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Our Parish



VOL 1

August 1993

No. 4 (New Series)

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Our Parish

**MONTHLY BULLETIN OF
THE ARMENIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SYDNEY**

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Our Parish Bulletin

I would like this Bulletin to change and answer more to your expectations.

This Bulletin needs help. Your help.

You can help by articles to be published, you can help by letting us know of things you like and dislike in this bulletin, you can let us know what you would like to see in this Bulletin.

At this stage, we are hoping that this bulletin will have (from September onward) something about:

- *the Activities of our Parish*
- *the School*
- *the Armenian Community in Australia*
- *Armenia*

I am eagerly awaiting to your comments.

Fr Anton

THE BLESSING OF THE FRESCO AND OPENING OF THE ART EXHIBITION

The church was full for the Mass. Many of the present were invited guests representing different Armenian Organizations in Sydney. The Mass finished just on time for His Excellency Archbishop Aghan Baleozian to walk in the Church while the choir sang "Hrashapar".

It is always with great joy that we welcome His Excellency amongst us. Usually he officiates at our school functions, but this time it was in our church that we welcomed him. This is his second visit to our Church. The first being at the occasion of the visit of our Patriarch in 1989.

After a few words through which his Excellency spoke of the faith of the artists and the expression of that faith in their work, he blessed the fresco. He congratulated Vladimir and Flora for their magnificent work and for the Armenian gift they are leaving to us.

The people were invited to go to the Hall for the opening of the Exhibition of the paintings of Vladimir Grigorian.

Mrs Fila Qasabian spoke in English (the text is reproduced in these pages). Father Anton spoke in Armenian mentioning how it was providence that arranged his meeting in Armenia with the Artist and his wife Flora Baghdassarian. Father was looking for art teachers to come and teach the students of St Gregory.

Speaking of Vladimir's paintings, Father pointed out that the works executed in Armenia convey the age of the land and its buildings. As if a lot of dust was sitting there. The colours are subdued. Whereas his works in Australia have been influenced by the sharp contrasts of the colours and shapes of Australia.

His Excellency spoke of the Armenian art in the works of Vladimir and declared the Exhibition opened.

The exhibition will continue till Sunday August 8.

The time of the exhibition:

Monday August 2 - Friday August 6:	12.00 noon - 8 pm
Saturday August 7	10.00 am - 6 pm
Sunday August 8	12.00 noon - 5 pm

Also:

Saturday August 14	12.00 noon - 6 pm
Sunday August 15	12.00 noon - 5 pm

The exhibition is not only for selling the paintings, it is also an occasion to see some really beautiful and worthwhile works of art.

So many of those who visited commented about the high quality of these works and the richness in the variety.



It was suggested that we accept advertising on these pages. We realize it is a good idea and we would like you to know the rates.

Full Page	\$40.00 per issue
Half Page	\$25.00 per issue
1/4 Page	\$25.00 per issue

Some items for sale in the Church Hall this week

There is an art exhibition, and the paintings are for sale.

There is a magnificent reproduction of the fresco that you might purchase, and have it signed by the artists. You might want to frame it at home, or send it to friends in Australia or overseas. They are at a reasonable price of \$20. Framed ones are available for \$50 each.

There are single and double postcards also of the fresco. The singles are \$1.00 and the doubles, \$1.50 each.

The Annals magazine has something about the artists. The Annals are \$2.00 each

Also to help with the restoration work of the hall, the artists donated two paintings, and raffles are being sold for these two paintings. \$2.00 a ticket.

Prayer

Prayer is so simple.
It's like quietly opening
A door there in the stillness
To listen to His voice;
Perhaps to petition,
Or only to listen.
It matters not.
Just to be there
In His presence
Is prayer.

20 Years Priest

It was in August 1973 that I was ordained priest in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. Full of youth and enthusiasm, I wanted to work in the Vineyard of the Lord.

My main dream has always been to work with the youth, with school children.

When I returned to Sydney in October 1982, I did not have any specific plans. All I knew was the fact that my life will be difficult here. I had that feeling because I had familiarity with the people here, and I have many relatives...

Immediately after my arrival, I commenced visiting our families. During these visits, the young ones were complaining that they could not understand the Mass, therefore they were staying away from the church. I had no intention in changing the language of our prayers, therefore I started thinking of teaching them our language.

By the end of January 1983, I had already started Saturday school. About 40 children started spending almost all of Saturday in the church hall, learning Armenian.

Soon it was evident that Saturday school was not the answer. There was the need for a bilingual full time school which would be a place not only for teaching the Armenian language, but also, to give a full Armenian and Christian Education.

Today, 9 years down the track of that school project, I ask myself many questions.

- 1 - What was the real reason for starting the school?
- 2 - What has been the cost of the school?
- 3 - Is it worth having a school?
- 4 - What does the future hold?

I ask myself these questions not as the founder and Principal of St Gregory's Armenian School, but as a priest.

1 - THE REAL REASON OF THE SCHOOL.

When I was thinking of starting the school, there were many issues in my mind.

1983 was a time when Catholic schools were full and the Armenian students had great difficulty in being accepted in these schools, specially those who were not Catholic (90% of our people).

Those teenagers who were going to Public Schools did not seem interested in education, and most of them (specially in the Western Suburbs) under the peer group influence, were leaving school before even finishing year 10.

The discipline, manners, culture and morality of these teenagers were not satisfactory.

There was no religious education or religious formation in this youth.

For sure there were exceptions. But I am talking in very broad terms.

There were people who were interested in Armenian Saturday school, in Armenian Scout movement, in Armenian youth movement... As a priest, I was not impressed and still I am not impressed by the work that was carried out and the results thus received.

As my answer to all these concerns, I started thinking in terms of starting an Armenian school. When I approached different people in the education field and I explained our situation, they all maintained that it was madness to venture in this line.

But I ventured.

The result: St Gregory's Armenian School.

2 - THE COST OF THE SCHOOL

I was told by the President of the Independent Schools' Association that to run a school, it costs \$4000 per student per year in the Primary, and over \$6000 per student in the High School. This does not take into account any monies spent on buildings. And in our case the bus expenses are a big extra burden.

We have 160 students in the Primary and 40 in the Secondary. Our cost of running St Gregory's Armenian School is as follows:

	School	Buil	Buses	Total	Students.	\$
Primary:	2800	300	1100	4200 x	160 =	672,000
Secondary	4500	300	1100	5900 x	40 =	236,000
				grand total		= 908,000

We receive :

From the Government:	\$10 per primary student x 160 =	241,600
	470. per secondary student x 41 =	18,800
	total	= 260,400
	Fees from parents:	= 90,000
Transport: \$10 per week, 40 weeks 100 families		= 40,000
	Building Fund	= 50,000
	Other income: Pre school	= 24,000
	Printing	= 12,000
	Market garden	= 16,000
	grand total	= 492,400

These figures show that in 1993, there is a shortfall of over \$400,000. Without the High School, the shortfall will be over 200,000.

B - Non-Financial.

What these financial figures mean to me, is the following:

Since the beginning of the school 9 years ago, until today, I cannot remember a single week of my life when I did not have to worry about the wages of the teachers and other staff members of the school.

It has been a continuous miracle.

As all families know very well, financial problems become the source of other problems. Because we become more agitated, and easily aggravated. I have been living on my nerves for all these years.

Because of my inability to express myself, to explain the picture fully to you all, you could not understand what was going on.

I was promised help by my superiors. But no help came.

I tried all in my power to bring some help from outside, but no help came.

Our parish suffered a lot because of the situation of the school.

a - All the monies available went towards meeting the cost of running St Gregory's.

b - All those who had any problem with me because of the school, not only withdrew their children from the school, but also left the Parish. Such a pity !!

3 - THE SCHOOL: A WORTHWHILE PROJECT

Personally, I feel very tired and I keep going on because I care for these children at the school.

I need help.

The school needs your help.

Having an Armenian School is a worthwhile project. The school should be the work and the project of the whole community.

St Gregory's has proven its importance. The students there are receiving an education at a high standard. But what is even more important than learning subjects, these children are growing in a family atmosphere. They receive individual attention. All this will help them in their adult life.

Few students left the school. All those who left had no problem in

their classwork in their new school. On the contrary, they found the new school so easy. Some returned, because they were not happy with the environment of their new school. In their words, this is a better school.

St Gregory's endeavours to prepare a future generation of Armenian families where Christian values will be upheld, where the members of that family will have a good understanding of the significance of being Armenian on these faraway shores, where its members will find their rightful place in the Australian Society.

4 - THE FUTURE

Although the future is in the hands of the Lord, we have our role to play.

For St Gregory's to succeed, your help is needed. The help is threefold.

a - Involvement:

In 1986, an association was formed and incorporated. The Land of the school, and everything else is in the name of St Gregory's Armenian School Incorporated. Until now, the membership of this incorporation was limited to the foundation members. Now we would like to make the membership open to all.

Any person can apply to become a member. When membership is approved \$ 1.00 has to be paid, and a further \$2.00 annual fee. This is the extent of financial responsibility of the members.

But the members have the responsibility and the right to chose the directors of the association. These Directors have the responsibility of running the school. Until now, I was the President of this Incorporation. Now I would like to give this responsibility to others of your choice.

If you would like to become a member, if you would like to know

more about the Incorporation and the by-laws that govern this incorporation, please ring the school.

b - P. R.

Encourage families to send their children to St Gregory's. If we had another 100 students, our expenses will not have increased by much, but our income would have increased enormously.

Each new student enrolled at the school is equivalent to the income that we make from a Luncheon at the school.

If you are happy with the school, talk about it. And thus assure the future growth of the school.

c - Financial

Help as you can, according to your means:

The school is the pride of the Armenian Community of Sydney. Be involved and assure the future growth. The Future is your Future, it is the **FUTURE** of all Armenian children in this country.

Father Anton

To Every Parent

There are little eyes upon you,
And they are watching night and day;
There are little ears that quickly take
In every word you say;
There are little hands all eager to do
Everything you do,
And a little child who's dreaming of
The day he'll be like you.

You're the little child's idol,
You're the wisest of the wise,
In his little mind about you,
No suspicious ever rise;
He believes in you devoutly,
Holds all you say and do;
He will say and do in your way when
He's grown up to be like you.

There's a wide-eyed little child who
Believes you're always right,
And his ears are always open and he
Watches day and night;
You are setting an example
Everyday in all you do
For the little child who's waiting
To grow up to be like you.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa



It will always be right to do the right
- whatever the cost.

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առիթով

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դէպի Սուրբ Գրիգոր Լուսաւորիչ վարժարանի նոր
հողաշերտը 1
Կիրակի, 4 Սեպտեմբեր, կէսօրէ առաջ ժամը 11-ին:

- Հայկական գուարճալի մթնոլորտ.
- Ընտիր եւ համադամ ճաշ.
- Հաճելի անակնկալներ.

Ձեր ներկայութեամբ քաջալերեցէք Ս. Գրիգոր
Լուսաւորիչ Հայկական ամէնօրեայ վարժարանը:

Ծանօթ:

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Լիտգրմպի եկեղեցիէն պիտի ուղղուին ու-
րոշուած վայրը:

. Անձրեւելու պարագային առնուած են
պէտք եղած նախազգուշութիւնները:

**PICNIC LUNCHEON
FATHERS' DAY**

**SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 4, 1988.
Lot 1 MUNGERIE ROAD. ROUSE HILL**

- *Armenian & Family Atmosphere*
- *Delicious Food*
- *Pleasant Surprises*

* *From 11.00 a.m.*

* *2 buses will be leaving Lidcombe school at 12.00*

noon.

Be sure to come with all your friends and enjoy a pleasant day filled with surprises. Even rain, should not deter you from coming, as we have ample sheltered areas. Come and see the near-completed buildings of the school. We are sure you will all be pleasantly surprised by the progress.