

**Bone Marrow  
Donor Drive for  
Charlotte Conybear  
to be held on  
Easter Sunday  
at  
St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Armenian Church**



Four-year-old Charlotte Conybear, the great-granddaughter of Aram K. Jerrehian, Sr., co-founder and a godfather of our parish, is suffering from Aplastic Anemia, a dangerous bone marrow disorder that has resulted in the failure of Charlotte's bone marrow to produce adequate blood cells. She is currently receiving transfusions and may need a bone marrow transplant. There are no matches for her among her family and there are no matches on either the National Bone Marrow Registry or the Armenian Bone Marrow Registry.

As bone marrow matches are dependent on genetics, ethnicity is a key component to finding a match. Thus, Charlotte's family and friends are organizing bone marrow donor registration drives at Armenian Churches across the country on Easter Sunday. As the day upon which we celebrate the resurrection of Christ, we ask you to consider participating in this most worthy effort to potentially give this beautiful child a new lease on life.

Following church services, a special coffee hour reception will be held in Memorial Hall, as we typically do on Easter Sunday, hosted by the Jerrehian Family. In the Fellowship Room (cocktail room), volunteers from our parish will be conducting the drive, which consists of answering a few questions, filling out a short form and taking a swab inside the mouth with a q-tip. There will be no blood taken. To be a donor, you must be 18-60 years of age, in good health, with no history of cancer or heart disease, and be willing to donate your marrow if you happen to be a match. Your blood type does NOT matter. This is a tissue match, not a blood type match.

The cheek samples are sent to a lab for testing. If a person is a match for Charlotte (or anyone needing a bone marrow transplant), the person will be contacted and asked to visit a local clinic where further testing will be done and if appropriate, a donation will be made. In the vast majority of cases (80%), bone marrow donations are no more painful than giving blood as marrow cells are taken from the blood, rather than directly from the marrow. 20% of the time, marrow is taken under general anesthesia from the hip bone (resulting in some soreness that goes away after a couple days).

Being a bone marrow donor is an incredible opportunity for an ordinary individual to be a hero – and save the life of someone they have never met. It could be Charlotte or it could be someone else. We recognize that a number of Armenians in our area are already registered with the National Bone Marrow Registry, which conducted a drive in the late 90s to assist another young Armenian girl in the Midwest. We sincerely hope that those who are not, will consider participating to help out Charlotte, or possibly another Armenian individual who may need marrow down the road.

For more information on the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry, please visit <http://www.abmdr.am>. For more information on the National Bone Marrow Program, please visit <http://www.marrows.org>.