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Հրատարակութիւն Ամերիկահայոց Արեւելեան Թեմի Ազգային Առաջնորդարանի
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MARK YOUR CALENDARS... ALL ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCHES UNDER PRELACY'S JURISDICTION WILL BE OBSERVING SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3RD, 1982 AS SUNDAY SCHOOL DAY.

ՄԱՂԹԵՐԳ

ԿԻՐԱԿՆՕՐԵԱՅ ԴՊՐՈՑՆԵՐՈՒ

Կիրակնօրեայ Սուրբ յարկին Մենք սաներն ենք յուսարդձ. Կայծերու պէս յուսածին Ցայտած սրտէն պերն նախնաց. Ուստի քայնք անխոռով, Ո՛վ հարազատ գարմ արի, Հաւատաւոր գրնաց՜ով Լոյս — աղբիւրին ցանկալի:

Եկեղեցին սրբագգեաց՝ Ժառանգ անգին, հրաշափառ, Մեր խոյանքին վերապաց Թա՛փն է խիզախ բոցավառ, Հայ մըշկահոտ սրբութեան Բոյրովն օծած մեր հոգին. Մեր երթին մէջ յաղթական Թումբերն ամէն պիտ՝ փըշրին:

Կեցցեն յաւե՛րժ անասան Հիմնադիր եւ բարերար Կիրակնօրեայ Լուսոյ տան Ձահակիրներ վեհափառ: Հնչեցէ՛ք յար ծննդաներ Մեր սրբութեան ցնծագին. Որ վա՛ռ մընայ դարե՛ր դեռ Սրբաբանանչ ՀԱՅ ՀՈԳԻՆ. . . :

ԿԱՐԱՊԵՏ ՓԱՓԱԶԵԱՆ

HYMN

[MAGHT-YERK]

OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH

We are the children, yearning for the light, Coming to this sacred home, our Sunday School.

Like flames emerging from the light, We have burst forth from the hearts of our magnificent forefathers. Let us then walk confidently, O ye brave heirs, true to our race, Marching faithfully towards The coveted source of light.

The Holy Church, Our priceless and glorious legacy, Is our inspiration, fearless and fiery, Soaring upward in our flight. With our souls anointed By ever fragrant Armenian holiness, In our triumphant march, All obstacles will fall away.

May our founders and patrons, The majestic torchbearers, Of the light enshrined in our Sunday School, Live eternally and unshaken. Ring evermore, O cymbals, Joyfully in our hearts, That the ARMENIAN SOUL, radiant with holiness, Remain ever glowing for ages and ages. . .

HYMN written 1948 by Garabed Papazian (now Rev. Fr. Diran Papazian)

Translation from the Armenian original text by Rev. Fr. Diran Papazian 1981



Հայ մանուկը մանրանկար Հայ եկեղեցւոյ դիմաց: Լուսանկարը վերցուած է «Հա- յատանի Երեւանի» հատորէն, «Սո- վետական Գրող» հրատարակչութիւն, Երեւան, 1980 թ.:

READING OF PROVERBS 4:1-13—

Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight; for I give you good precepts: do not forsake my teaching, When I was a son with my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, he taught me, and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth. Get wisdom; get insight. Do not forsake her, and she will keep you; love her, and she will guard you. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get Wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight. Prize her highly, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. She will place on your head a fair garland; she will bestow on you a beautiful crown." Hear, my son, and accept my words, that the years of your life may be many. I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness. When you walk, your step will not be hampered; and if you run, you will not stumble. Keep hold of instruction, do not let go; guard her, for she is your life.

READING OF MATTHEW 18: 1-6—

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them, and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like the children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

ՄԱՆՈՒԿ ՅԵՍՈՒՍԸ ԴՊՐՈՑԻՆ ՄԷՎ

Երբ եօթնամեայ եղաւ Յիսուս, Ու շնորհալի էր զարգացումն հասակին Իր ծնողքը՝ թէպէտ անուս՝ Սակայն սրտանց կը փափաքին Որ Մանուկը Սուրբ Գիրքին հետ թարթափի, Ու օր մըլլայ մեծ ուսրի:

Առտու մը Յովսէփ տարաւ զինքն յանձնեց Ծերուկ Աւիիին, որ ուսրի մըլ մեծ,

Ու բազմաթիւ սերունդներ Իր թաթին տակ կը դընէր. . . :

Առաջին դասն երբ ըսկըսաւ՝

Ռարբին ըսաւ. «Պէտք էր գիրքը՛րը ճանչնալ նախ:» Յուցուց փայտովն Ա՛յէ՛Ֆն ու ԲԵԹ. . . Ըստարբրէ Մանուկն ուսած տատերը գէթ: Բայց Յիսուս դէպի վեր Ա՛յէ՛ն յատած նոյն կէտին՝ Խոհուն ու անվիհեր՝ Հարց մ'ուղղեց վարպետին, —Ինչո՞ւ սակայն Ա՛յէ՛Ֆն ունէր Երեք որոշ ակոսներ:

Ռարբին արդեօք գիտէ՞ր որ

Թիւ մ'էր այն խորհրդաւոր. . . : Աւիին շըւարած՝ չըտուաւ պատասխան, Ձը հասկընալով միտքը Յիսուսին. Ու զայրոյթով մը անմիտ ու անբան՝ Իջեցուց թաթն անոր ուսին. Յետոյ բռնելով Տըղեկին ձեռքէն Ձայն հօրը տարաւ, Ու ցուրտ հեգնութեամբ՝ որը ապաքէն Արեւմտարեւմտի ցոյց մ'էր անիրաւ՝ Ըսաւ. «Ձաւկիդ այդ իմաստունն Ուրիշ վարպետ մը գըտի՛ր դունն:»

* * *

Որդեակ, առաջին Գիրքն—առաջին դաս—, Ձոր ուրիշներէ պիտի սորվիս դու, Գեղ առաջին քայլ ըրէ՛ր որ գիտնաս Թէ ինչե՛ր ունիս խորհրդածելու. . . Յիսուսի նըմանող չես կըրնար ըլլալ բնաւ, Թէ գիրքէն չը քաղես հոգիի հունձձ մը լաւ:

ԵՂԻՇԷ ԱՐԲ. ԴՈՒՐԵԱՆ
«Գրուածներ Մանուկ Յիսուսի Կեանքէն» հատորէն:

MESSAGE FROM THE PRELATE

Dear Parents: It would give me the greatest pleasure to have the chance to meet personally with each of you to discuss openly and in depth one of our most vital concerns, the Christian and spiritual education of our children. However, this is an impossibility, so my message must reach through the written word and hope that it touches your hearts and minds, encouraging you to respond to my appeal. The occasion which has initiated this appeal is the planned celebration of Armenian Sunday School Day to be held on Oct. 3rd, 1982. This day will not only commemorate the history of the Armenian Sunday School, but will also mark a turning point, a revitalization of goals, and a new sense of direction for our Sunday Schools.

I appeal to you because I know well that your children's religious education is of prime concern. You have given life to your children and thus are responsible to nurture their growth, both physical and spiritual. Yours is not an easy role for it is in the midst of family life that a child gets his first impressions about life, love, and faith. As a parent, you should be a model of behavior for your children. It is in their early years of childhood that they learn to love and respect God. It is in the home where the most basic human values of love, respect, faith and sharing are taught to the child.



As parents, be a good example for your children. Let them see and feel your dedication to the Armenian Church community. Let them follow the Christian path that you lay before them. In this way only, will the spiritual foundation be laid in their souls to give them strength to become the religious and community leaders of tomorrow. Your child looks to you, to what you do, and what you say. Do not lead your child to church only to turn and walk away yourself. Be as one, parent and child, in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and in silent prayer. As the American saying goes "A family that prays together, stays together."

For us, Armenians, the Church has an
(Continued on page 2)

"Armenia was the first Christian nation," we proudly proclaim whenever we speak to non-Armenians. Thus, outwardly it would appear that Armenians' pride and joy is their religion. However, closer examination would cast some doubt on that premise.

If we were to conduct a survey today about the importance of Armenian Christian education vs. Armenian language education, the result would be overwhelmingly in favor of language education. For those needing proof of that statement, you need only tally and compare the amount of dollars spent annually for language and for Christian education.

Not too long ago we heard a conversation among a group of parents and surprisingly the consensus of opinion was that "even if their children did not actually learn very much in Sunday School, it was a good way to expose them to other Armenian children."

This issue of OUTREACH is devoted to Christian Education and our Sunday Schools. Our experience in life has been that if we expect little, we get little.

Faith and spirituality are more than social events and religious rituals. Religion can be the pivotal value through which we find our essential wholeness as an individual, as a human being and as a member of the larger community of Mankind. Simply stated, faith is an everyday outfit, not Sunday clothes. Faith can and should give our life direction and meaning, offering guidance in solving the many problems that face us as individuals and as a part of society.

Children are born with a precious gift: curiosity, the need to know and explore. If this natural need is properly nurtured and not frustrated and weakened, it can become a powerful force. Just as our mental growth is life long, so too our Christian growth should be continuous and never completed. Thus, Christian education is not just for children, it is for us all. The one hour that children spend in Sunday School should just be a beginning. The Church and Home must become partners working together, and not isolated from one another.

We can write long articles about the Sunday Schools and what they should be; we can conduct seminars for teachers; we can prepare new textbooks, but in the final analysis, it is only the involvement of the parent which will lead to decisions of quality and also serve as a role-model which children can emulate.

PRELATE'S MESSAGE (cont. from p.1) added dimension. It is both a Christian and national church. Our history is closely linked with her destiny. The Armenian Church has been the center of Armenian community life in all its phases throughout centuries.

To deny your child the opportunity to attend Sunday School is to deny him or her the opportunity to know, love and respect their religion, culture and history.

Hold your faith and religion in high esteem. Be responsible as Christian parents, educate your children, teach them the will of God and give them an opportunity to learn about their forefathers, our nation and Armenian posterity.

Let Armenian children come together, pray, learn, and play as one. Do not deny them their heritage, their roots.

Let the Armenian Sunday School build and nurture the foundation of our future, our children. Support their growth and partake as a family in the enriching life of the Church.

Prayerfully,
BISHOP MESROB ASHJIAN
PRELATE

OUTREACH

Bishop Mesrob Ashjian, Prelate

Armenian Editor . . . Very Rev. K. Hagopian

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THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE AND PROBLEMS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCHES IN AMERICA

The following are major excerpts from a lecture delivered by Mr. Puzant Yeghiayan, at the assembly of Sunday Schools Councils and Teachers, St. James Armenian Church Cultural Center, Watertown, Mass.

Mr. Yeghiayan was chosen 1982 Prelate "Man of the Year", an honor which he justly deserved as the following sampling of his intellectual strength will demonstrate.

Why should we at all be concerned with problems of religious education?

Because, basically it is a contemporary world-wide national concern for us all.

One dominating thought in all Armenian circles of the Diaspora is the preservation of the identity and unity of the nation as a whole. But to my mind, the more preservation of identity, or of language, of social customs, of cultural heritage or religious traditions are not enough, if not aimed at higher missions. To me, the "conservation" of national values sounds too conservative, even stagnant! We need something above mere conservation of acquired values, something more of a positive and creative character in the building of a nation, more of a dynamic force in constituting ethnic unity.

Beyond and above mere preservation, we should aim at the creation of cultural values, and at a sharing of our spiritual heritage and wealth with the surrounding nations of the world. For, then alone may we pursue and attain the greater Armenian Cause of securing an internationally recognized justice and freedom for our nation.

And for the achievement of such wider tasks, we must exert and pull together all available means and materials. And certainly, alongside with other resources and forces, such as the Family, the School, the Press, Social Organizations and cultural activities, a particular role will be accomplished by the Church with its various duties and the S. School organization. Because, the Sunday Schools should not be looked upon as marginal enterprises of the Armenian Churches but rather as integral parts of our collective efforts, as widely appreciated educational programs for the promotion and presentation of ethnic values to the growing new generations, specially in America and Canada.

A. A Firmly Established Nation-wide Institution

"Therefore I recommend to all our Gracious Prelates, Preachers and Priests, that they talk to our beloved people and explain the necessity of organizing Sunday Schools. I advise the affectionate parents, that they take care of the fuller education and upbuilding of the character of their children, and endeavor to keep the religious and moral spirit aflame through the Sunday Schools".

With these direct exhortations the Venerable Catholicos Sahag II of Cilicia concluded his reformatory Encyclical Epistle—"Condag"—proclaiming the official establishment of the Sunday School System in the Armenian Church, in 1930. One year earlier, in the Spring of 1929, a constitution for the establishment and management of the Sunday Schools had been drawn and the actual organization set up in Lebanon by the Coadjutor-Catholicos Papken I, and Levon Zenian was appointed as the First General Secretary of Sunday Schools of the Armenian Church, under the auspices of the Catholicosate of Cilicia, Antelias.

Since then, the S. School system has expanded rapidly in almost every colony of Armenians in the Diaspora, from Lebanon and Syria, eastwards to Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, and westwards through Palestine, Egypt, Cyprus and Greece, up to the United States, Canada and the South American countries.

At present we have some 90-100 Sunday Schools of the Armenian Churches all over the world, with 10-11,000 students and 675-700 teachers. And including the S. Schools of the Armenian Evangelical Churches, the numbers would rise respectively to 145-150 Schools, 15-16,000 students, and 1200-1250 teachers. (The Armenian Catholic Church practices a different system of religious instructions as prescribed in its Catechism).

Attached to each Armenian Prelacy, we have a "Council of Religious Education", to supervise over the functioning of the S. Schools, in cooperation with the national constitutional bodies and the directors of the elementary schools, wherever such schools exist. In 1950, also a "Central Auxiliary Union of the S. Schools of the Armenian Church" (HEKTOM, in Armenian) was constituted in Lebanon, to support the project.

Every Sunday School has a curriculum program of two cycles of 5 and 7 year courses. Throughout the years there also have been produced series of textbooks and other materials, pictures, posters, etc., which may be obtained from the Office of the General Secretary of S. Schools at the Catholicosate, Antelias.

One convincing reality we should keep in mind is that the Sunday School system has become an inseparable part of our educational structure in the Diaspora. It is no more a casual institution. It is a firmly established institution, to be rightfully accounted among many other essential institutions. We have the Church as a historic institution and an unshakeable spiritual fortress of the nation; we have our Schools and ample educational materials and methods; we have our Press and extensive publications, our various social and humanitarian and cultural establishments. All these serve the people and characterize our ethnic consciousness and maintain our national unity. But equally side by side with these established and active institutions we have to reckon our S. Schools.

Because, the S. School system has grown out of the necessities of our collective life in the Diaspora. And parallel to other important community activities, the S. School organization accomplishes a considerable part in the educational process of the new generations.

This effective role of the S. School system is especially evident in America, where the Armenian Elementary School is still lacking, or in its rudimentary stage, while the American Public Schools provide no assurance for the religious education of different ethnic groups. And therefore such educational vacuum could be partially filled up by the S. School system. For the American Armenians therefore, the S. School system constitutes a highly appreciable organization, never to be neglected or underestimated. To the contrary, it should definitely be incorporated as a component part of the entire texture of our educational, cultural and national life, and conducted along genuine Armenian traditions.

B. Religious Education As Unbroken Continuation In Armenian History

Another unshadowed reality we must be aware of is that the S. School system is not something altogether new in the educational process; it is one of the oldest establishments of the Armenian Church. Although as a formal organization the S. School system is a recent development, but as an educational experience and spirit it has always been a permanent and prominent mission of the Armenian Church in all ages. In fact, one of the major roles of the Armenian Church has been its educational task. At all places and in all times the Armenian Church has served as a school for the spiritual fortification and moral edification of its people.

This unique coordination between religion and education has been symbolized by the fact that in all History of Armenia, as at the present times, the Church and the School have always stood side by side in the same premises. And one of the secrets of the tenacity of the Armenian spirit and of its triumph over centuries of devastating encroachments from the outside world has been that positive power of venture which religious nurture of the Armenian Church has inspired in every generation.

Otherwise, the Armenian Nation might have been swallowed up altogether and submerged by the successive overwhelming waves of invasions by the Persian, the Arabian, Roman, Byzantine, Crusaders', Mongolian and Seljuk-Ottoman forces. If the History of Armenia be interpreted rightly, a salient fact would emerge, that Christian education and spirit of the Armenian Nation—contrary to the superficial verdict that as though it may have infused a mood of submission—has always been a most vindictive force sustained by the Church in the struggle against the destructive assaults, and has contributed positively to the reformation of the national character and unity.

The Armenian Church has not merely been an altar for adoration; it has always stood as a dynamic center of education for the moral and cultural enrichment of the nation.

After many citations taken from the History of the Armenian Church and venerable Church Fathers, the author concludes:

Such citations intend to confirm that religious education has been a continuous mission of the Armenian Church and a component part of the general system of

education in Armenian history. And therefore, what was organized in 1930 as "S. School of the Armenian Church" was not something new, but rather a modernization of what had already existed in the history and educational system of Armenia. And consequently, what the Armenian Church promotes today also in America and Canada in organizing S. Schools is a genuine continuation of that unbroken historical trend, both in spirit and contents.

For, the S. School system is a remarkable achievement in the Diaspora, and it should be looked upon as such.

C. The S. Schools As Compared With Other Institutions

In comparison with other existing institutions, the S. Schools of the Armenian Church reveals a few characteristics which not only distinguish it from others of its kind, but also emphasize its particular educational value for the enrichment of life.

1. First, there is one obvious difference between the Armenian S. School and the world-wide S. School system as found in the Western tradition. The curriculum of the Western system—and this is true also about the Armenian Evangelical Churches—is mainly loaded with Biblical contents; and in general, very indiscriminately the Bible is taught from cover to cover. Whereas, the Armenian S. School curriculum expands much beyond the Biblical materials, and it comprises in a large measure materials from Armenian history, from lives of the Saints and Heroes; also it includes the teaching of the *Sharagans*, songs and prayers from the Armenian liturgy, as well as a study of the ceremonies and sacraments, and illustrations from Armenian literature and the arts. And characteristically enough, such particular curriculum of the Armenian S. School turns it into a genuine native institution true to the ethnic traditions, and set in a modernized form and pedagogical methods.

We have to rely more and more on the historic resources and traditions of our people. Especially in America and the wide western world, where our people are directly exposed to the fascinating influences of more organized cultural and religious forces surrounding us, we are called to be more alert to evade alluring sirens to abandon what heritage belongs to us and adopt what is foreign to our nature, history and tradition.

Enquiries I have made in America have awakened in me almost a fear, that even among some of our religious workers trained in fraternizing theological institutions there grows a submissive mentality with a neglect of the essentials in Armenian language and liturgy, and an easy welcome to borrowed curriculum materials incompatible with our ideals and aims, instead of adopting what enriching elements we find in them.

2. A second attractive feature of the Armenian S. School system becomes apparent when we compare it with some other existing Armenian cultural and social organizations.

At present we have various active groups of youth, such for example, as sportive clubs, Boys' and Girls' Scouts, Alumni Associations, etc., which serve our young people with admirable devotion within their limits. But there is one notable difference between these and the S. School System. Each one of those particular associations moves within a limited circle or is affiliated with one or other of social sections of the nation, often exclusive of one another. While the S. School forms a wider and more inclusive field for all the children of our people, just as the Church which sponsors them embraces the totality of the nation. And therefore, the S. School system can contribute fully to the realization of the unity of the nation as a whole. Actually all members of those particular youth organizations can participate at the same time in S. School activities, just as the Church constitutes a wider basis for national unity and solidarity.

3. Then also, there is a deeper wealth which the religious educational system of the Armenian Church opens for the new generation. As a nation we owe it to the Armenian Church that the propagation of the Armenian language, literature and history has been carried on throughout all centuries; and at present also, though the church liturgy is carried on in the *Grabar* language, this sounds familiar in the ears of the people young and old, and thus through

(Continued on page 4)

SUNDAY SCHOOLS (Contd. from p. 2)
the church services we are enabled to pre-serve the Armenian language, both classical and modern.

The ordinary objection that the classical Grabar language is "unintelligible" is not as justifiable as it is thought to be. For example, our "Hayr-mer" is not less intelligible in Grabar than it actually is in the prosaic translation into modern Armenian—and which "modern" Armenian language? Or, is the "Aravod Louso" of Nercess Shnorhali less communicable in Grabar than it would be if translated?

4. Beyond merely problems of language, the greatest blessing in the preservation of the Armenian Liturgy lies in the fact, that through it we become the heirs of that spiritual and cultural wealth which has been accumulated by the creative works of many generations. By participating in those same ceremonies, by professing the same Creed, by singing the same Sharagans and songs, and by reciting the same prayers which have resounded for centuries under the protective vaults of the Church; by so doing we live in constant communion with the Spirit of our forefathers, in unison with all our Saints and Heroes of history. And therefore we feel more really and deeply in our hearts, that we are one and inseparable nation as a whole, with an unbroken continuation, with one eternal heritage and one ideal. And thus, we become more refortified and resolute to carry on our endeavor and struggle for survival and security, and our national mission to share with other nations that profound spiritual heritage.

Of course, all this call for reform and resolution is relevant mainly to the Armenian Diaspora. They are not intended for Present Armenia, which conducts its own educational system. In Sovetakan Hayastan, formal religious education is not programmed, although freedom of religious worship is respected.

D. Facing Practical Problems In The Sunday Schools Of America

However, in the Diaspora also we are confronted with serious problems in connection with our S. Schools. And our problems are of such magnitude, that regional efforts will not be enough to solve them. We would need to bring our combined resources and forces to bear upon these problems, and in a cooperative spirit find solutions generally applicable in all regions and communities.

1. One immediate problem is the need for expansion of the Religious Educational System, to make it sure that every church in every town has its organized S. School, and to secure largest possible attendance in them.

In Section A, above, we have noted that there are about 150 Sunday Schools in all the Diaspora, with some 14-15,000 students. This number represents only 2% of our population in the Diaspora, and 25% of children within school age. Still, these percentages differ when compared between Churches: the Armenian Apostolic figure falls lower to 18%, while the Evangelical rises to 35%. This means that, comparative to their population, the Evangelical Armenians have nearly twice the number of S. School attendance than the Apostolic Armenian Churches have.

This difference becomes more striking when we view the Armenians of America separately. In America, the Evangelical Armenians constitute only 5% of all the Armenian population in this country; but their S. School attendance is 40% of all the Armenian children in the S. Schools—although in terms of subject-matter the Evangelical system lacks the essentials taught in the Apostolic system.

This considerably low number of attendance in the Apostolic S. Schools can certainly be raised to a normal ratio. And this could be done primarily by the Armenian families and through the efforts of church authorities. Every Armenian family must make it a practicable rule, that their children attend the S. School of the parish, as well as every religious and educational leader should appeal to the parents for such attendance. Also clubs and social organizations should see to it that their activities do not interfere with the S. School time schedule.

Moreover, child attendance in S. Schools would indirectly help to increase also adult attendance to church services, as parents would chose to come to church along with their children on Sundays. And thus a real cooperation would result between families and S. School system.

Furthermore, S. School attendance would secure two other benefits: Children in America would grow familiar with the

church services, and eventually form the habit of church attendance in mature life; at the same time, by participating in the songs and prayers and liturgy in general, they would grasp the essentials of the Armenian language.

Thus, the S. School would serve in a sense as an entrance-porch to the vaster nave of the Church. That would also be the first step towards the realization of the wider plans, that is the establishment of permanent Armenian Elementary Schools in America.

2. The second challenging problem is the revision of the S. School Curriculum in America, to include more of the Armenian historical, cultural, social and artistic values.

I have rapidly looked into the curricular materials used in the local Sunday Schools. They certainly contain a vast variety of subject-matters taught, compiled in an orderly sequence for all the Grades, and presented in a pedagogical method. It is a great accomplishment. However, there seems to me that some improvement can be made both in the contents and the presentation of those materials. Three aspects of this curricular problem command attention—language, authorship and text.

In terms of language, there is one line of distinction to be drawn between the S. Schools in America and in other Armenian colonies: in the Sunday Schools of the Middle Eastern countries, all curricular materials are given in the Armenian language, as well as the teaching practices and the services. This is true of both the Apostolic and the Evangelical Armenian S. Schools. Whereas, in America the predominant language-media is English. Even the Armenian prayers and songs inserted here and there in the curriculum are transcribed in English letters.

As to the publications and their authorship, I have found out—though without surprise—that most of the materials are borrowed from the series of textbooks prepared for American S. School standards, such as LPP (Little People's Paperbacks), or CPH (Concordia Publishing House), or OCEC (Orthodox Christian Educational Commission), and others. Although in some cases Armenian Supplements to those materials are added by CRA (Council of Religious Education), but the overshadowing complex is basically of American style.

Considering the authorship of these textbooks and references, for example, out of the 73 names of authors I have counted in the Echmiadzine Diocesan group only 7 were Armenians, that is hardly 1 in 10. Though even that many is not found in the Armenian Evangelical textbooks series. While in the Cilician Prelacy group, almost invariably all textbooks are by Armenian authors.

There is another discomfiting fact, that most of the subject-matters contained in the standardized textbooks have no relevance to the Armenian Church or tradition. The dominating current tends towards an attachment with and eventually merging into the American standardized systems:—in one Armenian Diocese case, through the intermediary of the Greek and Russian Orthodox religious education agency; while in the Armenian Evangelical case, through their affiliation with the American Protestant churches. Though in one Armenian Evangelical S. School recently a course in Armenian history and culture was introduced for the graduating class; but this trial did not last long. In the Cilician Prelacy group, the curricular materials are more markedly of Armenian character, and some prayers and songs are even printed in Armenian letters, as well as some words in the text — «Սուրբ Գիրք», երգիչ, աղօթիչ, Սուրբ Աստուած, խաչ, Եկեղեցի, Աւետարան, Ս. Հոգի, մով, նուէր, խոստովանիլ, ծառայել, etc.—. It also uses most of the textbooks of Armenian authorship in the Echmiadzine Diocese, and in addition it has textbooks prepared and published by its own Religious Educational Council.

The apparently inconsistent correlation between the different systems can be remedied only by a consorted effort of all Armenian Churches, Apostolic and Evangelical. A Mixed Commission of Armenian Religious Education in America should be constituted with the representatives of both Armenian prelacies and Evangelical Churches, in order to revise the whole system—to rise above regional practices and produce a more uniform curriculum and materials. Such a revised general program would include:

- Selected Biblical stories and New Testament teachings,
- Armenian historical and cultural materials, with lives of Heroes & Saints,

- Prayers, songs and liturgy, with description of ceremonies & sacraments,
- Explanation of Creed, Christian conduct and morals,
- Selected readings from Armenian literature and poetry,
- And all these, supplemented with various series of materials of arts: Series of posters and pictures of Armenian Cathedrals and Monasteries, Series of colored pictures of Saints and heroes Series of reproductions of colored Miniatures from Armenian Manuscripts, Series of paintings of memorable events in Armenian history, etc.

A group of Armenian Artists could be commissioned to collect or produce such series of artistic materials.

Above all, such a consorted action would result in a nation-wide benefit: in a sincere cooperation, the ideals of unity and ethnic identity so often theorized would be put into effective practice.

3. Another consuming concern is the Recruiting and Training of Teachers for the Sunday Schools.

In all our communities there certainly are groups of dedicated young teachers in the S. Schools. Without their devotion it would be impossible to carry on this important mission of the Church. As a nation we are grateful to these teachers. But the usual procedure of recruiting has been to admit former graduates of S. Schools as assistant-teachers, gradually promoting them to higher responsibilities. This certainly secures a system of continuity; but at the same time it should be supplemented with renewed associates, admitted specially from the ranks of young men and women of collegiate and university standing. There could be no higher challenge to educated young people than to join hands with the leaders of the growing new generation. This appeal should catch the imagination especially of those who are taking educational, social and cultural training courses in the universities, to voluntarily devote some of their spare time and energy to this field of fruitful service.

Such beneficial action could expand in another dimension also. Available young teachers could be sent out as S. School visiting teachers to smaller towns and suburbs where clusters of Armenian families live deprived of any educational program for their children.

4. Finally, we would have to face the Problem of Financing these programs of curricular revision and production of materials, and training of teachers.

Though crucial it may seem, this financing problem might be the easiest to settle. Because, already each church has an allotted yearly budget of its own for religious education; and that could be enlarged to meet demands for a growing program. Also some independent educational and cultural organization or fund might take interest in these wider programs and provide full financial support. Or an individual benefactor might surprise the Church authorities with an Endowment Fund for the purpose.

5. But prior to all action, it seems to be a commanding step, that the existing different Councils of Religious Education should consent to organize and call to session a General Convention of Armenian Churches on Religious Education, to be able to discuss in an open but scientific mind and cooperative spirit the problems involved.

In the past, a divergence of interests and attitudes has been apparent. Since decentralized educational system may have been encouraged by the excellent democratic ideals of freedom and self-sufficiency in the American social system and educational philosophy. Each church may have been let to act as an independent unit more or less, or dependent on regional authorities.

That background of a mentality of independence may also explain why, since 1940, when the S. Schools system of the Catholicosate of Cilicia was introduced in the Armenian churches of America, the curriculum was mostly of a local initiative. And even after 1960, when an effort for uniformity has been attempted, the task of programming has been entrusted to casual agencies available, and consequently curricular materials have been compiled or adopted mostly from sources quite remote from Armenian traditions and practices.

Since then, diligent studies for improvement have been made separately by each church group, but still always separately.

It is ripe time, that a more effective system of cooperation and interdependence between different systems of religious education in America be worked out, to be able to coordinate the forces and create new possibilities for growth and unity.

«ՀԱՍԿ»

Պաշտօնական Ամսագիր
Կաթողիկոսութեան Հայոց
Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ

Տիրոջ տարի՝
լոյս կը տեսնէ ամէն ամիս
—Կրօնական, բանասիրական եւ
հայագիտական նիւթեր
—Լուրեր Կաթողիկոսարանէն
—Լուրեր Հայ Եկեղեցւոյ Թեմերէն
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Այս հատորը, որ կը բաղկանայ երկու մասերէ, Անահիտ Ռսկեան եւ Սգաւոր Առիւծ Գեօն, թեւ իր լրումին չի հասցնէր Մալխասի ծրարագիրը, բայց արդարութիւն կ'ընէ իր վէպի կարգ մը հերոսներուն եւ մասամբ ալ գոհացում կուտայ իր ընթերցողներուն, որոնք, յափըռ-սակութեամբ կարդալէ յետոյ Մալխասի երկերը, անհամբեր կը սպասէին հայ-վէպի վախճանին:

366 էջ

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Here is a worthy common cause and a constructive basis for all sections of Armenian communities to cooperate and succeed.

Here is a field where we can begin to work together!

All these may sound revolutionary and reformatory.

But no nation can survive and progress without a renewing spirit of reformative action. And the deepest and most far-reaching of all revolution and reformation is that which takes place in the realm of thought and spirit.

I congratulate you for your courage and devotion to this mission of reform and renewal in the Religious Educational System of the Church.

Even if the churches stand apart, the Sunday Schools can cooperate!

PUZANT YEGHIAYAN

“WHAT DO PARENTS EXPECT OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS”

Christian education is primarily the responsibility of parents within the family structure. The child acquires his christian values through identification with his parents. The attitudes parents have towards Church, Sunday School, prayer and family devotion, determine the child's outlook on all matters concerning our Christian faith. Children spend one hour each week at Sunday School, whereas parents are with them all or most of the hours during the week. Therefore, it is in the home that Christian values are transmitted to the child through the living example of the parents. Sunday Schools only reinforce what children have acquired in the family atmosphere. If parents are truly convinced of the mission of Sunday Schools they ought to show this conviction through an active interest in Sunday Schools. At times they ought to volunteer to teach or help organize activities for the children, thus through active participation demonstrate to their children that they value Sunday Schools to a high degree. Consequently, children sense their parents' real and genuine concern and they also get involved wholeheartedly. But if parents don't feel responsible enough to take their children to Sunday School, through indifference, negligence or sheer laziness, children sense this very quickly. When they see that their father drops them at Sunday School and goes to chat with a friend somewhere else, instead of going to church and participating in the Mass, children realize that the activity is simply done mechanically, as duty, and lacks spirit. Therefore, whenever the circumstances

change, children are ready to quit Sunday School for good. This becomes a heart-breaking loss for their parents and for the church community.

In some cases it is the children in Sunday School that minister the faith to their parents. Oftentimes parents do not react to other influences in their community but most of the time they react positively to the message of christian values brought home to them by their children from Sunday School. If they are not keen on praying in the family, children invite them to pray as they have learned in Sunday School. They innocently retell the Christian stories they have heard from their teacher to their parents, thus filling the family with new blessings of a christian message. Sometimes children even admonish parents for things they do or say which are not approved by Sunday School values. Children minister to their parents in a very unique manner.

Parents would like to cooperate with Sunday School teachers who model christian values through their relationship with the children. Abstract concepts of honesty, truth, love of God and fellow men, need to be clarified through the living example of the teachers. The loving and caring attitude of the teachers for the children, their genuine concern for their welfare, their interest in the family as well as the child, are factors that make children wait for the following Sunday to see their teachers again.

Parents expect Sunday Schools to make the Bible Stories and Armenian Church history, relevant to the child's daily ex-

periences. Biblical characters and Saints of the Armenian Church should have a point of identification with the children living in the present society. If that relevance is not made clear to them it won't have an impact on their present life.

Parents expect Sunday Schools to bring the children closer to the church. They ought to be the future members and leaders of the church, if they haven't learned to love their church early in their lives, they won't trouble themselves later on to serve the church wholeheartedly. In order to bring them closer to the church, they ought to attend Mass as a group, every Sunday. They need to acquire the knowledge of the Mass and the liturgy of the Armenian church and learn to sing the *Sharagans*. Music has a great appeal to the children and when they participate in the Mass they'll enjoy it and appreciate it more fully.

Children in Sunday School ought to learn to take on responsibilities gradually, be trained as the future youth leaders, board members, delegates, board of trustee members, Sunday School teachers. Initiative should be encouraged in pupils, and in their small ways they should learn to contribute towards the welfare of their Sunday School. Leaders are not born, they are prepared. Unless they have a chance to bring out their potential, they will remain passive in the church life in the future, as adults. Due to the conducive atmosphere for learning and growth in Sunday Schools, in which the church bond is made clear to the children, the church community will reap a harvest of devoted members who actively participate

in the life of our church. They'll become the future parish priests, deacons and choir leaders or members of the church.

Christian fellowship is sought by parents when they take their children to Sunday School. Children need to share their exciting new adventures in christian living with their friends and teachers. Getting together with their peer groups who share the same values is very reassuring for children and teenagers. Sometimes lasting friendships are established in Sunday Schools which become enriching experiences for them. They can do constructive things together, have special group projects, have contacts with children of other Sunday Schools and have opportunities for sharing their knowledge and experiences with Armenian children in other cities and states.

This leads to the final point I would like to make. Sunday Schools should employ up-to-date teaching methods with as much pupil participation and involvement as possible. Teachers should make use of dialogues, discussions, and projects in order to secure maximum participation. Audio-visual aids in the form of slides, filmstrips, video tapes and audio materials will create a great deal of interest for the subject matter taught in Sunday Schools and make learning a most exciting adventure. So that children wait anxiously for Sundays to come when they will have the week's most rewarding and fulfilling experience. *The Sunday School*.

AZADOUHI KALAYDJIAN (Simonian)
From the faculty of the
Beirut University College

HELP WANTED (Continued from page 5)

3. 37 years experience in elementary level teaching.

Languages: Armenian, French, Russian, Persian.
Ref. 102

Bookkeeping

3 years experience. Knowledge of computers—BASIC. Languages spoken: Armenian, Spanish.
Ref. 103

Journalism

B.A. in Journalism and minor in Business.
B.A. Major in Journalism and minor in Business.

Experience in advertising, writing, public relations, and Administrative/Managerial work.

Language: English.

Ref. 104

Please address all inquiries to Sona Hamalian, Administrative Assistant to the Prelate. 138 E. 39th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016.

ARMENIAN NATIONAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS (Continued from page 6)

NEW YORK

St. Illuminator's Armenian Day School, 69-23 47 Avenue, Woodside, NY 11377. (212) 478-4073

CANADA

ONTARIO

A.R.S. Babayan Kindergarten and Day School, 45 Hallerown Place, Willowdale, Ont., Canada M2J 4Y4. Mr. Markar Sharabkhanian (416) 491-2675

QUEBEC

Sourp Hagop Armenian Day School A.R.S. Kindergarten & Elementary School 2005 Victor Dore, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3M 1S4. Mrs. Aghavni Eloian (514) 332-1373

*Not under A.N.E.C. jurisdiction



“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” (Mark 10:14).

Drawing by Harutune Tiriakian

ԱՌԱՋՆՈՐԴԱՐԱՆԻ ԵՐԻՏԱՍԱՐԴԱԿԱՆ ԽՄԲԱԿԸ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՄԷՋ

ՔՐԻՍՏՈՆԷԱԿԱՆ... (Շար. էջ 5-էն)

մեր դպրոցներէն ներս գտնուող փոքրիկներուն վրայ, ինչպէս նաեւ դպրոցներէն դուրս եղող հայորդիներու, այն ատեն ներկայ դարու Գրիստոսի առաքելները կը դառնանք եւ այն ատեն մեր վարձքը երկնքի մէջ կը գտնենք: Դաստիարակութիւնը միայն ասպարէզ չէ, այլ սուրբ գործ է, ուր մեր ժողովուրդը կ'ազնուանայ, կը դառնայ Աստուծոյ որդի եւ ուր Գրիստոս իր աստուածութիւնը կ'իջեցնէ մեր սրտերուն, ունենալու համար մարտիրոսներ, սուրբ սիրտեր:

ՕՇԱԿԱՆ ՎԱՐԴԱՊԵՏ ՉՕԼՈՅԵԱՆ
Կաթողիկոսական Փոխանորդ
Արարական Ծոցի Երկիրներու:

Հիւսիսային Ամերիկայի Արեւելեան Քեմի եւ Գանատայի Առաջնորդարանի հովանաւորութեամբ, եւ Առաջնորդ Սրբազան Հօր՝ Գերշ. Տ. Մեսրոպ Եպս. Աշճեանի փափաքով եւ ճիգերով կազմակերպուած՝ դէպի Սայր Հայրենիք երիտասարդական խմբակի ուղեւորութիւնը իր աւարտին հասաւ Երկուշաբթի, 23 Օգոստոսի կէսօրէ ետք, երբ յօգնաբեկ ու յուզումնահար, բայց խանդավառ եւ երջանիկ ուղեւորները վերադարձան իրենց տուները:

14 երիտասարդ-երիտասարդուհիներէ բաղկացած ուսանողական խումբը, որ 29 Յուլիսին, Հոգշ. Տ. Նաթակ Վրդ. Յակոբեանի գլխաւորութեամբ, մեկնած էր Սայր Հայրենիք, աւելի մօտէն ծանօ-

թանալու եւ հաղորդուելու համար անոր անցեալի փառքէն փոխանցուած ժառանգութեան զանձերուն եւ ներկայի իրագործումներուն, աւելի քան երեք շաբաթներ եղաւ Հայրենիքին հետ, եղաւ իր արմատներուն այնքան մօտիկ՝ միաձուլուած, իր ոտքերուն ներքեւ զգալով Հողը Հայրենիքին. իր երակներուն մէջ արիւնը այլ թափով վազեց, երբ կանգնեցաւ իր պապերու կոթողական եւ ներքերանգ ժառանգութեանը դիմաց, եւ իր սիրտը տրոփեց Հայրենիքի սրտին հետ Երեւանեան եռուզեռին կամ Հրազդանի մարգարաշտը թնդացնող յաղթանակի ուրախութեան պոսթիկումներուն մէջ, ու հօգին նոր լիութիւն մը ստացաւ ի տես Հայ Եկեղեցւոյ անցեալի փառահեղ մեծու-

թեան եւ այժմեան հերոսական ճիգին:

Ումբը իր կեցութեան շրջանին այցելեց Միծեռնակաբերդի եւ Սարգարապատի յուշարձանային համալիրները, Մատենադարանը, Հայաստանի պատմութեան, ազգագրական եւ ժողովրդական ստեղծագործութեան թանգարանները, Պետական ժամանակակից եւ Մանկական արուեստից պատկերասրահները, ժողովրդային Տնտեսութեան իրագործումներու հանդիսավայրը, Յաղթանակի Այգին, Մ. Սարեանի տուն-թանգարանը եւ Բիւրականի աստղադիտարանը, էջմիածնի, Հոփսիսի մէկ, Չուարթնոցի, Գեղարդի, Սաղմոսավանքի, Յովհաննավանքի, Կարմրաւորի, Մարինէի, Սոր Վիրապի, Ամբերդի եւ Օշականի տաճարները,

