

Inspiration and Imagery: The 2025 Sanctuary and Museum Tour and Luncheon

Contributor: Gloria Korkoian

The Sanctuary and Museum Tour and Luncheon on September 25, 2025 brought together members, friends, and guests for an inspiring day celebrating faith, culture, and fellowship. Through thoughtful presentations, guided tours, and shared reflection, the event highlighted the beauty of Armenian heritage and the enduring spirit that continues to unite our community.

Established in 2010 under the capable leadership of Mrs. Diane Ekizian, the Sanctuary and Museum Tour has welcomed hundreds of visitors from across Greater Detroit to explore the history and beauty of our Church and Museum. Mrs. Ekizian and her devoted committee are to be commended for years of outstanding service. Since 2023, Gloria Korkoian has chaired the event with a dedicated team of volunteers and presenters, continuing this meaningful tradition with grace and enthusiasm.

Very Reverend Father Aren Jebejian, our Pastor, led an engaging architectural and art tour of the sanctuary. His presentation traced our parish history from its founding to the present day, highlighting the construction of the church, its architectural features, and its sacred art.

Each year, the tour focuses on a special theme. This year's theme, "Inspiration and Imagery," highlighted The Deep Mystery—the mural by Arev Petrosyan, installed and dedicated in 2023. Father Aren guided guests through the Sanctuary, explaining the mural's symbolism, and continued the discussion in the St. Vartan Room with a projected image of the artwork.

Deacon Rubik Mailian, our Director of Sacred Music since 1998, who holds graduate degrees in music and theology, performed three a cappella versions of one verse from Aravot Luso (Morning Light), a hymn that is sung during the Morning Service. His moving performance inspired artist Arev Petrosyan to create The Deep Mystery. During the Q&A session, guests inquired about the church organ and enjoyed a brief demonstration.

The Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum, opened in 1992, is the largest Armenian museum in North America. Its extensive collection reflects the depth of Armenian history and culture. Guests toured eight galleries guided by seven docents and

Mrs. Lucy Ardash, Museum Director, artist, journalist, and co-author of *A Legacy of Armenian Treasures*.

Once again, we were blessed with a full house. Guests joined us from organizations across Michigan and beyond, including the Bloomfield Township Senior Center, the GraceWay Bible Church MOSAIC group, NEXT of Birmingham, Waltonwood at Twelve Oaks Novi, the City of Detroit Rotary, and visitors from Grand Rapids, Fort Wayne, Indiana, and our local community.

Guests also viewed CNN's *On the Road: Armenia* in the St. Vartan Room and visited the bookstore. The afternoon concluded with a delightful buffet luncheon and book giveaway in the main hall.

Gloria Korkoian expressed heartfelt appreciation to the committee, administrative staff, catering manager, volunteers, and docents for their dedicated service. She also extended warm thanks to all guests and invited them to return for the October Bazaar.

Through these tours, we celebrate our rich history, vibrant culture, and enduring faith—the very pillars that have sustained us for centuries. Though our journey has seen challenges as well as triumphs, our shared perseverance and devotion to faith, heritage, and community remain strong.

Guest Comments

"The presentation was so very lovely. The architecture, materials, murals, art, music, and presentation were all wonderful."

"Everything was well done – opening session, the tour of the museum, the film on Armenia and a delicious meal. It all contributed to a delightful day."

"Thank you. We are honored to have been invited. Such a beautiful day!"