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Outreach

Հրատարակութիւն Ամերիկահայոց Արեւելեան Թեմի Ազգային Առաջնորդարանի
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Prelacy Begins Campaign for Holiday Food Parcels For Needy Families in Armenia and Artsakh

AREC/ANEC Begin Campaign to Aid Disabled Children

The Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America has launched a Christmas campaign for gifts for handicapped, disabled and homeless youngsters in Armenia and Artsakh. Realizing that this segment of Armenians is generally overlooked, Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian, the Prelate, has taken steps to insure that each of these youngsters will receive a gift for Christmas.

According to a report issued by the "Save the Children" foundation which was released early this year, there are nearly 7,000 children from infancy to age 18 who are currently in 43 institutions in Armenia and Artsakh. According to Save the Children, all of these institutions are in dire need for help. Upon being informed about the report and the state of these institutions, Archbishop Ashjian immediately began to seek ways of helping and has been successful in finding some private donors. He is continuing his efforts to find individuals who will support one or more child on an ongoing basis and an intensive campaign toward this goal is being implemented.

With the coming of the holiday season, His Eminence asked the Prelacy's two Education Departments (Armenian Religious Education Council and Armenian National Education Council) to launch a gift package campaign for these needy and disabled youngsters so that every child will have a gift for Christmas. In addition, AREC/ANEC is requesting that schools in the United States and Canada jointly "adopt" one of these schools/institutions as a year-round project.

The AREC/ANEC campaign entails shipping gift packages that will contain appropriate gifts, according to age, such as notebook, paper, crayons, pens, pencils, sweets, etc., along with food staples. The cost of each package, including shipping, is \$25. The children's campaign will be in conjunction with the greater food for Armenia campaign, "A Gift of Life" which the Prelacy launched several weeks ago.

AREC/ANEC is also encouraging the writing of letters between school children in Armenia and the United States and Canada. A letter will be placed in each gift package and it is hoped that it will be the beginning of a regular pen-pal movement.

An appeal is also being directed to businessmen and corporations for in-kind donations of goods and materials, such as, school supplies, candy, etc. For additional information about this aspect please contact the AREC/ANEC representatives at the Prelacy, (212) 689-7810. ■

This Holiday Season Give



FOOD PARCELS FOR ARMENIANS

Each parcel contains: 6 lbs. rice; 6 lbs. sugar; 5 lbs. bulghur; 5 lbs. macaroni; 5 lbs. lentils; 5 lbs. white beans; 6 lbs. powdered milk; 3 lbs. margarine.
Cost of each parcel, including transportation, is only \$25.00.

ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԱՌԱՋՆՈՐԴԱՐԱՆԻ ՆԱԽԱԶԵՌՆՈՒԹԵԱՄԲ ԿԱՊՈՑՆԵՐՈՒ ԱՌԱՔՈՒՄ ԴԵՊՈՒ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆ

Ցառաջիկայ տօներուն առթիւ Ազգային Առաջնորդարանը ձեռնարկած է 7000 կապոցի առաքում ղէպի Հայաստան եւ Արցախ: Ըստ Ազգային Առաջնորդարանի մարմիններուն, կապոցները պիտի անձնապէս յանձնուին ամենէն շատ կարիք ունեցող ընտանիքներուն, յատկապէս թոշակառուներուն եւ բազմանդամ երախտներու տէր ընտանիքներուն:

Ստորեւ Առաջնորդ Տ. Մեսրոպ Սրբազանի կողմէ, որ ուղղութեամբ եկեղեցիներուն եւ անհատ ազգայիններուն:

Սիրելի Հայորդիք,

Հայաստանի մէջ հունձքի եղանակը վերջացած է եւ ձմրան ամիսները արդէն կը զգացնեն իրենց գոյութիւնը: Եւ, 1992-93-ի ձմեռը, ըստ երեւոյթին, անցեալ տարուէն աւելի խիստ պիտի ըլլայ եւ դժուար: Օրինակի համար՝ ուժանիւթի չգոյութիւնը տագնապալի է, ինչպէս նաեւ պարզ ժողովուրդին համար անհրաժեշտ սնունդի մատակարարութիւնը: Հոկտեմբեր 15-ին Հայաստանի կառավարութիւնը հացի բաշխումին համար հաստատեց կտրօնի դրու-

թիւնը: Նոյն կառավարական աղբիւրներու համաձայն, հացը կը մնայ ժողովուրդի մէկ լայն զանգուածին սնունդի միակ աղբիւրը:

Այստեղ, Միացեալ Նահանգներու եւ Գանատայի մէջ, հակառակ մեր տնտեսական հարցերուն, օրհնուած ենք առատութեամբ: Մեզմէ ոչ ոք ինկած է չտաքած տան մը մէջ բնակելու եւ խոնաւ ցորտին ղէմ յանդիման ապրելու կացութեան մէջ: Մեզմէ ոչ ոք անօթութեան արհաւիրքը կը զգայ: Միւս կողմէ, գիտենք որ մեր շուրջ միլիոնաւոր սորաբներ կը ծախսուին «նիհարնալու» յատուկ յայտագիրներու վրայ:

«Գոհաբանութեան Օր»ը եւ Ծըննդեան տօնը շուտով կը հասնին: Այսօր կը գրեմ ձեզի, խնդրելու համար որ «Կենաց Ընծայ» մը բերէք հայ տան մը, եւ օգնէք մեզի, որ Ամանորի եւ Ծննդեան տօներուն առթիւ Հայաստան եւ Արցախ ուղարկենք ուտելիքի ծրարներ: Ձե՛նք կրնար ձեռնածալ նստիլ, երբոր գիտենք որ հարիւր հազարաւոր ազգակիցներ անօթութեան եւ վատ սննդառութեան վախով կ'ապրին: շար. էջ 2

Editor's Note

A front page story in the September issue of OUTREACH about Mr. and Mrs. Varujan Burmaian's support for the Nor Kharpet Center for Children in Yerevan, should have specified that the one million dollars presented to Armenia's Fund for Foreign Affairs by Mr. Burmaian was on behalf of the Armenian community in Brazil. ■

The Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America has announced a campaign to send 7,000 food parcels during the holiday season to Armenia and Artsakh. The food parcels will be distributed to the neediest families, especially the elderly and families with young children. Armenian authorities along with Prelacy representatives will oversee the distribution of the food packages.

The following appeal by Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian has been mailed to the community for the "A Gift of Life" campaign:

Dear Fellow Armenian:

The harvest is over and the winter months have begun in Armenia. The 1992-93 winter, from all indications, is expected to be even more severe and more cruel than the last. If anything, the shortage of fuel has gotten more critical, as has the availability of food for the general population. On October 15 the Armenian government announced the rationing of bread. According to government sources, bread is the only available source of sustenance for a large segment of the Armenian population.

Here in the United States and Canada, even with our economic problems, we are blessed with all the necessities of life and more. None of us has been in the position to feel the damp coldness of an unheated house; none of us has known the pangs of hunger. How ironic that in our society millions of dollars are spent each year on weight reduction plans!

The holiday season of Thanksgiving and Christmas will be upon us soon. I am writing to you today to ask you to give a "Gift of Life" to an Armenian family by helping us send food parcels to Armenia and Artsakh in time for Christmas and the New Year. We cannot stand by and do nothing as hundreds of thousands of our brothers and sisters face the prospect of hunger and malnutrition.

Each parcel will contain staples such as: rice, sugar, bulghur, macaroni, lentils, white beans, powdered milk, and margarine.

The cost of each parcel is \$20.00, with another \$5.00 for transportation. In other words, the final cost for each parcel is \$25.00

Our immediate goal is to raise enough funds for 7,000 parcels of which 5,000 will be sent to Armenia and 2,000 to Artsakh. We are requesting that donations be received at the very latest by the Sunday before Thanksgiving, so that our parcels will reach their destination in time for Christmas and the New Year.

We are turning to you once again. You have already done so much good through your support of the Prelacy's efforts that we hesitate to ask you again. But we must. The need is so great and the alternatives are totally unacceptable. Let us

(Continued on page 2)

From the Editor . . .

The following "Letter from Armenia" was written by Dr. Vartiter Kotcholian Hovannisian, who has taken a four-month leave from her practice in California to assist with medical needs of the Armenian Republic. She will remain in Armenia through January, 1993. Dr. Hovannisian's words are far more poignant than anything I could write to urge you to support our community's efforts to send aid to Armenia and Artsakh. It does not matter through which fund, which church, which organization. Just do it. And do it now.

A Letter from Armenia . . .

This is a hasty letter to be shared with whoever might be interested. Since my arrival in Armenia a few weeks ago, I had the painful "privilege" of experiencing a wide spectrum of life in this landlocked, seemingly forsaken corner of the world. The capital itself is in the throes of a definitive struggle for survival. People no longer complain about the irregular availability of water. The current fuel shortage, constant disruption of electrical current, the capricious appearance of gas, and now the ever-growing bread lines, and exorbitant prices of the "open market economy" have created a mass of have-nots and, at the other extreme, a class that can afford everything and anything. And winter is impatiently knocking at the door.

There is no need to repeat the sad situation of healthcare, of malnutrition, especially of the children and elderly. When I revisited the earthquake disaster zone, I was greeted by stark reality. In spite of all the good work by non-governmental organizations and by good people, no widescale changes have occurred. Of this I shall write at another time.

Perhaps difficult to believe, but I have, in fact, just witnessed something beyond the scope of the earthquake tragedy—when I traveled to Mountainous Karabagh (Artsakh) with the team of Baroness Caroline Cox. Karabagh is truly God's paradise—a word not used lightly or in vain—with people clinging to their homeland of millennia. Imagine a city, the capital Stepanakert, in the midst of a land being overflowed by MIG and SU bombers, dropping bombs indiscriminately on the civilian population at any given moment. Imagine the destruction by GRAD missiles of the city and of the villages—those amazing villages which, only with a brief respite, continue the traditional labors of ploughing, planting and reaping, grazing livestock. Many of these villages have been plundered, massacred, and destroyed, forcing thousands of survivors into the precarious existence of refugees. The proud towers of an ancient land are crammed into public buildings and camps, into water tanks turned into dwellings, with barely a blanket to cover them.

The only barriers between life and death are the selfless young men and women in the trenches, on the front lines, where heavy Russian armaments are raining down on them and the civilian population. The roads are almost impassable, having been left undeveloped by the Azerbaijani government, and torn up by tanks and missiles.

There are refugees throughout the land. In one of the settlements we visited with Baroness Cox, we met some sixty families from the once prosperous village of Verin Shen in the Shahumian region. In June they were told to leave the village at once and had to flee with only the clothes on their backs. Those who could not escape were cut to pieces and others died during the retreat. Now they live in abject misery, pleading not so much for help as the means to return to their homes.

The odds and the imbalance are great. Only the steadfastness of the defenders is maintaining the quest for life. In fact, the population that has been living in basement shelters for four years is coming out, once more trying to achieve a degree of normalcy. Stepanakert, with more than 50,000 inhabitants, has some 2,000 children in ten schools with no windows

or heat but with dedicated teachers and a high level of achievement. These are children who have been deprived of basic nutrition and a taste of sweets for four years and who continue to bear the physical and psychological impact of the unceasing warfare.

It is essential to create public and international pressure to bring about intervention to end the aerial bombings, the missile attacks, and the threat of wholesale genocide. The defenders need to be helped without discrimination to meet their basic necessities, including shoes, gloves, warm water-resistant clothing, binoculars, and other equipment. The survival of the civilian population must become a foremost objective—this with food, especially powdered milk and sugar, electrical hotplates, shelter, and social services. The United Nations and other agencies must be pressured to extend humanitarian and refugee assistance.

The medical needs are equally great. Traumatologists are needed critically in Karabagh, and there is a chronic shortage of surgeons to handle the daily cases of battlefield wounds and bombing and artillery casualties. I-V plasma exponents, electrolyte solutions, dialysis lines, and bandages are in short supply and running out. The Stepanakert hospital requires surgical instruments, sutures, bandages, antiseptics, sterilizing solutions, antibiotic ointments, and non-narcotic analgesics.

Scabies is becoming commonplace, as a third of the fighters and much of the civilian population is afflicted with the condition. Topical preparations are needed to deal with this problem. Stepanakert is in dire need of two ambulances, even used ones, with a four-patient capacity. These can be purchased relatively inexpensively in Europe.

Finally, a personal note to all my friends and acquaintances. We have often spoke of donations we have given in the past and have asked repeatedly who might have benefited from our magnanimity. Other have been waiting for a "better, more certain time." It is time to end our incidental "Good Samaritan" handouts that allow us to clean our closets of unwanted items and to feel good about it. The time has come to give with a little pain in the heart. Imagine your child, husband, wife, father, or mother in the predicament of the people of Karabagh and the forlorn refugees still dreaming of a return to their native village.

Miracles can be performed simply by curbing our extravaganzas and in the spirit of Christmas donating an ambulance, a road-paving machine, a few generators. In the place of expensive gift wraps, we can give hope to thousands of refugees and to the brave men and women in the trenches. If we do not meet this call, the greeting "Merry Christmas and Peace on Earth" will ring hollow and hypocritical.

The struggling people of Armenia and Artsakh have put their lives at risk. They wait with hope and anticipation for the response of the Armenian Diaspora.

Vartiter Kotcholian Hovannisian, M.D.
Armenia Hotel Lobby, Yerevan
October 27, 1992, 9:40 p.m.

My grandfather once told me that there are two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was less competition there.

INDIRA GANDHI

Prelacy Inaugurates Campaign

(Continued from page 1)



remember the words of our Lord and Saviour, "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded." (Luke 12:48)

The very existence of the Armenian Republic, in large measure, depends on us. Please look over the enclosed card and decide now how many food parcels you can sponsor. Remember, we must make all of our arrangements at the very latest by Thanksgiving so that the parcels will arrive in time.

It is impossible to exaggerate the severity of the situation. The parcels of food will provide not only nourishment but the sustenance of knowing that there are people who care and are prepared to help. Every attempt has been made to assure that the food parcels will reach the most needy, especially the elderly and

children. For example, a retired person receives a pension of 600 rubles a month, which is approximately \$2.50, and there are many children whose fathers have been wounded or killed in the Artsakh struggle, leaving the families without livelihood. These are the types of families that the food parcels will reach.

Please make your Gift of Life immediately.

Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian

Donations for the food parcels can be sent to the Armenian Prelacy, 138 E. 39th Street, New York, NY 10016. Checks should be payable to the Armenian Apostolic Church of America.

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շաբ. էջ 1-էն

Իւրաքանչիւր տուփ պիտի պարու- նակէ հետեւեալ սննդեղէնները՝ բը- ըրինձ, շաքար, ձաւար, մաքարոնի, ոսպ, ճերմակ լուբիա, փոշի կաթ եւ մարճըրին: Ներփակեալ քարտը կուտայ իւրաքանչիւր ապրանքի քանակը: Ամէն մէկ տուփ պիտի արժէ քան տուր, 5 տուր պի պի- տի ծախսուի օգտին փոխադրու- թեան համար: Այլ խօսքով՝ իւրա- քանչիւր տուփ պիտի արժէ 25 տուր:

Մեր անմիջական նպատակն է 7000 տուփ ուղարկելու համար գումար մը ապահովել: 5000 տուփ պիտի յատ- կացուի Հայաստանին, 2000-ը Արցա- խին: Մեր փախաքն է որ գումարը հաւաքուած ըլլայ ամենէն ուշը Գոհարանական Օրուան նախորդող Կիրակի օրը, Նոյեմբեր 22-ին, որ պէսպի տուփերը իրենց տէրերուն հասած ըլլան նոր տարուան եւ Միտունդի օրերուն:

Անգամ մը եւս ձեզի կը դիմենք: Արդէն միջնէ հիմա շատ էք օգներ, Առաջնորդարանի տարբեր տարբեր ծրագիրներուն մէջէն: Բայց ստիպ- ւած ենք: Կարիքը մեծ է եւ այլ ուղի չկայ: Յիշենք մեր Տիրոջ եւ Փրկչին խօսքերը. «Որուն շատ տրուած է, անկէ շատ պիտի խնդրուի: Որուն շատ վստահուած է, անկէ շատ աւելի պիտի պահանջուի» (Ղուկաս 12.48):

Հայաստանի գոյութիւնն իսկ խնդրոյ առարկայ է, եւ կարեւոր չափով մըն ալ մենք պատասխա- նատուութիւն ունինք: Հաճեցէք աչքէ անցընել ներփակեալ քարտը եւ որոշեցէք թէ քանի՞ տուփ կրնաք ուղարկել, Հայաստան: Բայց գիտցէք, որ մենք բոլոր կարգադրութիւնները պէտք է ըրած ըլլանք միջնէ Նոյեմբերի վերջը, ապահովելու համար ձեր նուէրներուն առաքումը Ամանորէն առաջ:

Կարելի չէ նկարագրել ահաւոր կացութիւնը: Ձեր նուէրը ոչ միայն

անունը պիտի հայթայթէ՝ այլ աւելի կարեւոր բան մը պիտի ըսէ մեր հայրենակիցներուն՝ կան մարդիկ որոնք կը մտածեն, կը հոգան եւ պատրաստ են օգնելու: Մենք ջանք չենք խնայած որպէսզի այդ տու- փերը հասնին անոնց՝ որոնք ամենէն աւելի կարիքի մէջ են, յատկապէս ծերերն ու մանուկները: Երեւա- կայեցէք, հազարաւոր հանգրստեան կոչուած ծերեր կան, որոնք պե- տութեանէն ամսական կը ստանան 600 ուրբլի, որ այսօր կ'արժէ մօտ 2.50 տուր...: Եւ յետոյ կան երախաները, անոնք՝ որոնց հայրերը վերա- ւորուեցան եւ կամ մահը գտան Արցախի բարձունքներուն վրայ, պաշտպանելու համար մեր հայրենի հողը, եւ սակայն իրենց ընտանիք- ները թողուցին անհաց: Ահա թէ որոնց պիտի հասնի ձեր նուէրը:

Հաճեցէք ձեր նուէրը հասցնել անմիջապէս:

Անկեղծ շնորհակալութեամբ եւ աղօթքով

Մերոպ Արքեպիսկոպոս Աշճեան Առաջնորդ

Message to Clinton

Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian sent the following message to President-Elect Bill Clinton immediately following the presidential elections:

"Congratulations on your impressive victory. We pray that almighty God will grant you guidance and courage as you assume leadership of our great country and the world community. Please know that our prayers are with you at all times."

Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian
Prelate, Armenian Apostolic
Church of America

OUTREACH

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Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian, Prelate
Mardiros Minas-Haftvani, Managing Editor

Iris Papazian, Editor

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Bishop of Brooklyn is Honored by Prelacy

Bishop Thomas Vose Daily, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Brooklyn, was honored at a reception hosted by Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian, Prelate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, on Friday, October 30.

Gathered at the Prelacy's V & H Hovnanian Hall were clergymen of various denominations along with Armenian clergymen, community leaders and individuals who came to pay their respects to Bishop Daily who was installed as the sixth Bishop of Brooklyn in April 1990. For several hours guests enjoyed the informal atmosphere while savoring the many Armenian delicacies prepared by the Prelacy Ladies Guild.

The short formal program was expertly guided by Dean Hratch Zadoyan of Queens College who welcomed the guests to the Prelacy and then invited Professor Thomas Byrd, a professor at Queens College and frequent lecturer at the Prelacy, who spoke briefly about the Armenian Apostolic and Catholic Churches. Dean Zadoyan then introduced Massachusetts' Judge Sarkis Teshoian, a past chairman of the Prelacy's Executive Council, who made some introductory remarks about the Bishop. Judge Teshoian noted that although the Brooklyn Diocese, which is made up of Brooklyn and Queens, is one of the smallest dioceses in square miles, it is one of the largest in population. Born in Belmont, Massachusetts, Bishop Daily attended public schools there and received his higher education at Boston College and at St. John's Seminary in Brighton. He was ordained on January 10, 1952, in Boston by the late Richard Cardinal Cushing. Bishop Daily served the Boston Diocese with distinction in various capacities until 1984 when he was appointed to lead the Diocese of Palm Beach in Florida.

Speaking to the assembled guests, Bishop Daily thanked Archbishop Ashjian for the gracious invitation and said, "To be honored at this reception makes me feel so unworthy, but I want you to know that I am deeply grateful especially because of my long association with the Armenian Apostolic Church in Boston, particularly in Watertown, Massachusetts, and the Mekhitarist, and the late beloved Father Luke Arakelian of that community who did so much for all Armenians, especially new Armenian arrivals in New England."

Citing events in Armenian church history and names of some of its early leaders, the Bishop then came to more recent times saying, "Who could not be moved by the great struggles borne by the Church in Armenia to maintain its integrity and its existence despite wars and natural disasters, and in our own time the terrible massacre of 1.5 million Armenians murdered by Turkish forces and then, in the lives of many of us, Stalinism and the decimation of so many Armenians, especially the elite, the educated, the artists and the writers who for so long gave life to Armenian culture."

Bishop Daily praised the courage and spirit of the Armenian people who were able to "continue to survive and continue to recall their great culture as seen through their art and architecture, their Christian literature which is so rich in historical works, and for us most of all through liturgical celebrations which not only bring the people together, but hold them together in faith that is proven to be unconquerable."

Thanking Archbishop Ashjian once more, the Bishop stressed the importance of dialogue and "to associate with one another, to recall our common bonds and our real differences through prayer." Acknowledging that the road ahead is "sure to be long, arduous and not without pain, but," the Bishop added, "the ultimate union will be all the more delicious and savory, all the more enjoyable and inspiring, all the more gracious and full of life."

The evening's formal portion concluded with remarks by Archbishop Ashjian



Judge Sarkis Teshoian (at podium) welcomes Bishop Thomas Daily on behalf of Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian. Seen in photo, left to right, are Dean Hratch Zadoyan, Judge Teshoian, Gagig Hovagimian, a former deputy in Iranian Parliament, Archbishop Ashjian and Bishop Daily.

Photo by KANTZABED

who spoke of Bishop Daily's memorable installation service. The Archbishop said witnessing the service was a "moving, and great experience." He noted that he was very impressed by the words of greetings that Bishop Daily directed to the Protestant, Eastern Orthodox and Jewish religious leaders attending the installation service. "As he began his ministry in this great diverse city, Bishop Daily was reaching out in the true spirit of ecumenism and assuring us that there is so much to be accomplished together."

Speaking about the ecumenical movement the Archbishop said, "We tend to speak of the ecumenical movement as though it were something new, but in truth, it is as old as Christianity itself, as related in the Gospel of John in Chapter 17. Speaking about the apostles and their followers, Christ prays to His Father, 'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. . . so that the world may believe that you have sent me.'"

Archbishop Ashjian recalled how since the early sixties when Pope John XXIII invited observers from the Orthodox Churches to attend the Second Vatican Council, relations between the two churches have steadily improved."

Speaking about the current situation

the Archbishop described how new tensions have arisen. "With political freedom in Armenia came religious freedom bringing about what many call a new crisis." The Archbishop said he is firmly convinced that "it is only through meaningful discussion and cooperation that we can assist our brothers and sisters overseas who are reawakening after a long spiritual sleep." He recalled the words of the late Catholicos Zareh I, "Today it is not the form of the faith that is in question; today the faith itself is at stake."

"It is that faith which we must act to preserve and I believe that the Church in the free world has a great obligation to assist the established churches in spreading the message to the people," the Archbishop concluded.

With the end of the formal program, the Prelate presented Bishop Daily with a gift saying, "I am truly honored to bestow upon you this cross lovingly crafted in the Armenian motif. I hope you will bear it as you bear the yoke of our Lord."

Bishop Daily thankfully accepted the beautiful cross and closed with, "Your Eminence, may God grant you many years. Please know you have my prayers and remembrances in the liturgy even as I beg yours for me and our people." ■

Gold Medalist Visits Prelacy



Archbishop Ashjian with guests: Gold medalist, Menazagan Iskandarian and his coach Gorin Movsesian.

Menazagan Iskandarian, the Armenian Republic's first Olympic gold-medal winner, visited Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian at the Prelacy offices. Mr. Iskandarian, who won the medal in wrestling, was accompanied by his trainer/coach, Mr. Gorin Movsesian and Mr. Setrak Agonian, a member of the U.S. Olympic Committee and ardent supporter of the Armenian Olympic Committee.

His Eminence honored his guests with a luncheon and recalled how many Armenians shed tears of joy when the gold medal was presented to Mr. Iskandarian, as the Armenian tricolors were raised and the strains of the national anthem, *Mer Hairenik*, filled the auditorium.

During the luncheon, the Prelate asked the 25-year-old athlete what thoughts went through his head at that moment. He replied, "I started to cry. And through my tears I saw a vision of my home and Homeland."

Mr. Iskandarian and his trainer were in the United States to attend a wrestling demonstration in North Carolina.

The Armenian Republic was represented by five athletes in the recent Olympic games in Barcelona. The newly-independent country captured one gold medal and one silver medal, bringing great honor to a small country struggling to cope with its many problems. ■

Prelate Asks for Donations to Aid Day Schools in U.S.

Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian has issued a Christmas appeal to aid Armenian educational institutions, specifically the Day Schools on the east coast.

As he did last year, His Eminence has issued a letter encouraging Armenian Americans to reduce the expenditure on Christmas cards and gifts and to donate this sum to one or more of the Armenian day schools in the area.

The following is the Archbishop's appeal: Dear Fellow Armenian:

Last year about this time I wrote to you about the approaching holiday season, the joyous celebration of the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

At that time, I very candidly shared with you my growing concern about the ever-increasing commercialization of this Christian holiday, noting that instead of concentrating on the single most important event that changed the world, we spend most of our time in stores shopping for gifts. I told you then that while gift-giving as a token of love is a wonderful gesture, the numbers of gifts and their monetary value have become so great that the time had come for us to set new priorities.

I am gratified that so many of you agreed with me and expressed your own frustration about the way we celebrate Christmas. A large number of you eagerly accepted my suggestion of decreasing the amount of money spent on cards, gifts, and food and contributing to one or more of our area Armenian schools. As you know, I am a great supporter of Armenian education and I feel this is a very important and appropriate way to celebrate our Lord's birthday. The Armenian schools in the Diaspora are in need of and are worthy of our support. What better time than Christmas to help educate our young generations and ensure the perpetuation of our culture and values?

The two schools on the east coast affiliated with the Armenian National Education Council are St. Illuminator's Armenian Day School in Woodside, New York, and St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School in Watertown, Massachusetts. However, as we did last year, we are asking you to send your donation to any of the day schools according to your preference. For your convenience we are listing the names and addresses of the schools on the east coast. Please take the time now to send a donation to these worthy institutions. They need and deserve our support.

St. Illuminator's Armenian Day School
69-23 47th Avenue
Woodside, New York 11377

St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School
47 Nichols Avenue
Watertown, Massachusetts 02172

Hovnanian Armenian School
817 River Road
New Milford, New Jersey 07647

Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School
209-15 Horace Harding Expressway
Bayside, New York 11364

Armenian Sisters Academy
440 Upper Gulph Road
Radnor, Pennsylvania 19087

Armenian Sisters Academy
20 Pelham Road
Lexington, Massachusetts 02173

AGBU Armenian Elementary School
465 Mount Auburn Street
Watertown, Massachusetts 02172

**The future is
purchased by
the present.**

—Samuel Johnson

Prelacy Issues Statement on "Clarification"

A "clarification" issued by the Chancery of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America which recently appeared in some sections of the Armenian press requires a reply in order to correct the record.

Originally appearing in the *Armenian Church*, the Diocese's official publication, which we are told has a circulation of 40,000, the Diocese saw fit to have the statement reprinted in the Armenian press as well, responding to "a number of requests" in order to present it to a "wider audience." This was puzzling since none of the Armenian newspapers even comes close to a circulation of 40,000.

Be that as it may, it appears that the statement made by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian during the opening of the Armenian Society's Center in New York last April makes good press, playing on the emotions of the people, and therefore will be repeated time and again without anyone questioning the motive or the substance of the statement.

On April 12, Archbishop Barsamian was invited to attend the Center's opening to read a message from His Holiness Vazken I, Catholicos of All Armenians, as was Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian to read a message from His Holiness Karekin II, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia.

Archbishop Barsamian chose to take the occasion to make a speech during which he expressed the wish that next year we would have one Primate and one Diocese in America. Understandably his words were received with jubilation. Certainly the concept of a unified church is a laudable goal and one that we sincerely hope can be realized soon. However, the Archbishop's remarks were premature, to say the least, and a disservice to our entire community which is eagerly waiting for substantive and concrete advancement towards church unity, rather than just words.

Archbishop Ashjian could have taken the easy way out and followed with his own emotional words for unity. However, in view of the insignificant progress that has taken place between the unity committees, as well as certain other incidents that have taken place, he chose to remain silent. At the Prelacy's National Representative Assembly in May, Archbishop Ashjian very candidly spoke about this. He said, "I am not afraid nor ashamed to tell you that I prefer to remain silent when there is nothing to say, rather than to constantly reiterate publicly and rhetorically declare that I want unity, that I want one diocese. Words are meaningless; deeds are important."

Archbishop Ashjian went on to state the fact that two Bishops of the Holy Etchmiadzin See visiting the United States had been told that their participation in services in a Prelacy Church, or even a mere visit, would effectively close the doors of Etchmiadzin Churches in the United States to them. The Diocesan Chancery denies this, yet in its own explanation, raises doubts when it states: "When a clergyman from abroad visits our Diocese, he usually inquires about the unique ecclesiastical situation existing here. Upon becoming aware of that situation, he is free to decide what to do and is solely responsible for his actions." If, indeed, there are no objections the topic need not even come up since Armenian clergymen worldwide, and most certainly the two Bishops involved, are well aware of the "unique ecclesiastical situation."

One of the Bishops was in fact specifically told not to participate in services in a Prelacy churches, i.e., participating in the Liturgy or delivering a sermon. The Bishop did perform the baptism for which he had travelled thousands of miles since this is considered a private event and not an "official" visit. Certainly the Prelacy is not simply making up stories, as the Chancery seems to imply, but merely repeating what the Bishops themselves related and subsequently was confirmed by other individuals who were directly involved.

The "clarification" further puzzles us since just a few months ago, following the Prelacy's NRA and the statements made by Archbishop Ashjian, Archbishop Barsamian requested to meet with Archbishop Ashjian and over dinner discussed this situation with the suggestion that in the future if such matters developed, the two clergymen should discuss it privately rather than bringing up the issues in public. Archbishop Ashjian accepted this and considered the case closed and since that time has not spoken about the incidents.

We join the Chancery of the Diocese in praying to "Almighty God that He may give our leaders the wisdom to resolve our differences, and that He will guide them to reunite the Armenian Church." We also reiterate the words of Archbishop Ashjian in his comments to the Prelacy's NRA: "I publicly extend my hand to my brothers Bishops Khajag and Hovnan and ask that we show our people through our deeds that we are united and we will remain united and our first united task will be to help Armenia become economically independent through the Pan Armenian Fund." ■

Archbishop Ashjian Honored By New York

Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian was recently honored by the Senate of the State of New York with the passing of a resolution commending the leadership and commitment of the Prelate to the Armenian Church and community.

In a letter dated October 14, 1992, and signed by Senator Serphin R. Maltese, representing Queens County, the Archbishop was presented with the Legislative Resolution. Senator Maltese wrote, "Please be assured that your dedication and devotion to your spiritual beliefs and principles have made a valuable impact in the lives of those in our community."

The Resolution acknowledges His Eminence's long years of service in the United States and says, "... it is the sense of this Legislative Body that those who give positive definition to the profile and disposition of the communities of the State of New York do so profoundly

strengthen our shared commitment to the exercise of freedom..."

After listing the many accomplishments of the Archbishop during his distinguished career in the United States and abroad, the resolution concludes: "Whereas, through his long and sustained commitment to the preservation and enhancement of human dignity, Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian has so unselfishly advanced that spirit of united purpose and shared concern which is the unalterable manifestation of our American experience; now, therefore, be it Resolved, that this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations and most joyously commend Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian, Prelate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, fully confident that such procedure mirrors our shared commitment to the efflorescence of human dignity..." ■

St. Gregory of Datev Institute Sponsors Sixth Annual Religious Studies Program



Archbishop Ashjian with staff and participants.

Fifty-five young people representing 12 communities participated in the St. Gregory of Datev Institute which took place at the St. Mary of Providence Center in Elverson, Pennsylvania, from June 25 to July 5. The teaching staff consisted of Very Rev. Anoushavan Tanielian, Director of the Institute, Very Rev. Nareg Alemejian, Rev. Dr. Mesrob Tashjian, Rev. Khoren Habeshian, Rev. Antranig Baljian, Rev. Nerses Manougian, Deacon Aram Balekjian and Deacon Shant Kazanjian. Because of the tremendous success of last year's program, the Summer Program was expanded from 7 days to 10 days to include an optional 3-day retreat, conducted by Very Rev. Tanielian and Deacon Kazanjian.

Sincere gratitude is extended to staff members, to those pastors and boards of trustees and parents who encouraged their young parishioners and children to attend the Institute, to the Ladies Guild of St. Gregory the Illuminator of Philadelphia who hosted a luncheon for the participants on Sunday, June 28, to the Ladies Guild of St. Sarkis for hosting the Sunday banquet, to Mrs. Asdghig Kazanjian who provided delicious Armenian food on the opening evening and on the 4th of July, and to Mr. and Mrs. George Berberian for treating the participants to pizza, to Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Shehirian, Mrs. Valentin Paghounian, Mr. and Mrs. Leon Der Ohannessian for their donations to the Institute. ■



Professor Peter Cowe lectures to the participants.

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An elderly gentleman passed his granddaughter's room one night and overheard her repeating the alphabet in an oddly reverent way. "What on earth are you up to?" he asked. "I'm saying my prayers," explained the little girl. "But I can't think of exactly the right words tonight, so I'm just saying all the letters. God will put them together for me, because he knows what I'm thinking."