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# Outreach

Armenian Apostolic Church of America  
138 East 39th Street, New York, New York 10016

Volume XVIII, Number 5 — November 1995

## Monument for Unknown Soldier of Karabagh is Dedicated in Michigan



*St. Sarkis Church community, Dearborn, Michigan, recently dedicated this Khatchkar Monument to the memory of the Unknown Soldier of Karabagh. The Khatchkar was crafted in Armenia.*

On Sunday, October 15, in the presence of several hundred tearful Armenians, a special ceremony was conducted in front of a newly erected Monument, dedicated to the Unknown Soldier of Karabagh, at St. Sarkis Church in Dearborn, Michigan. Presiding over the impressive ceremony was Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian with the participation of Archpriest Gorun Shrikian, deacons, and choir members.

During the Spring of 1992 Karabagh was under constant bombardment by Azerbaijan. Stepanagert, the capital, was turning into a ruin by the grad missiles stationed in the old fortress city of Shoushi, and the Armenian freedom fighting units of Karabagh were challenged on every front. Armenians, both in Armenia and the Diaspora, while enraged were unable to stop the barbaric actions of Azerbaijan.

At about the time that a few hundred Freedom Fighters were engaged in a critical assault against the fortified walls of Shoushi, the Eastern Prelacy was convening its National Representative Assembly in Dearborn.

Shoushi fell into Armenian hands on May 9, 1992. The clergy were assembled to start their conference the next day, when they received the news of the fall of Shoushi. The moment was overwhelming.

As we know, from that moment on the fighting history of Karabagh defenders changed. They became suddenly an organized army and started to occupy the adjoining territories that threatened their lines of communication and strategic position. The NRA of 1992 will

always be remembered because of the fall of Shoushi and especially because during the culmination banquet the Man of the Year was proclaimed to be "The Unknown Soldier of Karabagh."

On announcing the "Man of the Year," His Eminence declared, "In view of the fact that during recent years the Armenian community of Detroit donated and sacrificed more than any other community in our diocese to the Karabagh cause, I would like to see on your community ground a Khatchkar erected in memory of the Unknown Soldier of Karabagh, whose bravery reestablished our national pride for the generations to come." Archbishop Ashjian's proposal was greeted with resounding applause.

The Khatchkar was crafted in Armenia by artist Vahram Hovagimian and shipped to the U.S. in late 1994. The construction of the monument site was postponed until the summer of 1995. The St. Sarkis Church Board of Trustees and the A.R.F. Azadamard Gomideh of Greater Detroit jointly participated in the concept, expense and the implementation of the project.

A committee of three persons, Rev. Dr. Gorun Shrikian, Ned Apigian, and Jack Garbooshian, was elected to study and recommend the site of the monument and find architects interested in participating in the project. The site was decided to be in front of St. Sarkis Church on the property line that is shared equally by the church and the Armenian Community Center. Two architects, Anita Mouradian and Ned Apigian, agreed to participate.

A second committee was elected to

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## Suzanne Hagopian 1914-1995



*Suzanne Hagopian with Catholicos Karekin who bestowed upon her the Princess of Cilicia Insignia in 1987 in recognition of her outstanding service to the Armenian Church.*

Suzanne Hagopian, a generous and committed daughter of the Armenian nation went to her eternal rest on Saturday, October 28 in New York Hospital.

Mrs. Hagopian became ill while vacationing in France during the summer and remained hospitalized in a coma in France and more recently in New York until her death. She and her late husband, Hovsep, were long time supporters of the Armenian Church as well as educational and national institutions. The Wake took place at St. Sarkis Church, Douglaston, New York, on Tuesday, October 31. Funeral services took place on Wednesday, November 1, followed by burial at Cedar Grove Cemetery, Flushing, New York.

Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian described Mrs. Hagopian as a truly extraordinary woman. "It is difficult to speak of Suzanne Hagopian in the past tense," the Prelate said. "She has been a vibrant and active part of the Armenian American community for so many years and she has left her mark in so many varied ways that she will be with us forever. Her love for the Armenian Church was unmatched and her willingness to help with both her financial resources and her active participation in the life of our community has certainly earned her an honored position in the Armenian Hall of Fame."

Archbishop Ashjian travelled to France to visit Mrs. Hagopian on September 21, where he prayed at her bedside and made arrangement in conjunction with Mrs. Hagopian's court-appointed guardian, Karekin Arzoo-

manian, Esq., for her transfer to the United States. She was transferred to New York Hospital on September 29 and subsequently to a nursing facility. All efforts to bring her out of her coma were futile. Archbishop Ashjian expressed his deep thanks to Dr. Hrair Shahinian and Mr. Khoren Nalbandian both of whom were of tremendous help in arranging the transfer from France to the U.S.

Suzanne, or Shoushig as everyone affectionately called her, was born on December 25, 1914, to a traditional Armenian family in Adabazar, near Constantinople. She was the daughter of Takvor and Banzali Ajemian. Her maternal grandfather was Rev. Krikor Papazian and her maternal uncle was one of the great clergymen of the turn-of-the-century, Bishop Sumpad Saadetian, who was martyred in 1915 in Erzeroum. It was Bishop Sumpad, she was proud to relate, that requested that she be named Shoushanig in honor of Vartan Mamigonian's daughter. It is no wonder that in recent years most of the publications Suzanne sponsored were dedicated to her beloved uncle, Bishop Sumpad.

Following the genocide of 1915 her family relocated to Marseille, France, where the family established itself and centered its life around the church and community. In France she grew up with well-known community leader, Mr. Souren Fesjian, and the writer Henri Verneil. She was one of the youngest members of the Chorus of the Holy Translators Cathedral in Marseille.

During World War II, Shoushig

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## Suzanne Hagopian, 1914-1995

(Continued from page 1)

moved to Paris where she was married to Hovsep Hagopian, forming a loving union which continued until Hovsep's death in 1983. In 1949 they moved to the United States and successfully continued their business which they began in France, Suzanne's Parisian Furs, which the couple maintained until their retirement. During this period she and her husband were ardent supporters of many Armenian institutions from the radio hour, Armenian Echoes, to St. Sarkis Church.

After Hovsep's death, her deep faith in God provided her with the inner courage to continue and to serve the community with even greater commitment. In everything she did she asked that the memory of her husband be honored and remembered, because, she said, she felt they were still together and still working as a team.

Without doubt, the institution that was closest to Shoushig's heart was the Armenian Church. She was a founding member of the Prelacy Ladies Guild, as well as its lifetime treasurer. Her world evolved around the Prelacy, St. Sarkis Church, and St. Sarkis's Hovsep and Suzanne Hagopian School. She and her husband were the benefactors which enabled the Prelacy to establish the St. Nerses Shnorhali Library which today is home to thousands of valuable volumes relevant to the history of the Armenian church and nation.

Archbishop Ashjian recalled her generous spirit and willingness to help. "Her deeds," His Eminence said, "can be seen everywhere, not just in the United States. She was a dedicated servant to the Great House of Cilicia and the Seminary. She displayed her strong leadership qualities following the fire which destroyed St. Sarkis Church in Bayside, and she went on to become one of the major donors for the construction of the new St. Sarkis Church in Douglaston.

For her outstanding service to the Armenian church she was made a Princess of Cilicia by His Holiness Karekin II in 1987. The Prelacy honored her as the Woman of the Year in 1985, and the Hamazkain Armenian Educational and Cultural Association honored her in 1991. She accepted the honors modestly. She was always reluctant to speak about herself, steadfastly maintaining that "the future is important, not the past."

It is impossible to mention all of the institutions that have benefitted by Suzanne's commitment to Armenianism and her generous heart, but some that must be mentioned include:

*Mother's Day luncheon, 1995: Suzanne with her fellow members of the Prelacy Ladies Guild with Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian and the 1995 Mother of the Year, Mrs. Asdghig Baghdassarian.*



The Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America; The Great House of Cilicia in Lebanon; St. Sarkis Church in Douglaston, New York; St. Illuminator's Day School in Woodside, New York; The Hovsep and Suzanne Hagopian School in Douglaston, New York; Hairenik Association in Watertown, Massachusetts; Hamazkain Armenian Educational and Cultural Association; St. Hagop Church in Montreal; Sourp Asdvadzadzin Church in Toronto; Sourp Garabed Vank, Florida;

Armenian Earthquake Relief; Land and Culture Organization.

Hovsep and Suzanne had no children of their own, but they enjoyed the company of young people and made special effort to encourage young Armenian Americans in their education and direction. Archbishop Ashjian recalls how Shoushig welcomed him upon his arrival in New York in 1978 as the newly elected Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy. "She showered me with the uncompromising love of a mother. I

mourn Suzanne's absence, but am comforted knowing she is reunited with those she loved most—her beloved Hovsep and our Lord whom she served all her life with so much love and dedication. Her legacy shall remain forever.

In lieu of flowers donations were accepted on behalf of St. Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church, 38-65 234th Street, Douglaston, New York 11363. ✚

### In Lieu of Flowers Donations In Memory of Suzanne Hagopian

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### OUTREACH

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## Khatchkar Monument

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supervise and implement the project—Rev. Shrikian, John Manoogian, Board Chairman, and Dr. Haig Oshagan, Azadamard Gomideh chairman. After several weeks of study, the architects presented their plans. Both plans were liked, but the design presented by Ned Apigian was accepted since he was also available to supervise the project.

The construction of the monument was mostly financed from funds accumulated during the past thirty years from the moneys collected from the April 24 Madagh donations. The community was planning to erect a monument for the Genocide of 1915. With the new monument into focus, it was decided to use those funds, since this monument implicitly is also dedicated to all the martyrs of the Armenian nation during the last century. On the four corners of the walls of the monument are the dates 1895, 1909, 1915, and 1988. The inscription on the monument itself reads: "Dedicated to the Unknown Soldier of Karabagh (Artsakh) whose valiant spirit, courage, dedication, and martyrdom re-established our national pride and prevented another genocide against the Armenian nation. 1988-1995." ✚

## In Lieu of Flowers

(Continued from page 2)

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## V. R. Nareg Alemeztian Elevated to Dzayrakouyn Vartabed

Very Rev. Nareg Alemeztian, pastor of Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church in Ridgefield, New Jersey, was elevated to the rank of Dzayrakouyn Vartabed on Sunday, November 12, in the presence of parishioners and friends who filled the church beyond standing room capacity. The ordination service took place during the Divine Liturgy and was performed by the Prelate, His Eminence Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian. Very Rev. Khajag Hagopian, Rector of St. Illuminator Cathedral, served as sponsor and celebrant of the Divine Liturgy. The choir sang under the direction of Armen Babamian with organist Zovinar Menatzaganian-Vartanian.

The elevation was granted by His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, at the request of Archbishop Ashjian. The impressive ceremony was further enhanced and enjoyed because of a 16-page booklet which was prepared specially for this occasion explaining and translating the entire elevation ceremony.

The order of Vartabed with four ranks, is given to a celibate clergyman who successfully prepares and defends his dissertation. Subsequently, the rank of Dzayrakouyn Vartabed is bestowed upon a vartabed who has shown outstanding educational and leadership qualities. When the clergyman is elevated to Dzayrakouyn Vartabed, he is given an additional 10 ranks, which is considered to be the highest academic degree in the Armenian Church.

Following the religious ceremonies, the Board of Trustees hosted a luncheon in honor of Hayr Sourp in the Church's auditorium. This, too, was filled to capacity, with reservations having been sold out ten days prior to the event.

Michael Mirakian, chairman of the

*The Heart of the Giver  
Makes the Gift Dear  
and Precious.*

—Origin Unknown—



Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian addresses the parishioners who filled Sts. Vartanantz Church in Ridgefield, New Jersey, to witness the elevation of V.R. Nareg Alemeztian.

Ordination Committee, served as Master of Ceremonies. He introduced two special guests, The Rev. Francis S. Bancroft III, President of the Ridgefield Clergy Association and the Honorable Stewart Veale, Mayor of Ridgefield, both of whom addressed the audience, congratulating Hayr Nareg and praising the active role he has taken in the community since his assignment to Sts. Vartanantz Church. Mayor Veale presented Rev. Alemeztian with a framed resolution on behalf of the Ridgefield Council acknowledging Hayr Sourp's role in the community.

Also addressing the gathering were Richard Sarajian, Esq., chairman of the Board of Trustees, and Shant Haroutunian, Esq., on behalf of the Prelacy's Executive Council, both of whom emphasized the significance of the event and offered congratulations to the entire parish as well as to Hayr Sourp.

The cultural portion of the program included a moving recitation by Deacon Vahan Kouyoumdjian who presented *Asdootzo Numan* by R. Tavoyan. The magnificent voice of Alex Vartanian, who sings in church regularly, thrilled the audience with *Kousanee Yerk* from the opera *Tavit Beg* and the hymn *Numanyal Movsesee*. He was accompanied at the piano by the equally gifted Zovinar Menatzaganian Vartanian.

The afternoon ended with words by Hayr Sourp and Archbishop Ashjian. Hayr Nareg expressed special words of thanks to Catholicos Aram I, Archbishop Ashjian, all of his clergy brothers, to the town of Ridgefield and its representatives, and to each and every parishoner, relative, friend, who were present. He expressed his commitment to continue his mission toward the Church's growth in service. He thanked all of his faithful parishioners who have stood by him and helped in countless ways.

The final words were reserved for Archbishop Ashjian who emphasized the importance of this elevation and thanked the Sts. Vartanantz parish for recognizing its importance and taking every measure to make this day very special. The closing



Stewart Veale, mayor of Ridgefield, New Jersey, presents commendation to Very Rev. Alemeztian during banquet which followed the Divine Liturgy and elevation ceremony.

benediction and the singing of *Giligia* ended a very inspirational day.

More than 100 congratulatory messages were received from all over the United States and Canada, as well as from Belgium, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Iran, Kuwait, and Lebanon.

Very Rev. Alemeztian was born on May 10, 1962, in Beirut, Lebanon, where he received his primary education in the Vahan Tekeyan School. Subsequently he was accepted in the Seminary of the Great House of Cilicia where he successfully completed his studies. In 1978 he was ordained a deacon and a celibate clergyman in 1981. While serving the Cilician Catholicate in a number of different positions, including Staffbearer to His Holiness Karekin II, Hayr Nareg continued his theological studies. In 1986 he was assigned to Vancouver (Canada), to serve as pastor to the parish of St. Gregory the Illuminator and to advance his theological studies. He was assigned to Sts. Vartanantz Church in New Jersey in 1991. ✚

## Videotapes of the Election & Consecration of Catholicos Aram I Available at Bookstore

The Armenian Prelacy Bookstore is pleased to announce that the election and consecration of His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, have been captured on video and now available for purchase. The set of four videotapes, which also includes the reception following the consecration, is narrated in Armenian.

June 28 to July 2, 1995, were historic days for the Catholicate of Cilicia. Attending the beautiful ceremonies and celebrations were H.H. Karekin I, Catholicos and Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians; the Patriarchs of Jerusalem and Constantinople, Archbishops Torkom and Karekin; primates of the various dioceses within the Cilician See; the Patriarch of the Armenian Catholic community, Hovhannes Bedros XVIII Kasbarian; the spiritual leader of the Armenian Evangelical community, Rev. Hovhannes Karjian; the Coptic Patriarch, Shenouda III; and representatives of the Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches, the Middle East Council of Churches, the Assyrian Church, and the Anglican Church, as well as representatives of many local churches.

Attending the Consecration were many dignitaries including the President of the Republic of Lebanon, His Excellency Elias Hrawi, who was accompanied by various government ministers; representatives of the Republic of Armenia, and the ambassadors of many foreign countries.

These historic events are now captured on video and can be purchased from the Prelacy Bookstore. The full set of four tapes is \$60.00, plus \$8.00 for shipping. Orders should be submitted to the Prelacy Bookstore, 138 E. 39th Street, New York, NY 10016. Telephone orders can be made by calling 212-689-7810. ✚

## File this under "Honest, it really happened" category:

A kindergarten class was performing "The Nativity" as their holiday presentation. Parents and friends eagerly watched the familiar story. Joseph came to the inn and knocked on the door. The little boy playing the innkeeper decided to be inventive. When Joseph asked if there was room at the inn, he answered by saying: "You are so lucky. We have just had a cancellation."



## Mid-Atlantic Seminar in Niagara Falls



A scene from the National Association of Ladies' Guilds Seminar in Niagara Falls.

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Seminar of the National Association of Ladies' Guilds took place in Niagara Falls, New York, on October 7, hosted by the Ladies Guild of St. Hagop Church.

Following registration and breakfast, the seminar was called to order by Yeretsgin Arpine Shrikian, chairwoman of the NALG. Ms. Sevart Seyranian offered words of welcome on behalf of the host Ladies Guild.

Alice Arutunjan, secretary, introduced the day's speaker, Ms. Verone L. Moody, Vice President of Education for Planned Parenthood of Niagara County, who addressed the group on the NALG's theme of the year, "Improving Communication Between Parents and Children."

Ms. Moody, who has more than 25 years of experience working with parents and groups developing programs for schools and religious organizations, reviewed the commonality that parents share. She emphasized the importance of family traditions and noted that grandparents are also involved in internalizing family relationships, as well as being "fill ins" for working parents. She expressed the need to show love and

affection which reenforces a child's security and also the importance of faith, religion, and values. A lively question and answer period followed the lecture.

Following lunch, Yeretskin Shrikian presented a report on NALG activities and discussed the value of keeping church doctrines and traditions alive by encouraging young people to participate in religious activities as well as social functions in their communities.

Also attending were NALG officers, Rita Tatevossian, vice president; Vicki Jamjyan, secretary; and Agnes Bianco, treasurer.

The NALG extends thanks to the following members of St. Hagop Ladies Guild who helped with arrangements: Mrs. Seyranian, Mrs. Arutunjan, Mrs. Mary Viscome, Margaret Ispahanyan, Arshalous and Emma Garijanian, Sonya Gregian, Maria Chappell, Sadie Mooradian, and Valentine Ishkanian. A special note of appreciation to the Board of Trustees of St. Hagop Church and the Board of Directors of the Armenian Community Center. ✝



The NALG has sponsored several seminars during 1995 with the theme, "Improving Communications Between Parents and Children." This photo is from a seminar which took place at the Prelacy in New York City in April.

**REMEMBER THAT GRANDCHILD AT CHRISTMAS, EVEN AFTER YOU ARE GONE—A "CHRISTMAS ANNUITY" FROM THE CHURCH IS A LASTING GIFT.**

*Want more information?*

*The Prelacy's Endowment Fund can provide details.  
Call 212-689-7810.*

# ANEC NEWS

ANEC NEWS will appear on a regular basis on the pages of OUTREACH. The Armenian National Education Committee (ANEC) is sponsored by the Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America and the Armenian Relief Society with its primary function being to instill the Armenian spirit in students through the teaching of language and culture. ANEC establishes a reciprocal relationship with its affiliate schools for the purpose of implementing modern, educational programs as developed by the Committee, based on the individual needs of the students. ANEC is also a clearing house for educational textbooks and tools for the benefit of all schools. Articles and photographs for ANEC NEWS should be sent to the attention of Mrs. Gilda Kupelian, Armenian National Education Committee, 138 E. 39th Street, New York, NY 10016.

## Mesrobian School, Granite City, Illinois:



Mrs. Norik Checkosky, a member of ANEC, recently visited the Mesrobian School, St. Gregory the Illuminator Church, Granite City, Illinois, which serves the needs of its Armenian students in this small, 100-year-old established Armenian community. Mrs. Checkosky notes that it is inspirational to see the extraordinary dedication and enthusiasm of the Armenian-born pastor and Yeretzgeen, Rev. and Mrs. Vartan Kassabian who serve as teachers. Seen in above photo taken earlier this year are, back row, left to right, Mrs. Haroian, the A.R.S. representative, and Yeretzgeen Kassabian. Front row, Rev. Kassabian and Mrs. Checkosky.

## Nareg Armenian School, Ridgefield, N.J.



Students of the Nareg Armenian School, Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church in Ridgefield, New Jersey, with 4th grade teacher, Mrs. Arpi Panossian, during the school's 1995-96 opening session.

## Pontius' Puddle

