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Outreach

Հրատարակչի Վերըիմաց Արևելյան Թեմի Առաջնորդարանի
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St. Illuminator's Cathedral To Celebrate 75th Anniversary

St. Illuminator's Armenian Apostolic Church will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the consecration of the Cathedral on Sunday, April 14, 1991. A thanksgiving Mass will be held at the Cathedral with Archbishop Mesrob Ashtjian as celebrant. Following the service, a luncheon will follow at the New York Hilton Hotel at 1:30 p.m.

For more than three-quarters of a century, St. Illuminator's has served the Armenian people. Especially during the great influx of immigrants after the 1915 Genocide, the Cathedral was instrumental in helping the thousands of Armenians, uprooted from their ancestral homes, who found refuge in the United States, with New York being the first stop. Since those days the Cathedral has continued in its service as a house of worship where the Christian faith flourished and where the Armenian heritage was passed on to each new generation. The Cathedral continues to be the *Mayr Yeghghetsi* of the Prelacy, and her dedicated parishioners, most of whom are now living in distant suburbs, continue their loving support of the first Armenian Cathedral in the United States.

See Page 2 for more on this important milestone



World Council of Churches Issues Statement About Karabagh

The World Council of Churches ended its seventh assembly on February 20. As reported in last month's issue of OUTREACH, Archbishop Aram Keshishian, Prelate of Lebanon, was elected moderator of the WCC Central Committee. Prior to adjourning, the WCC issued the following statement about Karabagh:

"We express our concern for the worsening situation in Karabagh. The Armenian people of Karabagh have been victims of discrimination, intimidation and violence. There is continuing tension between the Republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia over the region of Karabagh, historically part of Armenia. The WCC through statements and

publications, has drawn the attention of the churches, the public and the governments to this matter.

We therefore appeal to all parties involved: to seek ways to resolve the conflicts in the region through peaceful means. We especially appeal to the leaders of the Soviet Union to take immediate measures to safeguard legitimate religious, cultural and national interests, including the right to self-determination of the Armenian people of Karabagh; to take steps to ensure that the human rights of all people in the region are protected. We call upon all member churches to continue to be faithful in prayer, especially for the Armenian people in the region as they strive for both justice and peace."

76th Commemoration of the Genocide on April 24

Requiem Service & Concert at St. Bartholomew's Armenian Heroic Ballads & Hymns will be Performed

The 76th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide will be commemorated with a Requiem Service and Concert on Wednesday evening, April 24, at St. Bartholomew's Church, 50th Street and Park Avenue in New York City. The program will begin at 7:30 p.m. The Requiem Service will be led by Archbishop Mesrob Ashtjian with the participation of the New York metropolitan area clergy.

Master of Ceremonies for the event will be Dr. Ara Caprielian with guest speakers Mr. Vartan Hagopian, President of the Artzakh Writers Union, and Professor Hrach Zadian, Dean of Queens College, NY.

The concert portion of the commemoration will feature the Concert Brass Ensemble, directed by Roger Louis Voisin, who will present a pro-

gram of Armenian Heroic Ballads and Hymns spanning 15 centuries compiled and arranged by Rouben Gregorian.

The program is unique in both content and format, combining secular and sacred music from sources dating as far back as the 5th century commemorating the long and turbulent struggle of the Armenian people for religious and political freedom. The adaptation of the songs for brass quintet represents a unique departure from traditional modes of performance of Armenian classical and folk music and successfully capture the various moods of the music, ranging from the purely spiritual to the elegiac to the defiantly patriotic.

Rouben Gregorian, who has compiled and arranged this music, is a

well-known conductor, composer, teacher and musicologist, born in Tiflis, Georgia, in 1915. His musical education took place in Iran and in Paris and in 1952 Mr. Gregorian and his family came to Boston, where he became a faculty member of the Boston Conservatory of Music, and went on to a distinguished career.

Directing the Concert Brass Ensemble is Roger Voisin, currently chairman of the Department of Woodwinds, Brass and Percussion at Boston University. Trained in the brilliant, formal French style, he learned the superb technique and cool, sweet sound for which he later became famous. Now retired from the Boston Symphony he remains an active and elegant force at both Symphony Hall and Tanglewood and mentor to many young musicians.

Participating in the concert are soloists William Hite, tenor, and Mark McSweeney, baritone.

The commemoration will conclude with a solemn requiem service in remembrance of the one-and-a-half million men, women, and children who perished during the deportations and massacres.

Prior to the program a rally organized by the Armenian National Committee will take place at Ralph Bunche Park at the United Nation from 3 to 6 p.m.

**See Page 5
for additional
information**

From the editor...

Faith & Commitment

Vigen Guroian's article, "Armenian Nationalism and the Ferment of Faith," which appears on the opposite page is must reading for anyone who is serious about the Armenian church and its future in the Homeland and the Diaspora. The article originally appeared in The Christian Century and it is reprinted with permission from the publisher.

Professor Guroian skillfully analyzes the rebirth of faith in Armenia and the inadequacy of the Church to provide the people what it desperately seeks. At the same time his analysis of the Diaspora Church is equally bleak as he eloquently states that "that lively and experiential faith [in Armenia] reveals just how thin and pale much of diaspora Armenian Christianity is."

The message becomes more urgent in light of the fact that according to recent surveys there has been a marked increase in the feeling of religious commitment in the United States. Our Church's preparedness in meeting these needs will surely define our future. I hope you will all read Professor Guroian's article, reflect and let us know your thoughts.

The Forty Martyrs of Sebaste (d. 320)

As we were preparing this issue of OUTREACH and thinking about Professor Guroian's article, the coming of the joyful Easter season, and faith and commitment, we came across this little item in a recent issue of CHRISTIAN HISTORY about the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, whose martyrdom is remembered each year in the Armenian church. This year the commemoration was on March 9.

"Never was Rome in more danger from the church than when Christians refused military service. When the Empire was threatened on three borders at once, the pacifism of the church threatened the Roman way of life. Roman officials saw clearly that a vast organization with many conscientious objectors, and opposed to Roman ideals, could not be tolerated in a time of war. Thus, Christians were purged from the army in the early fourth century."

"In 320, near the end of the Great Persecution, the emperor Licinius ordered all Christians to renounce their faith on pain of death. Forty soldiers of the Twelfth Legion, stationed at Sebaste in Armenia, refused. They were stripped naked, forced out onto a frozen lake, and left to die from exposure. Fires were built on the bank, however, and warm baths were prepared for anyone who would recant.

"Only one gave in. Yet when he did, another soldier, moved by the example of the suffering Christians, declared himself a Christian and took the apostate's place.

"Within twenty-four hours, most of the forty were dead. The others were then put to death."

OUTREACH

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The Mystery Altar Curtain at St. Illuminator's

by Hourig Papazian-Sahagian

Over a decade ago, Archbishop Moushegh Der Kaloustian launched a thorough search of all the nooks and crannies of the Cathedral's rear rooms, in preparation for the Lenten season. While rummaging through church and school equipment accumulated over the decades, Father Moushegh found a "buried treasure" which had lain undisturbed in a corner. While unfolding yards and yards of his find, Rev. Der Kaloustian realized that he had discovered an altar curtain of great beauty—a rare example of hand-crocheted needle art.

The curtain, which has since been frequently photographed and studied by artists and craftsmen, measures 10 feet in height and 19 feet in width. The design theme is a series of 15 prayers, worked into the same number of crocheted frames. Recently it was ascertained that the entire curtain has been worked in one piece and not in 15 sections as had been previously believed. The curtain graces the main altar of St. Illuminator's, its delicate, cream-colored lace backed by red velvet.

The left lower corner of the curtain bears the crocheted dedication, in Armenian, which reads, "A gift to St. Illuminator Cathedral, 221 E. 27th Street, New York." The right lower corner carries the benefactors' prayer: "Lord, expiate and forgive our sins and those of our servants and people. Remember us also before the immortal Lamb of God." The signature reads, "The Najarian and Seghatekian Families."

No date or address is to be found anywhere, lending an air of mystery as to the source of this magnificent labor of love and faith. The pastor, trustees and parishioners have been puzzled over the past dozen years as searches have been conducted for the benefactor families and the originators of the "mystery curtain."

Was the curtain crocheted here in New York or commissioned to artisans in Armenia or in regions where the benefactors had lived? Was it among the first gifts to the Cathedral, honoring its consecration 75 years ago? Was the work done by the loving hands of the women of the Najarian and Seghatekian Families? If so, where could they have gathered in New York City to work on a crocheted cotton lace curtain the size of a mainsail of a large sailboat?

The search continues for the talented makers of a master work of hand and heart and of its devoted benefactors. Any information concerning the "mystery altar curtain" of St. Illuminator's would be appreciated by the Cathedral parish.

Meanwhile, the entire community continues to enjoy the wealth of blessings fashioned into this unique pattern of prayer, hooking together the links of the faithful of the Cathedral's generations. An opportunity to see this beauty is Sunday, April 14, 1991, celebrating the Cathedral's 75th anniversary at special Badarak services and at a luncheon immediately following church services at the New York Hilton Hotel.

St. Illuminator's Cathedral To Mark 75th Anniversary

Գ ի Ր Օ Ր Հ Ն Ո ի Թ Ե Ա Ն ՍԻՐԵՑՅԱԼ ԶԱՒԱԿԱՑ ՄԱՅՐ ԵՆԵՂԵՑՈՒՑ Ի ՆՈՒ ԵՈՐՔ, ՄԻԱՑՅԱԼ ՆԱՀԱՆԳՍ ԱՄԵՐԻԿԱՅԻ

Հոգեին հիմնեցանք իմանալով Ամերիկահայոց Ազգեկեան թանի Բարեկեան Առաջնորդ Գեորգ Տ. Մեղրոյ Ազգայնականաց Աշխատչի, որ յառաջկայ Ապրիլի 14-ին փառաշուք հանդիսութեամբ պիտի տօնախմբէք Ձեր սուրբ կեղեցեալ օծան 75-ամեակը:

Գեղեցիկ առիթ մըն է այս, ամէն քանի առաջ հաւաքաբար եւ միաբերան փառք ընծայելու Աստուծոյ, որ ճոխանաւորներէն ուղտաբեր շարքեանկ մեր հասարակ չօր Ս. Լուսաւորիչ անուանով կեցուած է այս մայր կեղեցին հոգեւոր կենդանի շուրհին մշտնօր աղբիւր մը եղաւ մեր հաւատացեալ ժողովուրդի կեանքին մէջ: Պատմական երեսակայութեամբ մուսթերեցէք անցնող երեք քառորդ դարու հայ կեանքը մասնաւորաբար Նիւ Եորքի մէջ...: Աստուծոյ շնորհին, Աւետարանի ճշմարտութեանց, ազգային բարեպաշտական աւանդութեանց, եկեղեցական խորհուրդներու մասնակարծան, Բանին կենաց բարոյութեան, ծիսական հասարակաց ազօթքի եւ սոնական օրերու յատուկ խանգալայն ապրումներու ներգործութեան բարեբերը Ս. Լուսաւորիչ Մայր Եկեղեցւոյը կարանէն եւ կամարներուն ներքեւ առաստօրէն քաջկուսան տասնեակ հազարներէ հայ ժողովուրդի գաւազններուն: Քանի՜ հարիւրաւոր անգամներ այստեղ, Ս. Լուսաւորիչ Մայր Եկեղեցւոյ մէջ

«Քրիստոս ի մէջ մեր յայտնեցաւ, ՈՐ էՆՆ Աստուած ստո բազմեցաւ, Խաղաղութեամ ձայն հնչեցաւ, Սուրբ ողորմի նորաճան տառաւ. Եկերցիւ մը անձն եղիւ, Հաղորդու յոյ լրման տառաւ. Սկըն յընդհանուրս տիեզերաց»:

Եկէք, հետեւաբար, մեր սրբորը բանաց ար Աստուած եւ միաձայն գրչեք:

«Փառք մեզ, Տէր, Աստուած մեր»:

Ապա եկէք յարգանք եւ պատիւ ընծայե՛ք բոլոր այն անձներուն, այր թէ կին, մեծ կամ փոքր, որոնք անցնող ճոխանաւորներէն ուղտաբեր ընթացքին իրենց կեանքը խառնեցին Ս. Լուսաւորիչ Եկեղեցւոյ կեանքին, հոգեւորական թէ աշխարհական իրենց վիճակներով եւ այսպեան եղանակներով, եւ որոնք այժմ երկրին անդեմական կեանքի կայեքից կը դիտեն երկրի վրայ իրապարծուող մեր այսօրուան կեանքը: Եւ սրբաձայն բարբառով բռնեք. —

«Հոգաւքն իմնգուցիւք արա իմնգիտա եւ խաղաղութիւն»:

Այժմ նախնեք մեր կեանքին: Ս. Լուսաւորիչ Եկեղեցւոյ բարձրագոյն բնակչութեամբ յորդուն եւ նուազեւ կեանքով գեղուն Նիւ Եորքի մէջ հոգեւոր կեանքի օճակ մըն է, որուն ընդունութիւնը կը կայեցէք դուք որպէս անգամներ անոր այժմու բարկացուցական: Եթեանստուընչինքնամեակը թող դառնայ հոգեկան եւ ազգային պայծառակերպութեան շնորհ եւ կենսամորթ ոյժի: Թող Ձեզմէ ամէն մէկը այսօր ուխտ մը կատարէ, ներքին հոգեփրկութեան հասանքին այցելելու եւ վերանորոգէ իր սերն ու նուիրումը այս սրբալէն օճակին:

Մենք անձնապէս երախտիքի գացուանով կը նախնեք Ս. Լուսաւորիչ Մայր Եկեղեցին: Երջանկայն ապրումով կ'անդրադարձանք այն պահներուն գորս անձամբ սարքած ենք անոր կամարներուն ներքեւ եւ խորանին վրայ որպէս աղօթարար, պատարագիչ, բարոյիչ ու պատմական զարգացումներ, Սեր վարդապետութեան օրերէն մինչեւ Կաթողիկոսական պարտաւորութեան այս օրերը: Սեր հոգիին մէջ անջնջելի բարեբեր կան Ս. Լուսաւորիչ Մայր Եկեղեցւոյը հրաշագործ գորութեան շատախիտ: Անքիլիստի վճարանէն երբ այս իտպը կ'ուղեցնէ Ձեզի, սրտի պարթը կը գզանք հրախել ձեզ որ անխափել սիրով կարդանք մեզք այս սուրբ տաճարին: Ժամանակ, ջանք ու աշխատանք, ներթափան գոհուրդներ մի իմայնք է ինչպիսի անոր ՀՅ ու Նիւարար առաջնութեան պողպատեմբ: Սեր սրբազնաբեր շարականաց վարդապետին բառերը կը մատուցանենք ձեզ:

«Խորան սրբութեամ կամգնեցաւ սուրբ եկերցի. Եւ Քրիստոս թագաւորն ի սմա պատարագալ, Եկալք ի նաւատացեալք երգեցաւք մեր ձեզ»:

«Նոր երգչը ձեր կեանքն է, 75-ամեակի առիթով նորոգուած եւ լեցեւորուած անցեալի հարուստ փառանգութեամբ եւ լարուած դէպի ապագայ բացուող նախանձախնդրութեամբ:

Այժմ երգչը 75-ամեակը նոր իրադրութեաներով, որպէս վկայութիւն ձեր քրիստոնէական հաւատքին եւ ազգային գիտակցութեան ու արժանապատուութեան: Որովհետեւ կեանքը, թէ անհատական եւ թէ՛ համայնական մակարդակներու վրայ, իր բնութեամբ իսկ, զարգացում է: Ով կը զարդի զարգացումէ՛ կը զարդի գոյութենէ, իմաստաւոր, նպատակասլաց եւ ստեղծարար գոյութենէ:

Եստակ նայեցէք: Ձեր եկեղեցին ճանչնալով որպէս Մայր՝ բոլորուեցէք անոր շուրջ եւ անձեղծե՛ք ու ծաղկեցուցէք անոր կեանքը որ ձեր կեանքն է Աստուծոյ շնորհին եւ օրհնութեան ներքեւ:

Ողջ լինե՛ք ի Տէր, զօրացեալք շնորհօք Սուրբ Հոգւոյն եւ յաւկա օրհնեալ ի մէջք. Ամէն:

Տրուաւ Օրհնութեան Գիրս այս
Ի Կաթողիկոսարանն Սեօր Տանն Կրկիկոյ
Որ յԱնթիլիաս, Լիբանան
Ի 28-ւ Յունուարի, 1991 Թուին Գրիստոսի, եւ
Ի Թուին Հայոց ՌՆՊ

ԳԱՐԵԳՐԷ Բ. ԿԱԹՈՂԻԿՈՍ
ՄԵՄԻ ՏԱՆԻ ԿԻԼԻԿԻՈՑ

Karekin II, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, issued an Encyclical on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of St. Illuminator's Cathedral. His Holiness offers praise to God noting that "for 75 years this cathedral, christened St. Illuminator's after the father of our faith, has continued to be an ever-flowing source of living." He then offers homage "to all those souls, male and female, old and young, who throughout the past 75 years have fused their life to that of St. Illuminator's, either in their capacity as clergy or laity... and who today, from their heavenly dwellings in the hereafter, are gazing down upon the realization of our life today on earth." Speaking about the future the Catholicos asked that "each one of you make a solemn vow today and experience a profound spiritual change in your life by renewing your love for and commitment to this spiritual hearth which is St. Illuminator's... remain bonded to your Cathedral with immeasurable love... be renewed on the occasion of the 75th anniversary, fulfilled by the rich heritage of the past and stretching out with ardent fervor toward a bright future. . . . Look forward! Recognizing that your church is your mother, rally around her. Make her life grow and flourish; for her life is yours in God's grace and blessing."

After 70 years the Armenian Church is as ill prepared to compete in a religious free market as the Communist Party is in a political one.

IN AUGUST 1990, Mikhail S. Gorbachev sent a message to His Holiness Vazken I, Catholics of All Armenians, pleading with him "to use the influence, authority, rich life experience and the higher feelings of your humanitarianism and . . . your responsibility for the fate of the Armenian people, to work for the immediate ending of ethnic violence and fighting in the Transcaucasian region." The message revealed the deep historical and cultural relationship of the Armenian Church to the Armenian nation. It was also a reminder of the long-established Soviet practice of prevailing upon that church to assist the central government in imposing its policies.

This dual role for the church—self-described soul of the nation and partner with the Soviet authorities—developed not only under Soviet rule but over half a millennium of Ottoman domination. Over the years the Armenian Church learned simultaneously to sanctify the existing social and political order and represent itself as the one institution above all others upon which the well-being of the Armenian people depended. The Soviet authorities built upon and modified this dual role to suit their own purposes.

The Armenian Church, in turn, internalized the Soviet bureaucratic structure and gave the regime unqualified public support. Over the past 70 years Armenian hierarchs have labored to link the communist myth of the Bolshevik revolution and a fraternity of Soviet peoples with the Armenian national-religious myth of a people born out of the church and nurtured in that church's bosom. The central symbol of the latter myth is also a historical fact: The fourth-century Armenian kingdom was the first to establish Christianity as a state religion.

As late as February 1988, in the midst of the heated national movement to annex the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabagh, Vazken I could be heard drawing together the Soviet and Armenian myths. During an interview published in the Moscow newspaper *Moskovskiy Novosti* he said: "Mutual respect and trust form the basis of relationships between the church and the state. There is no evidence to prove otherwise." He invoked the powerful symbol of the Armenian homeland with "Etchmiadzin as the headquarters of the spiritual life" of Armenians everywhere. He boasted of full churches that attracted believers and nonbelievers alike, thus proving that the church is so intertwined with the traditions of the people that it stands with them as witness to the fact that "we are a people, we prevailed and we conquered."

The behavior of the church since the elevation of Vazken I in 1985 might be described as pragmatic accommodation—a middle position in a spectrum ranging from total obedience to and collaboration with the state at one end to minimal support and evasion of state restrictions at the other. Through this pragmatic accommodation, the Armenian hierarchy sought to preserve a traditional moral, and liturgical role in the national life. The price paid for even such a symbolic role has been a static, secularized, ecclesial body largely gutted of any deep piety or serious theology. In 1972, a decade before Gorbachev and *glasnost*, the Armenian Church had only six bishops, eight monks, about 30 archbishops and roughly 100 priests in all of the Soviet Union. These served 3.5 to 4 million Soviet Armenians. The church figures have not changed significantly, though hopes are high for the future. There are, for example, only 33 operating churches in the whole of

Armenian Nationalism and the Ferment of Faith

by Vigen Guroian

Vigen Guroian, associate professor of theology and ethics at Loyola College in Baltimore, Maryland, has written and lectured extensively about the Armenian Church. This powerful and thought-provoking article appeared in a recent issue of The Christian Century.

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Armenia today for over 3 million Armenians. There is no real theology being done. As author Claire Seda Mouradian commented in a recent article on the Armenian Church: "One looks in vain for essays about christology, ecclesiology, or Christian morality." Problems of dogma, rites and liturgy are dealt with almost exclusively "from a national and secular view, in the context of the quest for the historical patrimony."

Yet despite the Armenian Church's stagnation, something quite remarkable has been happening in Armenia amid the political and social upheavals over environmental issues, Nagorno-Karabagh, and especially the pogroms of Azerbaijan and the catastrophic earthquake of December 1988. A religious awakening is under way. There is little statistical data to support this theory. Most of what is known about it in the West comes by way of diaspora Armenians traveling to and from Armenia. It is not difficult to verify, however, that hundreds of baptisms are done each week at the See of Holy Etchmiadzin, the historic birthplace of Armenian Christianity. I saw the building in which these baptisms occur during a recent visit. On that occasion, a former student of mine who recently completed a year of training at the seminary in Etchmiadzin explained to me how hundreds of people line up on the weekends to be baptized. In streets and marketplaces people can be seen wearing shiny new Armenian crosses. Vazken I has pointed out that 70 percent of all infants are now being baptized, compared with 20 percent 30 years ago.

While in Armenia I visited St. Sarkis Church, the home parish of the bishop of Yerevan, Karekin Nersissian. In recent months vesper services have been held at St. Sarkis on Wednesday and Friday evenings, followed either by a lecture from a seminary or priest on a religious topic or, more frequently, by choral practice. The entire parish is the choir. On the evening I was there the parish was earnestly rehearsing for a visit from representatives of the World Council of Churches. The rehearsal was profoundly moving: I was struck by the enormous crowd, the small children, the people's piety and reverence before icons and crosses, and most of all the voices singing hymns newly learned with remarkable clarity and fervor.

Armenia's religious awakening is by no means uniform, however. The new religious ferment takes a variety of forms, including a minority Catholic community and Hare Krishna sects. During the 19th century, Protestant missionaries made considerable headway among Armenians who had been discouraged by the deadening traditionalism of the Armenian Church. That Protestant evangelical movement has persisted in the Western diaspora, with congregations in most of the major centers of Armenian diaspora life. Within Armenia itself Protestant Christianity could pose a significant challenge to the Armenian Church. It is viewed already by some church leaders as not merely a challenge but a threat, and it may well become so. Even Orthodox Armenian believers exude an evangelical piety which, if sufficiently frustrated by an ossified Orthodoxy, could be won over by

a lively and experimental Protestantism. The vast majority of Armenians will most likely remain with the Armenian Church, though the shape that church might take in the future is an open question.

THE ARMENIAN CHURCH did not have to cope with religious pluralism during the Soviet period. Ironically, it was effectively shielded from it by the state's official atheism. Meanwhile, the Soviets tolerated a church willing to reduce its public expressions to a minimalist ritualism and willing to cooperate with the authorities. In exchange, the church was allowed a monopoly of religious institutional presence. The result is a church as ill prepared to compete in a religious free market as the Communist Party is in a political one. In fact, the last place the Soviet structure remains totally intact in Armenia is the Armenian Church. Likewise, the last place democratization is understood is within the church, even though in theory and by constitution the Armenian Church is among the most democratic of the Orthodox churches.

While Soviet culture is being rejected by great numbers of Armenians today, it goes on living within the church. Many Armenians have turned to religion as a way of sorting out the decadence of Soviet culture, seeking firm ground upon which to stand and live with hope. They think that religion is the basis for any moral reformation of society. Sadly, the Armenian Church lingers far behind the rest of the society in refuting a corrupt Soviet culture.

Although it is unlikely in the short term that any new Armenian Church will emerge out of the old one, several comments made by Vazken I in a September 5, 1990, television address provide the opportunity to speculate about another scenario for the Armenian Church. The patriarch congratulated the newly elected non-communist Armenian Parliament for its declaration of an independent Armenia:

This is the time for our people, both in our fatherland and in the diaspora, to emerge with a new spirit, abandoning the old molds of thinking and working, and following the words of the . . . Apostle: "You must remove the old yeast of sin so that you will be entirely pure." [1 Cor. 5:7].

His remarks suggest a new model of a national church that would welcome vital, autonomous, secular institutions of government and culture as lifting from its shoulders the burden of being the sole symbol of national unity. With this new model, the Armenian Church would realize that its former real or imagined responsibilities for preserving the memory of the nation's rich past need no longer be its sole or even its primary concern. I recall a conversation with a young priest at Etchmiadzin who said to me: "The church will be much healthier and of true service to the gospel of Jesus Christ when one head is removed from the Patriarchal Eagle." He was referring to the two heads of the symbol of the Patriarchate representing the church's spiritual leadership of the nation and its role as custodian of the nation's temporal life and culture.

While this priest was committed to

Despite the Armenian Church's stagnation, a religious awakening is under way in Armenia.

ministering to the immediate physical as well as spiritual needs of the people, he knew all too well the history of the national church. Under the millet or community system, the Ottomans had placed in the hands of the religious leadership the responsibility of overseeing and administering the internal lives of their religious-ethnic communities. What came of necessity grew into habit. Armenian hierarchs conceived of themselves as princes not only of the church but of the nation. As the Russian Orthodox theologian and historian John Meyendorff has pointed out, in the 19th century the reversal in the scale of values within what had already for some time become Orthodox national cultures was completed. "The nation and its interests began to be considered as ends in themselves," and the churches internalized these nationalist aspirations in such a way that those aspirations became the primary goals of the churches as well. In effect, "the Orthodox churches accepted *de facto* control by secular national interests." The temptations to blur the discontinuities between Soviet atheist culture and Christian faith only compounded this secularization of the faith.

I suggested to the young priest that the church itself is in a diaspora among its own people. To my surprise, he welcomed and heartily embraced that description. (I had not expected such a metaphor to be understood in Armenia, as it is not yet intelligible to most Armenians in the diaspora.) In order to understand the church in Armenia as in a diaspora, one must realize, in the face of a massive myth depicting even present-day Armenia as a Christian nation, that Armenian Christianity no longer exists. One must also understand the mission of the church as biblical and not nationalistic.

WHEN I ASKED the wife of the priest of an historic church in the city of Etchmiadzin whether she thought Armenia was a Christian nation, she hesitated and then said, "Yes." I asked in what way that was so. "Armenians are hospitable," she said. While this was an answer worth exploring—hospitality is a powerful theme in biblical faith—it is not adequate. She knew it was not plausible either and said so later. In fact, it became clear that she held what can only be described as an apocalyptic view of the present times. She identified the Soviet empire as the harlot in Revelation 18, "drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus Christ." In her view only a remnant of the true faith remained. *Glasnost* and *perestroika* were "a good provision" to gather the faithful before the Second Coming. Yet the myth of an Armenian Christendom haunted her and remained a powerful part of her own symbolic construction of social and religious reality.

During my visit to Armenia, the complex relationship between faith and peoplehood was repeatedly brought home to me. Kevork and Anahid are a couple who lost their 12-year-old son and nearly lost their daughter in the earthquake. On the night I spent with them, I noticed that several feet from the foot of their bed was a small household "akhar." Hung on the wall from top to bottom were a picture of their son, photographs of family and friends in which the son was present, a crucifix, and the flag of the short-lived independent Armenian Republic of 1918-1920 (it has since become the flag of the new Armenian Republic). On a table against the wall were placed a votive candle, belongings of the son pulled out from the rubble, and a miniature volume of the

Armenian Nationalism and the Ferment of Faith

(Continued from page 3)

Gospel of Mark.

Earlier, Kevork had made known to me his own personal struggle with faith and doubt. We had climbed a hill in Yerevan to a memorial to the 1.5 million martyrs and victims of the Turkish genocide perpetrated against the Armenians. Kevork told me that he had virtually exhausted himself in an argument with God. The earthquake, he believes—as do many Armenians—was set off deliberately by the Russians with an underground nuclear explosion to punish the Armenians for their defiance of Soviet authority. Anahid had had a recurring dream of God in the clouds and horses ascending into those clouds, where God's face was hidden. From out of the clouds God spoke: "I did not bring this catastrophe upon you." Even so, Kevork refused to exonerate God from responsibility for the earthquake. God was yet to blame, he exclaimed, "for he did not prevent the hand of men from doing such a thing to the Armenian people." I asked Kevork whether he was speaking of the earthquake or the genocide. "Both!" he answered.

Kevork's argument with God is on behalf not only of himself and his personal loss but of the victim nation—once victim of genocide, recently victim of a devastating earthquake. If faith is to be forged out of such tragedy, faith must illumine not only meaning for personal suffering, but for an entire nation's experience of affliction. (In October 1990, Kevork and Anahid's ten-year-old daughter Lilith visited the U.S. for a second time to receive corrective surgery for a head injury suffered during the earthquake. In accordance with the wishes and instructions of her parents, Lilith was baptized.)

Kevork was not the only Armenian I met who embodied such a union of faith and peoplehood. Meline and Dikran are two young professionals who live in one of the major cities in Armenia. She is a professor of philology and ancient Greek and he is a professor of architecture. They describe themselves as Christian democrats and teach their children at home. They say they are for the restoration of Christianity. Their views came the closest to those I heard from Russian religious dissidents in Moscow. I asked Meline and Dikran what they thought of Vazken I and Echniadzin. There was a long silence. They were really quite taken aback and unsure what to say to a stranger. So I shifted my query to what they thought the role of the Armenian Church should be in the future.

Dikran was emphatic. He wanted the church to join the political struggle for democracy and to oppose communism outright. I asked him if this was not a dangerous confusion of religion and politics, church and state. Was it not an primary mission of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to political and nationalistic purposes? He asked me, "What do you think the relationship of church and state should be?" I suggested that one problem with the Armenian Church in the past, whether under Ottoman or Soviet rule, was that it was too closely aligned with the state and wanted to assume the leadership of the nation. "Is it wrong for there to be an English Church?" Dikran countered. "No," I answered, but I also indicated that I think it is a mistake for any church to accept the status of an established church—in this case, a model based on the Constantinian-Theodosian union of church and state. With startling alacrity, Meline agreed that the church had been compromised over the centuries by the various transmutations of the Constantinian-Theodosian model. Dikran was less willing to follow the logic. He insisted that the role of the church is "to build the nation."

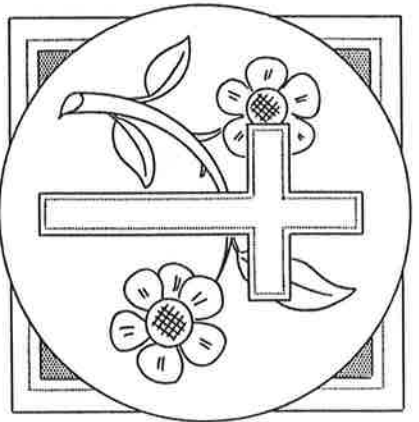
This couple's disagreement is a

microcosm of the tremendous struggle among believers in Armenia over how to relate faith, church and nationalism. Many secular nationalists are quite content with an Armenian Church struck in a medieval vision of Christendom, so long as the church does not challenge their own agendas. Under these conditions it is perfectly permissible and even desirable for the church to continue making vague pronouncements exhorting the nation to be proud of its past and hopeful about its future. In addition, a large number of believers hold to a narrow pietism and naive traditionalism which leave them incapable of envisioning a church other than the existing one. But even Dikran wanted an activist church that would risk its comfort in order to move the nation toward real democracy—an entirely different matter.

While Catholics Vazken's metaphor of the leaven and his call for the abandonment of old molds and for overcoming the spirit of "narrow nationalism" may mark the beginning of a new mind and mission for the Armenian Church, I remain skeptical. Much, in fact, may depend initially not upon the disposition of Vazken I or the hierarchy but upon whether Christian Armenians in the diaspora offer their support to the faithful in Armenia through educational materials and resources for mission and evangelization. Yet diaspora Armenians must also report honestly and self-critically to their kin on the true nature of their own often-envied religious experience within free societies.

Perhaps Armenian Americans will simultaneously find the will to commence the crucial business of sorting out what it means to be a Christian and a church in a nation that, although permitting religious freedom, is one in which religious bodies suffer profound spiritual enervation, the deconstructive impact of denominationalism and a secular hegemony which wears pluralism like a reversible vest.

I hope that the Armenian Church in America and in the rest of the diaspora may itself be regenerated and reformed under the influence of the religious awakening in Armenia. The various admixtures of faith and nationalism in the minds and hearts of Armenians need to be taken into account, but the awakening in Armenia itself is quite real. That lively and experiential faith reveals just how thin and pale much of diaspora Armenian Christianity is. Amid this religious ferment, Armenian national identity could well undergo some healthy transformations. Finally, there is reason to hope that the Armenian Church abroad and in Armenia will learn anew what it means to be free and faithful in Christ. Only then will it cease being the handmaid of nationalism and secular authority and instead be the spiritual leaven that raises and purifies the character of its people. ■



Today, after 2000 years, Christianity is the faith, at least nominally, of one-third of the earth's population. From a handful of fishermen, tax collectors, and youthful troublemakers in an obscure province of Judea, the faith has spread over the globe to claim the loyalty of almost two thousand million inhabitants of our planet.

Anooshig Vartan

A few days ago a relative said that there wasn't much left to write about Armenians anymore. His comment led me to a sort of soul searching.

Years ago when I was a teenager, I used to think the same way about Armenian poetry. During that particular period in my life I was practically devouring Armenian poems, reading a lot and memorizing many. Whenever I admitted a poem I would think that the poet had written it for me; that it was exactly the way I would have written. All the physical and emotional subjects were exhausted. A few decades have passed since then. I have read not only many new Armenian poems, but others in other languages as well. The truth is—as I've found out—that each new day brings a new experience and that there are many different ways to express the same feeling or thought.

I am amazed at the way we, as a nation, have turned our misfortunes of the past and present into unique creative experiences. If we keep this trait who will match our creativity? We have communities, large or small, from Armenia to Australia; from Europe to the Middle East, Persia and India; from Japan to the Americas, North and South. We pretty well cover the whole earth. It has been our luck to be brutally dispersed. This fact alone has doubtlessly strengthened our will to survive as a nation at any cost. We have learned—the hard way—to defy material riches in favor of the soul's ecstasy. We respect human values much, much more than the physical comfort. Only two days ago I heard from a reliable source that in Soviet Armenia where religion, the Armenian church had been persecuted for the past seventy years, new churches are being re-opened and rebuilt. No amusement parks, nor video shops. . . . Yes, it is truly amazing if we consider the enormous economic and political difficulties being created in the Soviet Union by the so-called new order and the old factions.

While I am writing to you, our church is observing the "Fast of Great Lent" in memory of Christ's suffering. We have also heard and seen the devastations of a horrible war waged in the Middle East. Some authorities are boasting of their power of destruction. No doubt related businesses are flourishing and lives are ending. There are fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, young men and women who have lost loved ones in the war.

The thought that there might have been innocent Armenians killed on both sides staggers the mind. Should we decide to write about war and peace; about injustice and justice from the perspectives of different Armenian communities around the world, there will be no end to subject matter.

Did somebody say there isn't much to write about us?

"There certainly is a lot," says

Your loving
Eugenie Horukoer

Seminar for Acolytes and Choirsingers In Vancouver, B.C.



Some of the participants during the seminar weekend in Vancouver, B.C.

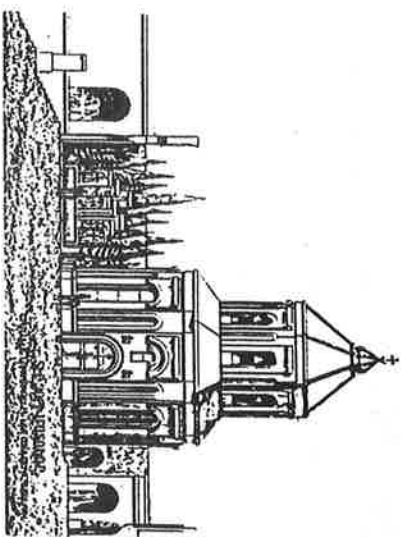
Saturday and Sunday, January 26 and 27, 1991, were special days for the Armenian faithful of British Columbia in general and for the congregation of St. Gregory the Illuminator Church in particular, because the Pastor and the Board of Trustees organized a seminar for acolytes and choirsingers, the first such seminar to take place in Vancouver.

Thirty-three boys and girls gathered at the church on Saturday morning and stayed there until Sunday 2:00 p.m. The participants learned the Prayer Hours, the Holy Liturgy, and the hymns of the Armenian Church, and actively took part in the Sunday Services. The participants wrote a letter to His Eminence Archbishop Mesrob Ashtjian, Primate of the Eastern United States of America and Canada, expressing their feelings about the seminar and renewed their commitment to obey the rules and regulations of the Armenian Church.

On Sunday, Very Rev. Nareg Alemeztian, Pastor, delivered a sermon emphasizing the role of religion and the Armenian Church in our lives and the necessity of our full involvement in the worship service. He thanked the parents and the participants and encouraged them to continue to support all the activities of St. Gregory Church.

The supervisors and the instructors of the seminar were Hayr Sourp and Archdeacon Krikor Zeytounlian. Each participant was presented with a souvenir and the seminar concluded with a meal, prepared by a group of devoted parishioners, at the Armenian Community Center's Lazarian Hall.

Participants were: Shant Khatchadurian, Margos Khatchadurian, Nazeli Sagerian, Sona Bedrossian, Shant Bedrossian, Isgouhi Demirtjian, Hagop Deragopian, Krisdapor Kabakian, Anahid Movsessian, Ara Movsessian, Rita Movsessian, Hagop Alemeztian, Ayda Boyajian, Anto Boyajian, Rozig Zarfian, Sevan Karayian, Sarkis Karayian, Eliz Karayan, Azniv Karayan, Kevro Terzian, Harout Beshdikian, Armen Boghossian, Alin Boghossian, Robert Horvath, Julie Horvath, Arka Movsessian, Anet Koudian, Joan Semerjian, Krikor Semerjian, Robert Semerjian, Archdeacon Krikor Zeytounlian, Vrej Gedikian, and Father Nareg Alemeztian.



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A P R I L X X I V

**Solemn Requiem Service & Concert
76th Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide**

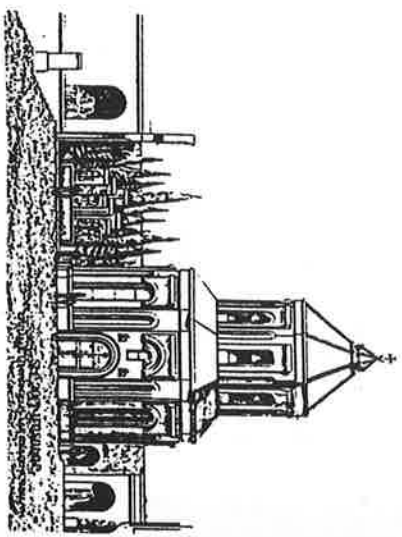
under the auspices of

Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian

**Prelate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America
Eastern U.S. and Canada**

with the participation of the metropolitan area churches

- St. Illuminator's Cathedral, New York, NY
- St. Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church, Douglaston, NY
- Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church, Ridgefield, NJ

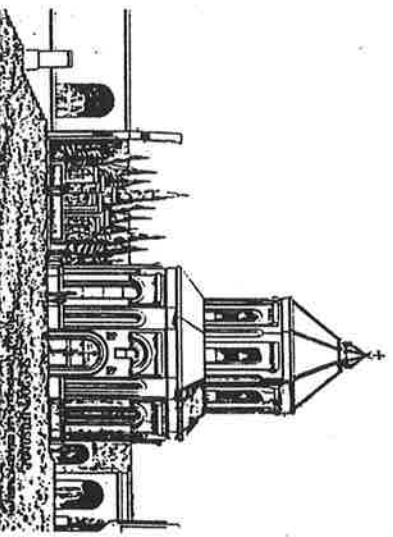


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Park Avenue at 50th Street, New York City

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 1991 • 7:30 p.m.



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Dr. Ara Caprielian

Guest Speakers

Mr. Vartan Hagopian
President, Artzakh Writers Union

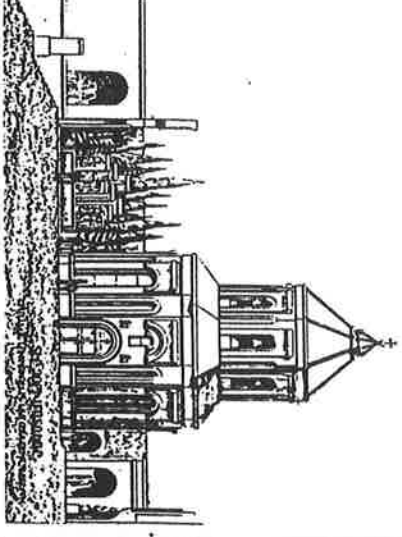
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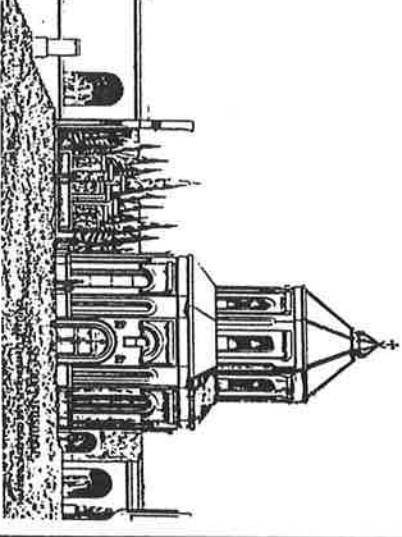
*At the Conclusion of the Program a Solemn Divine Service Will
Take Place In Honor of the one and one-half million martyrs.*

PLEASE JOIN US

*This program will follow the rally organized by the Armenian
National Committee at Ralph Bunch Park at the United Nations
which will take place from 3 to 6 p.m.*

Buses will be available at the following locations:

- Armenian Center, Woodside, NY at 6 p.m.
- Barouyr Grocery, Sunnyside, NY at 6:15 p.m.
- Sts. Vartanantz Church, Ridgefield, NJ at 6:15 p.m.
- St. Gregory Church, Philadelphia at 4:00 p.m.



Martyrs Chapel / Deir Zor

Was the Last Supper A Passover Meal?

by Archpriest Dr. Gorun Shrikian



BEGINNING WITH THE latter half of the second century the conflict between the Synoptic and Johannine accounts of the Last Supper and the crucifixion of Jesus became an issue of discussion. While the Synoptics insist that the Last Supper was a Passover Meal, the Johannine account differs and stresses the fact that Jesus died before the Passover Meal. In the light of these historical situations, let us examine the issue to see whether or not the Last Supper was a Passover Meal.¹

First of all, let us note that all four Gospels agree that the crucifixion and the death of Jesus took place on Friday (Mark 15:42; Matt. 27:62; Luke 23:54; John 19:31,42). During Jesus' lifetime, the time cycle of a day was reckoned from sunset to sunset (Jeremias says from 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.) According to this reckoning the Last Supper, Getsemane, the arrest and trial, the crucifixion and burial happened within a one-day period. But the question here is not whether Jesus died on a Friday or not. But rather did it happen on the first day of the Passover Feast or the preceding day which was called Day of Preparation? The Synoptic accounts insist that everything happened during the first day of the Passover Feast, while the Johannine account places everything on the Preparation Day period.²

According to the usual reckoning, the first day of the Passover Feast was the 15th of Nisan. And since the Synoptics present the Last Supper as a Paschal Meal (Mark 14:12-16; Matt. 26:17-19; Luke 22:7-13), therefore we can assume that Jesus ate the Last Supper with His disciples on the evening of the 14th of Nisan. The crucifixion date was then the 15th of Nisan.³ According to the Johannine account, the crucifixion of Jesus took place on the 14th of Nisan, during Preparation Day. This account automatically eliminates the possibility of having a Passover Meal together since at that time Jesus was already dead (John 18:28). John does not deny that there was a meal the preceding night of the crucifixion, but it was not a Passover Meal as indicated by the Synoptics (John 13:1-2). In the light of these testimonies we can summarize our findings in the following manner concerning the problem of the date. According to the Johannine account, everything happened between the 13th and 14th of Nisan, while the Synoptics differ and place everything between 14th and 15th of Nisan. According to John, there was no Passover Meal and according to the Synoptics there was. Our intention is to reject the Johannine theory and confirm the fact, in accordance with the Synoptic Gospels, that the Last Supper was indeed a Passover Meal. Therefore, let us consider some pro and con suggestions to establish our thesis.

Some scholars have suggested that if the Last Supper was not an ordinary meal, it could have been a *Kidush* meal. Jeremias rejects this suggestion on the ground that a *Kidush* meal was a simple blessing of the Sabbath over a cup of wine performed on Friday evenings. On Friday evening, according to both Synoptics and John, Jesus was already buried and therefore the above-mentioned theory becomes unacceptable.⁴ A *Haburah* meal is also mentioned as an alternative possibility, which was a duty meal occasioned by circumstances such as funerals, betrothals, weddings, etc.⁵ Another alternative suggested is that the Last Supper was a meal which the religious society of the Essenes used to eat together daily. The special importance which the evangelists attach to the Last Supper contradicts this notion of a communal daily meal.⁶

After rejecting these suggestions Jeremias brings forth the following evidences to prove that the Last Supper

was an actual Passover Meal shared by Jesus with His disciples at the eve of His crucifixion. In Luke 22:15 we notice that Christ expressed His desire to eat the Passover Meal with the disciples. Jeremias also adds the witness of the Quarto-decimanian celebration of the Passover, which states that the Lord ate the Lamb with His disciples on the great day of the Unleavened Bread. Today it is well known, Jeremias says, that the Quarto-decimanian Passover celebration was the traditional continuation of the primitive Christian Passover.⁷

Both the Synoptic and Johannine accounts place the locality of the Last Supper at Jerusalem. Jerusalem was a crowded city, especially during festive days. Under these circumstances Jeremias does not think that Jesus would consider eating an ordinary meal with His disciples with previous plannings. The Law demanded that the Passover Meal be held only in Jerusalem, beginning with the first century B.C. The slaughter of the lambs took place at the Temple area while the eating was transferred to the houses in Jerusalem. Jesus usually stayed in Bethany and there was no reason to stay in Jerusalem that night except to comply with the Law to eat the Passover Meal in Jerusalem.

The Last Supper took place during the evening hours and it was prolonged for several hours. This indicates that it was a Passover Meal, since the Law required the participants to consume the entire lamb during the Passover Meal. The room also, a custom which was practiced only on festive days.⁸ According to John, the Last Supper was eaten in a state of levitical purity (Num. 19:19), which was not required from the laity for an ordinary meal. However, the Law required such observances for a Passover Meal. Another point worth while to mention at this time is that Jesus broke the bread during the progress of the meal. During an ordinary meal the breaking of the bread took place at the

beginning of the meal.

It is a misconception to accept the fact that during Jesus' lifetime the drinking of wine during ordinary meals was a matter of fact. Those who visited Palestine and are aware of the living conditions of the people in the Near East realize that wine is a rare element and is usually limited to festive occasions, such as marriages, engagements, bereavement periods, etc. During the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles, the drinking of wine was prescribed as part of the ritual. There is no indication in the Gospels that Jesus or His disciples were wine users. The only occasion that is mentioned is the Wedding in Cana and the reference of Matthew 11:16-19, which cannot be considered as a reference that Jesus was a wine user. "Eating and drinking" is an idiomatic expression referred to those who are sociable by their characters, unlike John the Baptist who was an ascetic. Therefore, the use of wine during the Last Supper is an indication that it was a Passover Meal and a festive occasion to be celebrated.

Though we do not have enough evidence concerning the other elements that were used during the Last Supper, we might assume, according to the prescription of the Law, that the feast consisted of wine, unleavened bread, lamb and bitter herbs, symbolizing Israel's deliverance and the bitter days they lived in Egypt (cf. Ex. 12:8).⁹ The omission of the elements not mentioned by the Synoptics cannot be used as an evidence against their thesis, since their main objective was not to describe the details of a Passover Meal, but rather to transmit a liturgical formula with tremendous significance for the religious life of the early Christians.

According to Jeremias, John omits the Last Supper for special reasons. During the time he wrote his Gospel, a secrecy was imposed upon all baptismal and eucharistic procedures.¹⁰ Both Jewish and legal reactions against the sacramental beliefs of the Christians compelled John to present the issue in a different perspective.

Also, his theological concerns are more justified this way. John evidently relates Jesus' sacrificial crucifixion to the exact time of the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb. Thus, according to John, Jesus was brought before Pilate for trial and Jews refused to enter the Praetorium because "they had not yet eaten the Passover." This precaution was taken "that they might not be defiled" before eating the Passover (John 18:28).

John insists that Jesus died on Preparation Day (John 19:14), the 14th of Nisan, and that "his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth" (John 19:35).¹¹

At this time Jeremias also considers the existing objections which tend to establish the validity of the Johannine account. It is objected that if Simon of Cyrene was returning from work during the day of Jesus' crucifixion (Mark 15:21), that day could not have been the first day of the Passover. According to the Jewish law no one was permitted to work on that day. Jeremias argues against this objection asserting that there is no clear indication as to the nature of the work which was done by Simon. Everyone was permitted to go out of town as far as 2,000 cubits or 880 meters. Therefore, if Simon was a farmer he was allowed to visit his possessions. If he was not a Jew, as his name indicates, there was no reason to be concerned about the Jewish customs.¹²

The daily Eucharistic practice in the early church is brought forward as an objection. Once a year an observance would have been proper if it was a Passover Meal. Jeremias answers the objection on the grounds that the early Christian communal meals were not Eucharistic. The meals gradually evolved into the Last Supper, even before Pauline times.¹³ Also Christ's suggestion, "to do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me," was enough stimulus to do it as often as it was possible and not only once a year. The use of both leavened and unleavened bread in the early Church indicates a divergence of thinking in this respect according to some authorities. In defense of the Orthodox use of the leavened bread in the arguments of John of Damascus it is also objected that the Last Supper was not a Passover Meal. But the use of the unleavened bread in the Armenian Church indicates that the use of the leavened bread was not a Western custom alone.

After considering all these objections, the chief argument against the Synoptic view is the eyewitness account of John, which fixes Christ's death on the 14th of Nisan (Day of Preparation), preceding the day of the Passover. At this point I would like to object to John's assertion with statements from his own account in which he contradicts himself. In John 12:1 he mentions that Jesus visited Lazarus in Bethany six days before the first day of Passover. In 12:12, John mentions that the next day was the day when Christ was received by the multitude with palm branches, known to us as Palm Sunday. According to these statements that day Jesus came to Bethany was Saturday. The next day, namely, the Palm Sunday, was the first day of his point of departure. Monday was the second day. Tuesday the

(Continued on page 8)

Archpriest Dr. Gorun Shrikian is pastor of St. Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church, Dearborn, Michigan. This article is reprinted from a 1970 issue of GILGIA, published by the Prelacy. The question whether the Last Supper was a Passover Meal or not is one that continues to be debated amongst Biblical scholars.

ՏՕՆ ԱՐԲՈՑ ՂԵՌՈՆՂԵԱՆՆՅՑ



Clergymen serving Prelacy churches gathered for their annual clergy conference on Sts. Ghevontsiak day, February 5. This year the clergy met at St. Asdvadzadzin Church, Whitinsville, Massachusetts. Lectures were given by Rev. Zareh Sahagian, Archbishop Dr. Mesrob Tashjian, and Rev. Armen Ishkanian.

Փեմիս Բարեխնամ Առաջ-սիրուած եւ պատշաճ ձևով նորը՝ Բարձր. Տ. Մեսրոպ Արք. նիւթերը ներկայացուցին եւ շեշտը Աջեանի եւ Կրօնական Խորհուրդի զբոյն պատուիրաններու կարեւորությունով, Հրեայաբան Ամերիկայի թեան եւ գործադրութեան, մասնաճիւղային Կրիկեան Փեմի հո-նարարացար ներկայ ժամանակագերականաց դասը իր տարեկան շրջանին մէջ: Համագումարը գումարեց երեքշաբթի 5 փետրուար 1991ին, Ուայթընզիլի (Մասչուսեթս) Ս. Աստուածածին եկեղեցւոյ մէջ, Սրբոց Ղեւոնդեանց քանանայից տօնին առիթով:

Երկուշաբթի 4 փետրուարի երեկոյեան, արդէն ներկայ էին 18 հոգեւորականներ, որոնք հիւրընկալուեցան շրջանի Հոգեւոր Հովիւ Արք. Տ. Զարեհ Բէն. Սահակեանի տան մէջ:

Երեքշաբթի 5 փետրուարին, առաւօտեան ժամերու թիւն տեղի ունեցաւ Ս. Աստուածածին եկեղեցւոյ մէջ, որմէ ետք բոլոր ներկաները ուղղորդեան համագումարի վայրը:

Գերպ. Տ. Խածակ Ծ. Վրբ. Յակոբեան, յանուն Սրբազան Հօր՝ որ կը ժամակցէր Եկեղեցիներու Համագումարային Խորհուրդի ընդհանուր ժողովին Աւստրալիոյ մէջ, բարեկարգաւ ժողովեց ներկաներուն եւ արթթօքով բացուած յայտարարեց համագումարը:

Համագումարը ընտրեց իր դիւանը հետեւեալ կազմով՝ Հոգ. Տ. Նարեկ Վրբ. Ալեմէնզեան, ատենապետ, եւ Արք. Տ. Նարեկ Բէն. Փենչիկեան, ատենապետ:

Ատենապետ Հայր Սուրբը իր շնորհակալական խօսքը արտասանելէ ետք, անցաւ օրուայ յայտարարի գործադրութեան: Յայտարարի մաս կը կազմէին 3 դասախօսութիւններ, «Տանաքանեայ պատուիրանները հին կտակարանի շրջագծին մէջ» Արք. Տ. Զարեհ Բէն. Սահակեան, «Տանաքանեայ պատուիրանները նոր կտակարանեան մեկնաբանութեամբ» Արք. Տ. Մեսրոպ Ա. Բէն. Քաշ-ճեան, «Տանաքանեայ պատուիրանները 20րդ դարու ընկերութեան մէջ» Արք. Տ. Արմէն Բէն. Իշխանեան:

Երեք դասախօս քահանայ հայրերը բժականորէն ուսումնասիրեցին Պատարագ մատուցուեցաւ Անմահ Պատարագ

Book Review
Songs of Bread, Songs of Salt
 Diana Der Hovanesian
 New York, NY, Ashod Press, 1990.

Reviewed by Pierre Papazian

"Songs of Bread, Songs of Salt" is the latest collection of Diana Der Hovanesian's poems. The author of almost a dozen books of poetry and translations, Ms. Der Hovanesian has won various national and international awards for her work. A recent article in the *Boston Globe* referred to her as "the foremost translator of Armenian poetry." In the Armenian American community, she could also very well be called "la premiere poète" for she is without doubt the foremost Armenian poet working in the English language. While well-known among Armenians and a fair-sized group of non-Armenian poetry cognoscenti, she certainly deserves much wider recognition for her imaginative and creative poetry.

The bread and salt in the title are the traditional ingredients of the common welcoming ceremony of the Armenians, although other cultures also use bread and salt for the same purpose. Two of the five sections of the collection are entitled "Songs of Bread" and "Songs of Salt." The other three are "Horses on the Roof," "Snow Dream," and "Fire Dream." Throughout most of her poems, there are allusions and references to things Armenian, most of which will be lost on the "odiar" reader, and certainly some of which will be lost even on the Armenian reader, e.g., in her poem "How to Become an Armenian":

*to remain Armenian means using
 pen, plough and sword."*

Many Armenian readers may not even recognize the symbolism, let alone understand it. Even when there is no overt reference to things Armenian, the reader who has any knowledge of the Armenians and their history must often stop to wonder whether the phrase or verse cloaks some historical or personal statement on the Armenian condition.

The persistent evocation of her Armenian roots in her poetry certainly makes Diana Der Hovanesian as much of an Armenian poet as an American poet with New England roots. Some would argue that an Armenian poet must write in the

SONGS OF BREAD, SONGS OF SALT IS AVAILABLE AT THE PRELACY BOOKSTORE

Ս. Աստուածածին եկեղեցւոյ մէջ: Օրուան պատարագին էր Արք. Տ. Խորէն Բէն. Հապէշեան: Ս. խորան էին պատարակեցին Արք. Տ. Քորդաքան Ա. Բէն. Յակոբեան եւ Արք. Տ. Նարեկ Բէն. Փենչիկեանեան:

Ս. Պատարագի երգեցողութիւնը կատարեցին քահանայ հայրերը: Օրուան պատարագը տուաւ պատարագիէ քահանայ հայրը, երկու լեզուներով, անդրադարձաւ լով Ղեւոնդեանց եւ Վարդանանց նահատակութեան խորհուրդին, հայ եկեղեցւոյ գոյատեւման եւ պահպանման:

Անմահայնի օր մը քահանայ հայրերուն համար, որը տանին մէկ անգամ իրար մօտ կը բերք ժողովուրդի ծառայ հոգեւորականաց դասը, առիթ մը սաղով անոնց բաժնեկից լլալալու ցաւերու եւ ուրախութեանց եւ միանոք աշխատանք տանելու Հայաստանեայց Կաթողիկոսական Ս. Եկեղեցւոյ բարօրութեան համար:

Armenian language, but they are making the mistake of concentrating on the English words and missing the emotional, lyrical, and artistic impulses that transcend the language. Indeed, at times Ms. Der Hovanesian herself doubts her own identity. In the poem "At Khoji Vank" she refers to herself as "your step daughter from America. . ." in effect breaking the blood line that links her to the Armenian heroes whose name she invokes at the head of the poem. Again she doubts her Armenian identity in the poem "In My Dream" when she ends with the lines:

*I woke, washed, and looked in the glass.
 Only another American dressed in fine
 clothes.*

Yet the persistent theme that pervades the poems confirms her resolute adherence to her people and her ancestors. She is not a step daughter from America, but a true daughter from America.

While I have been reading Ms. Der Hovanesian's poetry for many years, I must confess that at times I still find the form of her poems jarring. Having been educated in the more rigid and stylized forms of the French poets from Ronsard and du Bellay to Rimbaud and Verlaine, I have to shift literary gears to read modern poetry. However, the only device I really object to in Ms. Der Hovanesian's poems is the hyphenation of a word at the end of a line in order to create a rhyme or to achieve a particular rhythm, as in "On Commonwealth Avenue" or in "Snow in Yerevan."

Diana Der Hovanesian is to be commended for her poetic accomplishments. "Songs of Bread, Songs of Salt" is a welcome addition to her other publications. I recommend that everyone read this collection and then get hold of previously published collections of her poetry. I must also congratulate Ashod Press for publishing Ms. Der Hovanesian's works. If William Saroyan was Armenia's gift to America in the field of prose, Diana Der Hovanesian is Armenia's gift to America in the field of poetry. ■

Not Bread

"What can you do with poems?
 They are not bread."—Vahan Tekeyan

No, not bread.
 But bread or seed
 will leave the caged bird
 starved
 when sky is what he needs.

And bread for us became,
 in times of loss,
 more than flour and
 leavening
 stamped with the cross.

Not bread, not bread,
 but pieces of the sky.
 What they did
 was help us fly.

Diana Der Hovanesian
 from *Songs of Bread, Songs of Salt*

Was The Last Supper A Passover Meal?

(Continued from page 6)

third day. Wednesday was the fourth day; Thursday the fifth day, and Friday was the Passover Day. John insists that Friday was the Preparation Day. According to this reckoning, Thursday was the Preparation Day and not Friday, which corresponds to the Synoptic accounts in contrast to his own account. This contradictory evidence is enough to demonstrate that the Synoptic account is correct and that the Last Supper was a Passover Meal.

Many scholars have tried to harmonize the two accounts suggesting miscalculation on the lunar system, a one day difference which divided the Judean and the Galilean calendar, etc.

A new theory developed by a French scholar, Annie Jaubert, offered in her book *The Date of the Last Supper*, is the most refreshing and provocative theory ever offered. Jaubert asserts that during Christ's lifetime two different calendars were used to determine the dates of the festive days. The old priestly calendar, observed by the mass, was three days ahead of the official calendar which was observed by Temple officials and also by the Jewish Diaspora. In this case Jesus ate the Passover on Tuesday evening and was crucified on Friday, the Preparation Day, according to the official calendar.¹⁴ If we accept Jaubert's theory, then both the Johannine and Synoptic accounts are justified. But still, there remains John's contention that the Last Supper was not a Passover Meal. Or he did not share Jesus' opinion about the old priestly calendar.

Astronomy cannot render any help in this respect, since we do not know the exact date of Christ's crucifixion. There is also the possibility that there was a miscalculation on the part of Jews that made them celebrate the Passover not on the exact date, namely, 15th of Nisan.

In the light of the above findings, this writer concludes that the traditional view of the Church that the Last Supper was a Passover Meal, must be held as valid until new discoveries shed enough light on the subject.

NOTES

1. Annie Jaubert, *The Date of the Last Supper* (Staten Island, N.Y., Alba House, 1965), p. 95.
2. Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), pp. 15-17.
3. Jaubert, p. 95.
4. Jeremias, pp. 27-29.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-36.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
11. Jaubert, p. 96.
12. Jeremias, p. 76.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
14. Jaubert, pp. 95-100.

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Giving is Receiving: The third in a series of articles

Charitable Trusts: Part II Choosing a Trustee

by Rosilyn H. Overton, CFP

Once you have decided to set up a charitable trust, one of the most important decisions you will make is who to choose as a trustee. In our previous article, Hasmig and Nerces Sarkissian were facing this decision. Before they make up their mind, they need to know what the job of the trustee will be.

The trustee's job is to distribute the income to the donors for as long as they live, to invest the money prudently and in accordance with the regulations, and to distribute the remainder to the charity when the beneficiaries of the trust have passed away. Obviously, the trustee is a very important person to you if you are the donor, and the selection of a trustee is critical to you being satisfied with your trust.

The trustee should have some knowledge of investments, or the advice of an experienced investment advisor. Although by law, the trustee only has to handle the money carefully, most donors want a trustee that they can talk to about how the investments are being handled and who has some expertise. The law specifies that most of the assets can be invested in income producing securities such as CDs, municipal bonds, U.S. Treasury bonds, etc. However, about 30% must go into stocks, since stocks give the best return over the years, and thus protect the charity from being left with nothing.

Personal trust is also important. Some people like a bank to be the trustee, while others prefer someone with a more personal interest in their welfare. Although a family member is not recommended due to certain tax and legal problems, a lifelong friend can be a good choice. A friend chosen for such an important role tends to take the job very seriously. Many people choose their attorney or a bank officer, but most attorneys do not have any investment training, and neither an attorney nor the bank will have the personal interest in your welfare that a good friend will. It isn't a good idea to choose a stockbroker or financial planner. While they are certainly knowledgeable about the investments, conflicts of interest can arise. It is better to choose a friend and suggest that the stockbroker or financial planner be consulted for advice.

Another reason for choosing a friend is that both attorneys and banks charge high fees for handling trusts. While your friend should be given something for his or her time and trouble, generally they will expect less compensation than a bank. For small trusts, 1 to 1½% is appropriate. As the trust gets larger, ½ to 1% is more appropriate. Usually the trustee's fee is paid out of the income of the trust.

The Sarkissians discuss who among their friends would be the best trustee. They decide it should be someone a little younger than they are, since they want to make sure that he or she will still be vigorous and capable of handling the trust for as long as the Sarkissians live. Hasmig suggests Janice Papazian, who has been their next door neighbor for 30 years, and who has handled her husband's life insurance money very well ever since she was widowed during the Vietnam War, educating her three children and living well. Nerces likes his friend Vahan Krikorian, who has been a successful businessman in their community, and is very smart about money. They decide to ask Mr. Krikorian first, and if he accepts, to then ask Mrs. Pa-

pazian to be the alternate, in case anything happens to Mr. Krikorian.

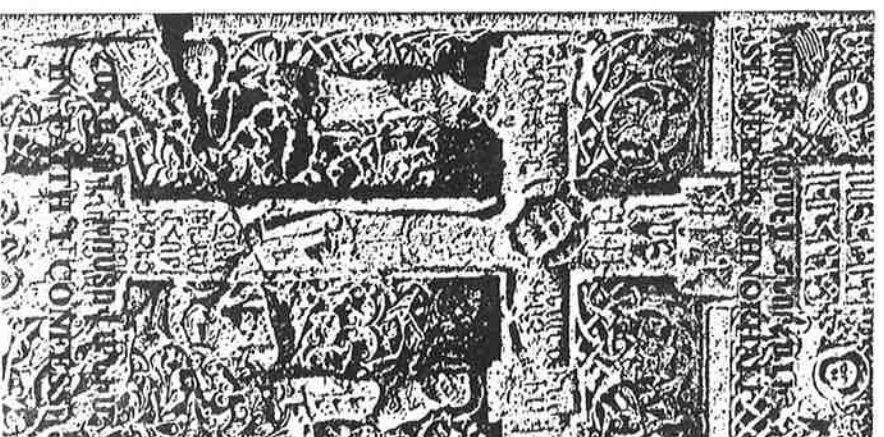
Mr. Sarkissian calls Mr. Krikorian and asks him to lunch. At lunch, he broaches the subject of the trust. Mr. Krikorian agrees, and Mr. Sarkissian calls his wife

and tells her to make an appointment with the attorney to draw up the trust. Next time, Nerces and Hasmig will make some decision about the kind of trust that they want, and how much income they will take.

Rosilyn H. Overton, CFP is a partner in Brown & Overton, a comprehensive financial planning and investment advisory firm known for its expertise in charitable giving and retirement plans. She is a Certified Financial Planner, holds a M.S. in Economics from Wright State University in Ohio. She has been named *Business Woman of the Year* in New York City and is Vice President—Communications of the New York Chapter of the International Association for Financial Planning. She has written numerous articles on finance, pensions, and insurance, and has appeared as an expert in financial planning on the Financial News Network, the CBS Morning News, and other television talk shows. If you have any specific questions about anything discussed in these "Giving is Receiving" articles, you may write to Ms. Overton at 20 Exchange Place, New York, NY 10005, 212-635-0633.



The subject of Charitable Trusts is complex, so this article explains only the barest essentials. If you find the information intriguing, you can contact the Armenian Prelacy, 138 East 39th St., New York, New York 10016, or your local Church office for more detailed brochures about Charitable Trusts or the previous topic, Charitable Annuities.



ՄԻՆԻՄ ԵՐԵՄԻՅՈՒ ԵՆՈՐՀԱԼԻ ՍՏ. ՆԵՐՏԵՍ ՏՆՈՐՀԱԼԻ ՀԱՒԱՏՈՂ ԱՆԽԻՍ IN FAITH I CONFESS

The prayer, "In Faith I Confess," by St. Nerses Shnorhali has been reprinted in a new edition which provides the classical Armenian, modern Armenian, English transliteration and English translation of each of the 24 verses. The prayer is a source of strength, comfort and guidance. This pocket-size edition should be in every home and at the **low price of \$3.00** you should have several for other members of the family.

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