraiser along with the drive-thru. For \$20, you can request to have a fellow parishioner jailed. The jailbirds will then have to raise money for the church to get bailed out of jail. Watch out, you won't be able to hide from our deputies!

Ladies Society Executive Board hosted a Mother's Day luncheon on May 8 under the canopy of trees in our church yard. It was a beautiful event attended by over 40 guests who enjoyed a luncheon catered by the Vintage Press. The day featured our three special guests, Sylvia Yahnian, Lucille Margosian, and Marilyn Zerounian. These three ladies have given 59 and 58 years of dedicated service to Ladies Society. It was a privilege to honor each of these ladies.

In the next three-monthly bulletins, you will get a chance to get to know these honorees. They will be featured one at a time as each is so deserving. We will start with the Sylvia Yahnian who is the longest serving member of Ladies Society then followed by Lucille Margosian, and finally Marilyn Zerounian. Please take the time to read about each of these wonderful ladies.

Birthday wishes for May go out to Margie Ann Davidian and Sandra Vartanian. We wish them all God's blessings.

*Linda Farsakian-Wall
Chairlady*

SAVE THE DATE

Pastoral visitation of **His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian** to St. Mary Armenian Church will be on **Sunday, July 18th**. (See flier)

RAFFLE WINNERS

Our fifth drawing for our St. Mary Armenian Church raffle was held on Mother’s Day, Sunday, May 9th. Congratulations to...

- (\$150) Kasper Hovannisian
- (\$100) Carl and Lori Abajian
- (\$50) David Yahnian

Our sixth raffle drawing will be held on Father’s Day, June 20th. It’s not too late to take part in the fun! If you don’t have tickets or need additional ones, please contact Tina Peters at (559) 967-2593 by phone or text.

WAYS AND MEANS

On behalf of the Ways and Means Committee we would like to thank everyone for all their hard work in making this year’s Food Festival a success. This long-standing church community event would not be possible without the participation of so many people dedicated to our beloved St. Mary. Also, a special thank you to Jim Soxman for his guidance throughout the planning and the day of the event. His years of experience were the key to our success. We look forward to continuing this tradition for years to come.

*Your Co-Chairs,
Margie L. Davidian and Judy Skaff*

WAYS AND MEANS

Ways and Means Committee next meeting will be on Thursday, June 10th via Zoom at 7:00 PM.

SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS!

Last day for Sunday School Students will be on Sunday, June 13th. Sunday School will resume in September. Please contact Tracy Valencia for any questions at 559-824-0913.

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council’s next meeting will be held via Zoom on Tuesday, June 15th at 6:30 PM.

ACYO

ACYO’s next meeting is Sunday, June 27, 2021 via Zoom at 3:30 PM.

CLINIC HELD IN MAJARIAN HALL

On Tuesday, May 4, 2021, the Tulare County Health Department conducted an immunization clinic at our church for the nearby residents of the county. Tulare County Health Department staff and Dinuba paramedics were on hand from 4-7 PM to provide their services.

Students from Hovsepien Armenian School Pilgrimage to Yetteem

On Friday, May 28, our church hosted pilgrims from the Hovsepien Armenian School in Pasadena. The seventh and eighth grade students, staff, and volunteers from the school were on their way to our church camp for a culminating school event. His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian coordinated the stop in Yetteem between the school and our parish so students could learn more about our unique and beautiful Yetteem Community. The visitors toured our gorgeous sanctuary, watched a historical video, and were treated to a barbeque that included hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and dessert.

Our church office hours are Tuesday through Friday from 9:30 – 2:30 PM. The office phone number is (559) 528-6892. If you are in need of something beyond those hours, you can email fathermashdots@stmaryyettem.org or text/call (818) 293-9098 or email St. Mary Parish Council Chairman Myron Sheklian at myron@sheklian.com or text/call (559) 280-7315.

Father Mashdots is available for pastoral care, spiritual guidance and support. Please inform Der Hayr of those who may be sick at home, hospitalized or wish a visit.

ALL services are livestreamed on our webpage at www.stmaryyettem.org. There are links on the “Camera Tab” for INSIDE and OUTSIDE services. The Holy Badarak is streamed on our Facebook page each Sunday beginning at 10:30 AM.

ARTSAKH AID

The parishes of our Diocese play an instrumental role in the rebuilding of our homeland and showed immense support to our homeland during the tragic war in Artsakh. To date our parish and individuals have contributed about \$8,100 to the effort.

As we move forward with these efforts in supporting the humanitarian efforts and strengthening Armenia and Artsakh, we ask that you make your future donations to **St. Mary Armenian Church** and write **“Armenian and Artsakh Relief”** on the memo line. In this way, we can forward and direct donations to go to Diocese-endorsed programs.

ST. MARY MEMORIAL WALL

The St. Mary Memorial Wall was started in 2001 and has been a huge success. Currently there is **space for 28 additional names** at a **donation of \$200/name**. Contact Jim Soxman: ph. 559-936-2227 or email: jimbeasoxman@sbcglobal.net.

ALL services are livestreamed on our webpage at www.stmaryyettem.org. There are links on the “Camera Tab” for INSIDE and OUTSIDE services. The Holy Badarak is streamed on our Facebook page each Sunday beginning at 10:30 AM.

The St. Mary Armenian Church of Yettem Facebook page and website will keep you informed about our church schedules, events, and miscellaneous happenings. Make sure you stop and visit often as we are always adding lots of pictures and information.

COOKBOOK

A second edition of the “Treasured Recipes from the Garden of Eden” has been made available. These cookbooks make a great gift. If you are interested in purchasing a copy, call the church office at (559) 528-6892 or Debbie Sheklian at (559) 733-4417. The cost of the cookbook is \$30 or \$30 plus shipping if mailed.


FACE MASKS

St. Mary Yettem face masks are available for purchase in the church office or at the Parish Council desk on Sundays. Thank you to David and Lisa Krause for this project. Suggested minimum donation for each mask is \$5.

PAYPAL

You may access PayPal through the St. Mary Yettem web-site (www.stmaryyettem.org) and click 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.

ARMENIAN SUMMER CAMP



HYE CAMP 2021

We are excited to announce Hye Camp 2021 is happening this summer!
Make friends and memories that last forever!

Week 1: July 18 – July 24
Director: Arpy Tatoulian-Jahjah

Week 2: July 25 – July 31
Director: Lauren Diramerian

Week 3: August 1 – August 7
Director: Rami Gabriel

Staff applications now open!
Camper applications go live May 15th!

hyecamp.com

The graphic features a collage of photos showing camp activities: people gathered under a pavilion, a group on a boat, a person on a dock, and a group of people sitting on the ground. A central logo for 'armenian summer camp' is also present.



St. Mary Armenian Church

JUNE 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 St. Gayane & her Companions, Virgins	2	3	4	5 St. Gregory the Illuminator Deliverance from the Pit Ladies Society Hot Dog Drive- thru 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM
6 Feast of the Catholicon of Holy Etchmiadzin Last day of Sunday School	7	8	9	10 Ways and Means meeting via Zoom at 7:00 PM.	11	12 St. Nerses the Great
13	14	15 Parish Council Zoom Meeting at 6:30 PM	16	17	18	19 St. Gregory the Illuminator Discovery of His Relics
20 Father's Day	21	22	23	24 Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Translators	25	26 Sts. Tridates the King & Queen Ashkhen
27 ACYO meeting via Zoom at 3:30	28	29	30			

9

Sunday Schedule:

Morning Service (Matins) 9:45 AM
Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM

Father Mashdots can be reached at:

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

Sylvia Sousamian Yahnian



Sylvia was born November 20, 1934, in Goshen. She was born Sara Sousamian the first child to Hagop and Varsanig Sousamian. Her maternal aunts Ester and Margaret renamed her Sylvia which she goes by to this day. Sylvia's younger sister Marilyn Zerounian and brother Michael Sousamian came shortly afterwards. The family eventually moved to a farm north of Visalia where Sylvia learned the lifelong lesson of hard work.

It was there on the farm that a handsome young man would show up wanting to buy milk. The Yettem Armenian community is a small community where everyone knew everyone. This was no exception with Sylvia and the handsome young man, Sark Yahnian. Getting to see Sylvia brought Sark to the farm frequently. Sylvia and Sark were married November 13, 1954 at St.

Mary Yettem Church. That's 66 years of dedicating themselves to their children, to the family business, and to our church. The couple was blessed with 3 children, Bryan, Richard, and David, 10 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren.

The couple worked hard side-by-side. They owned and operated a farm and walnut business. Sark ran the farming end and Sylvia was in charge of the books and of the walnut huller where she worked sorting walnuts year after year until her hands couldn't take it anymore. Sylvia was also in business with her parents. Together they picked, canned, and sold grape leaves under the label SY Grape Leaves.

When she wasn't working, she was volunteering at church and being a mom to her 3 children. She gave 100% support to each of the boys' activities. Be it 4-H, PTA, FFA, or David's sports, she was always there with Sark. She taught her children many important lessons, "When one door closes, another one opens, to never give up, and there is a reason for everything." Most importantly she taught them the love of family, the love of the church, and to work hard.

To Sylvia, church was "everything." This she learned from her grandparents and parents. Her grandfather Boghos Simonian was one of the carpenters of the original church built in 1911. Her parents received the Benefactor's Award for their service to our church. Sylvia was baptized, attended Sunday school, was a member of ACYO, and was married all in St. Mary Yettem church. Then she repeated the cycle with her children raising them in the faith of our church. Sylvia did not shy away from church work. She joined Ladies Society in 1962 and has been a faithful member for 59 years. She dedicated years of service to the organization as the chairlady, vice-chairlady, treasurer, assistant treasurer, advisor, and diocesan delegate. You could find her in the church kitchen at the drop of a hat. She made mas, made choreg for camp, helped prepare meals for big events, and so much more. Sark would frequently ask the boys where's mom? "At church in the kitchen," was always their answer.

Her service to the church did not stop with Ladies Society. She was a Sunday school teacher for 14 years. She and Sark were one of the founding members of the Mr. and Mrs. Club where she served as treasurer and corresponding secretary. The couple was also on the Ways and Means Committee.

When she wasn't in the kitchen at church, she was baking and cooking at home. Fresh made lahmajoon, monte, and choreg were the family favorites. The kids and the grandkids looked forward to Christmas because they knew a big basket of choreg would be their Christmas present.

Sylvia is described by her children as "loving", "rock solid", "reliable", and "consistent". She did what needed to be done with grace and humiliation. She quietly worked with dedication never seeking the spotlight. For that we are grateful for her service to Ladies Society and our church.

GRADUATES

Aram Babagian has graduated from Fresno State with a bachelor's degree in Ag Business.



Dustin Vartanian has graduated from Fresno State. He earned a Major in Business Management. He also earned a Minor in Armenian Studies.



GRADUATES

Gregory Krikorian has graduated from Fresno State with a bachelor's degree in Business Management and a minor in Armenian Studies.



Paige Ainley has graduated from the Grand Canyon University with a Master of Art degree in Curriculum & Instruction.

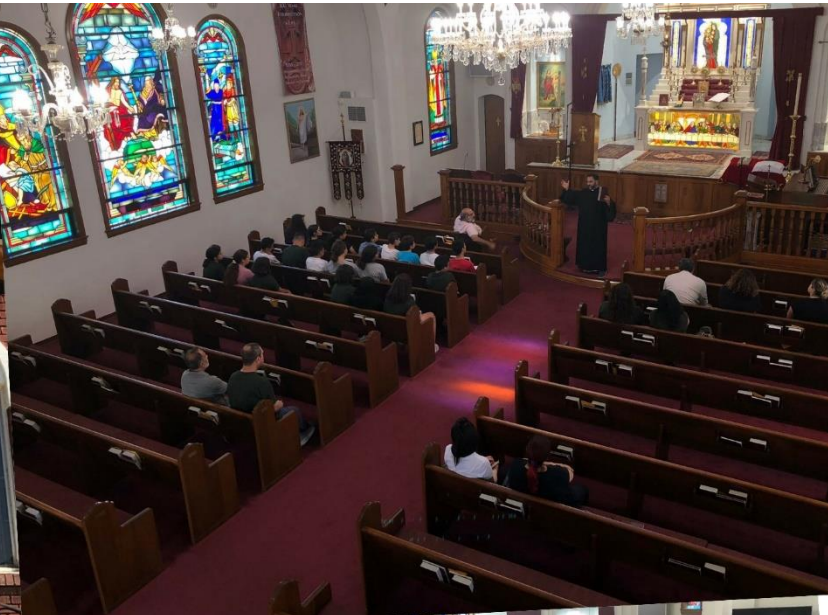




**May 2021 Activities:
Mothers' Day Luncheon
Sunday School Making Nushkar**







**Students from Hovsepien Armenian School
Pilgrimage to Yettem - May 28, 2021**



Hungry for Hot Dogs?

Let us Feed YOU...AND

Bring the WHOLE FAMILY too!



Drive-Thru

(St. Mary Yettem Church Parking Lot)



Hot Dog Feed

Saturday, June 5, 2021

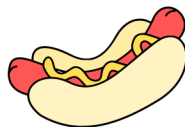
11:30am—1:00pm

\$5.00 per Meal

Meal includes:

1 Hot Dog, 1 Bag of Chips, 2 Cookies, 1 Bottled Water

Additional Hot Dogs -or- Chips -or- Water—\$1.00 each



☞ Church will be Open for those who would like to

“light a Candle and/or say a Prayer” ☞

Organized by the St. Mary Yettem Ladies Society

CONSUL GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA H.E. ARMEN BAIBOURTIAN VISITS ST. MARY ARMENIAN CHURCH YETTEM

On Saturday, May 28, 2021, Ambassador Armen Baibourtian, PhD , Consul General of the Republic of Armenia in Los Angeles, accompanied by Honorary Consul Berj Apkarian of the Armenian Honorary Consulate in Fresno, visited our St. Mary Parish in Yetttem. Dr. Baibourtian was appointed on September 6, 2018, to the position of Consul-General in Los Angeles by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. The Consul General has been visiting parishes from throughout the Western Diocese in the past months and made the visit to Yetttem prior to speaking in Fresno at a presentation hosted by the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State and the St. Paul Armenian Church.



**PASTORAL VISITATION OF HIS EMINENCE
ARCHBISHOP HOVNAN DERDERIAN**

**ST. MARY, YETTEM
SUNDAY, JULY 18, 2021**



**St. Mary Parish invites all parishioners
and friends to the pastoral visit of
His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian
to receive His spiritual message and blessings.**

Military Story: True Friend

Horror gripped the heart of the World War I soldier as he saw his lifelong friend fall in battle. Caught in a trench with continuous gunfire whizzing over his head, the soldier asked his lieutenant if he might go out into the “no man’s land” between the trenches to bring his fallen comrade back.

“You can go,” said the lieutenant, “but I don’t think it will be worth it. Your friend is probably dead, and you may throw your life away.” The lieutenant’s advice didn’t matter, and the soldier went anyway. Miraculously he managed to reach his friend, hoist him onto his shoulder and bring him back to their company’s trench. As the two of them tumbled in together to the bottom of the trench, the officer checked the wounded soldier, and then looked kindly at his friend.

“I told you it wouldn’t be worth it,” he said. “Your friend is dead, and you are mortally wounded.”

“It was worth it, though, sir,” said the soldier.

“What do you mean; worth it?” responded the Lieutenant. “Your friend is dead.”

“Yes, Sir” the private answered. “But it was worth it because when I got to him, he was still alive and I had the satisfaction of hearing him saying, “Jim..., I knew you’d come.”

Many times in life, whether a thing is worth doing or not, really depends on how you look at it. Take up all your courage and do something your heart tells you to do so that you may not regret doing it later in your life. May each and every one of you be blessed with the company of TRUE FRIENDS. A true friend is one who walks in, when the rest of the world walks out. War doesn’t determine who’s right. War only determines who’s left.