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Armenian Apostolic Church of America
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ՍՈՒՐԲԵՐԸ ՄԻՆԱԿ ԶԶԳԵՆՔ

Քրիստոնեական մեր անցեալի դարերուն ընդհանրացած եւ մեր ժողովուրդի զաւակներուն համար ապրումի եւ վերանորոգութեան աղբիւր հանդիսացող սրբազան աւանդութիւն մը եւ բարեպաշտական արտայայտութիւն մըն է ՌԻՆՏԱԳՆԱՑՈՒԹԻՒՆԸ: Ցեղասպանութենէն եւ բռնի տեղահանութենէն ետք, մեր Հայրենիքին համայնավարական անաստուած եւ անկրօն վարչակարգին տակ դժբախտաբար մարեցաւ ներշնչումի եւ հաւատքի այս սովորութիւնը եւ միայն կարգ մը շրջաններ, յատկապէս Միջին Արեւելեան երկիրներուն մէջ, պահեցին զայն:

Ուխտագնացութիւնը սուրբի մը գերբնական, տէրումի կամ սուրբի մը անունը կրող եկեղեցւոյ տրուած մեր այցելութիւնն է: Կը վստահինք Աստուծոյ զօրութեան, կը դիմենք սուրբին բարեխօսութեան, որպէսզի մեր տկար անձնքը ունենան սուրբին օգնականութիւնը:

Մկրտութեամբ մենք կը դառնանք Աստուծոյ զաւակ, անդամ Քրիստոսի ընտանիքին: Սակայն ապագայի մեր գիտակցական կեանքին մէջ պէտք ունինք մեր անձնքը մաքրելու, պէտք ունինք մեր հոգիները անաղարտ պահելու՝ զայն դարձնելու համար Սուրբ Հոգիին բնակարան:

Ուխտագնացութեան կ'երթանք՝

1) Որպէսզի սուրբերուն կեանքը ընդօրինակենք, սուրբին անոնց պէս ապրի՝ դէպի Աստուած մեր ցամաքն հարթելու համար:

2) Որպէսզի սուրբերուն բարեխօսութիւնը խնդրենք: Աստուծոյ հանութիւնը ունեցած սուրբին հետ Աստուծոյ կը խնդրենք որ նայի մեզի, ողորմի մեզի, զօրացնէ մեզ:

3) Որպէսզի Աստուծոյ հետ ըլլանք: Գտնեալնիչ զգացում է զԱստուած միշտ մեզի հետ ունենալը: Այն ատեն ո՛չ մէկ չարիք, ո՛չ հալածանք եւ ո՛չ ալ մահ կրնան յաղթել մեզի:

1700ամեակը առիթ մըն է արծարծելու ուխտագնացութեան քիւղղական բարեպաշտութիւնը: Մեր սուրբերէն ումանք մեր անկախ պետութեան սահմաններուն մէջ են, քայքայուած կը մնան բռնազրուած հողերուն մէջ: Միմալ են: Առանձին: Պէտք ունինք մեզի: Պէտք ունինք իրենց:

Հետեւաբար, ջանանք սուրբերը չհեռացնել մեր հոգիներէն, հոն ուր կարելիութիւնը կայ՝ երթանք այցի, որպէսզի մեր սուրբերուն անխնայութեամբ սրբացած մեր երկիրը հարազատ մնայ մեր հոգիներուն, ըլլայ ներշնչումի աղբիւր, հաւատքի վերանորոգութեան պատեհառ եւ առիթ: Մեր երկրին հողը սուրբ է՝ սրբացած մեր սուրբերուն անխնայութեամբ: Մեր հողը արիւն է, փրտիւն, մեր ազգին ծննդավայրը, մեր հայրերուն անիւնը, մեր մշակոյթը: Մեր Կենսակ:

EASTERN PRELACY CELEBRATES THE 17th CENTENARY



Editor's Note: The next issue of *Outreach* (September/October) will give full coverage to the 1700th commemorative events and the visit of His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia.

The 1700th anniversary of the official establishment of Christianity in Armenia is an occasion to bring the vibrant history of the first Christian nation into the forefront. For the past several years this is exactly what has happened, especially through exhibits and events in some of the largest and best known museums and institutions of learning.

Some of these events have been planned and executed by the 17th commemorative central office in Holy Etchmiadzin and the Catholicate of Cilicia as well as by dioceses in the diaspora.

The Eastern Prelacy under the guidance of the Prelate, His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, has planned a series of events in celebration of this milestone anniversary. It was with pleasure that His Eminence recently announced that the Catholicos, His Holiness Aram I, will personally preside over many of the public events.

His Holiness is expected to arrive in New York on October 3. That same evening Hrashapar services will take place at St. Illuminator's Cathedral, 221 East 27th Street.

Commemorative Services

The next day, October 4, the major public event sponsored by the Eastern Prelacy in New York City will take place at St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Avenue and 50th Street, at 7 p.m. His Holiness will preside over the impressive Ecumenical Service and Concert of Sacred Music as well as deliver his pontifical message. The main speaker of the evening will be Professor Jaroslav Pelikan an internationally well-known and respected theologian, author and educator.

From New York His Holiness will go to Washington, DC, where he will preside over 1700th commemorative services attended by a host of ecumenical clergy in the Washington area as well as the Armenian community of Washington, Maryland, and Virginia. The service will take place at St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 36th and Massachusetts Avenue. NW.

Catholicos Aram will arrive in Boston on October 7 and preside over that community's major event for the 1700th Anniversary which will take place at St. Stephen's Church, 38 Elton Avenue, Watertown. His Holiness will also officiate at a Pontifical Divine Liturgy at the St. Stephen's Church on Sunday, October 8, followed by a luncheon at the church hall.

Arriving in Detroit on Monday, October 9, His Holiness will be welcomed with a Hrashapar service and reception at St. Sarkis Church, 19300 Ford Road, Dearborn. The main commemorative event for the Detroit community will be a Gala Banquet on Tuesday, October 10, at the Fairlane Club.

From Detroit His Holiness will go to Canada where commemorative services will take place in Toronto on Friday, October 13, at St. James Anglican Cathedral, 65 Church Street. In Montreal His Holiness will officiate over a Pontifical Divine Liturgy at Christ Church Cathedral, 1444 Union Avenue.

THE PRELACY'S ST. GREGORY OF DATEV INSTITUTE SPONSORS 14th ANNUAL SUMMER CHRISTIAN STUDIES PROGRAM

Forty-eight junior and senior high school students from 10 parishes plus eight clergymen gathered for the 14th Annual St. Gregory of Datev Institute Summer Christian studies Seminar at the St. Mary of Providence Center in Elverson, Pennsylvania, July 2-9, 2000. The Program was held under the auspices of H.E. Archbishop Oshagan, the Prelate of the Armenian Prelacy of the Eastern United States and Canada, and the directorship of V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, the Vicar General and Chairman of the Religious Council of the Prelacy.

The Institute, sponsored by the Armenian Religious Education Council (AREC), provides an intensive four-year, faith-based, youth-oriented program of studies - one week each year. Upon completion, students may return for postgraduate classes. This year, the Institute registered 11 first-year students, 9 second-year students, 9 third-year students, 7 graduates, and 12 postgraduate students. More than 100 forty-five minute sessions were conducted during the week, about 20 for each of the five grades, plus Bible studies.

The purpose of the weeklong program is to create an environment for learning, worship, and fellowship, the students were reminded during the orientation. The daily schedule of the Institute reflected these three objectives: Morning and evening worship services; classes from 8:30a.m.-12:30p.m. and Bible studies from 7:30-9:00p.m.; free time for recreational and sports activities from 1:30-5:30p.m.

Through worship, interactive presentations, Bible studies, and small group discussions, the Institute's curriculum touched on all the essential elements of Armenian Christianity. This included what we believe, what we celebrate, how we pray, and ways in which we may implement and live out the Gospel in an age of disbelief.

The instructors were: Very Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian (Director), Very Rev. Fr. Yeghishe Manjikian, Rev. Fr. Dr. Mesrob Tashjian, Rev. Fr. Antranig Baljian, Rev. Fr. Nerses Manoogian, Rev. Fr. Gomidas Baghsarian, Rev. Fr. Khatchadour Boghossian, and Dn. Shant Kazanjian. The guest lecturers were Prof. Peter Cowe and Mr. Haroutune Misserlian.

♦♦♦

The Prelacy wishes to thank the staff, the guest lecturers, and the counselors of the Institute for their invaluable services.

The Prelacy's St. Gregory of Datev Institute...

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Special thanks are due to the Pastors and Boards of Trustees of the participating parishes for subsidizing a portion of the expenses by providing a \$200 scholarship for each church-sponsored participant from their parish: St. Gregory the Illuminator Church (PA), Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church (NJ), St. Sarkis Armenian Church (NY), St. Gregory Armenian Church (Indian Orchard, MA), St. Stephen's Armenian Church (MA), St. Asdvadzadzin Armenian Church (Toronto), Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church (RI), Holy Trinity Armenian Church (Worcester, MA).



Participants at the 14th Annual St. Gregory of Datev Institute Summer Christian Studies Program, July 2-9, 2000

Many thanks also to the parents who entrusted their children to the Institute for a week of spiritual formation; to the Pastors and Boards of Trustees of St Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church (Douglaston, New York) for their hospitality after Divine Liturgy on Sunday, July 9; to Mrs. Asdghig Kazanjian (the owner of Armenian Delight in Philadelphia) for providing delicious Armenian food on various occasions during the Program, including the 4th of July picnic.

The Institute also thanks the following organizations and individuals for their donations: The National Association of Ladies' Guild (NALG), Prelacy Ladies Guild (PLG), Mrs. Dorothy Bengoian, Mrs. Alice Haigazian, Mr. and Mrs. Vartan Karakelian, Mrs. Asdghig Kazanjian, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Khatcherian, Mr. and Mrs. Noubar Megerian, and Mrs. Laura Murphy.



This year's graduates are: (L to R) Nanor Harutunian, Alin Yaghmourian, Anna Abrahamian, Bedig Kalajian, Tamar Palandjian, Nayiri Baljian, and Ani Yaghmourian

Eastern Prelacy celebrates the 17th Centenary

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Princeton Symposium

As part of the Prelacy's commemorative events, a Symposium bringing together top scholars will take place October 27 and 28 at the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton, New Jersey. Coordinated by Professor Vigen Guroian of Loyola University, participants will include: Professors Karlfried Floelich, Nina Garsoian, John H. Erikson, Robin Darling Young, Robert W. Jensen, and Very Rev. Father Daniel Findikyan.

The two-day conference will address three basic themes: Theology/Doctrine; Liturgy; and Monasticism. While all the lectures will focus on the specific general theme, they will all relate to the Armenian Church. The papers presented will subsequently be published in book form.

Publications

The Eastern Prelacy is also preparing a series of publications, which will be useful in presenting the Armenian Church to both Armenians and non-Armenians. A series of booklets are being prepared specifically for young people. An in-depth history of the Armenian Church is nearing completion and will go to press and a volume dedicated to the 17th Centenary will feature the provocative and thoughtful writings of Professor Vigen Guroian.

"The 1700th anniversary has provided us momentum," said Archbishop Oshagan. "but we cannot stop next year just because the anniversary is over. First and foremost the anniversary must serve as a stepping stone toward renewal and rededication that will take us into the decades ahead."

PERSONAL REMEMBRANCES OF VEHPAR KAREKIN I

by Florence Avakian



Though more than a year has passed since Vehpar Karekin I went to his heavenly rest, he is among very few who made an indelible impression that is lasting and powerful. Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin I was such a person for me. I first met His Holiness in the late 1970's when he was the Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy, and I was a starting journalist. Many Saturday mornings, at his invitation, I went to the Prelacy where we had lively discussion, over Armenian coffee, about international events on which he was an expert. My knowledge and understanding about such issues, especially the Middle East, was enormously expanded.

He was among the most influential in encouraging me to pursue my career. Everytime, a major American or Canadian newspaper published an article of mine, he always managed to secure it before I could send it to him. If some time passed when he didn't see such an article, he inquired, asking if he had missed one.

Finding out that my mother's family hailed from Sepastia, he always greeted me by asking, "How is your Sepastazi mother?" Even when he became Catholicos of Cilicia, and then Supreme Catholicos, he often sent to my mother and me some of his many scholarly books and writings.

On one of his trips in the mid - 1980's to Toronto, Canada where his mother, sister and brother lived, he made provisions for me to come to Canada for a lengthy and indepth interview with him. It was one of the most insightful and memorable interviews I have ever undertaken. Always spirited and enthusiastic, his eyes especially sparkled at questions that were difficult.

When he visited New York and Canada as the Catholicos of All Armenians, I was privileged to be assigned as the official reporter by both Dioceses. Again I saw the rare qualities that made this church leader such a unique and charismatic personality - his brilliant mind, his vision for the future, his vast knowledge of church history and issues, as well as of international questions, his linguistic skills, his rare talent in diplomacy, his great stature in the international community, and his warm ease with all kinds of people.

He could give an hour-long oration with power and passion to thousands of people, yet go into a school and banter with young children on their own level. In an Armenian school in Toronto, he displayed his superb communication skills. Whispering to the children, "so the grownups don't hear", he related a secret to them which always worked for him as a child. "If you want lots of nice presents, learn an Armenian poem, a song, and go home, recite and sing. As the thrilled youngsters clapped and cheered, the Vehpar demonstrated the technique by reciting with passion, "Hay Yem Yes".

In another Armenian school in Montreal, he recited and sang with the older children, even conducting the singing. Walking into the kindergarten class, he went around touching the faces of the awe-struck youngsters, and asked them if he could join them in class. Even the teachers, and clergy accompanying His Holiness were charmed by his personal touch.

And in yet another school, while speaking and joking with hundreds of Armenian youngsters wearing school uniforms and berets, he took one of the hats and put it on his head. The students gave him a standing ovation.

On the trip from Montreal to Ottawa, the small plane got into a winter storm. Buffeted and shaken by the fierce winds, the plane had to circle the airport three times before executing a precarious landing. All around, there were worried looks on the face of most of the clergy and lay people. The calmest person was His Holiness who sensing their fears, said loudly, "God is with us."

Even when illness befell him, he never lost that unquenchable thirst for knowledge, his dedication to his work, and deep interest in people. While under treatment, he came to the Armenian Diocese in New York daily, attending to his work for many hours. On a visit to the home of Dr. and Mrs. Mekhjian, members of his medical team, he sat next to his mother in the limousine, their heads together, his arm around her shoulder, as they together sang songs from his beloved birthplace, Kessab. It was a poignant and unforgettable moment.

As he left the Diocese for the last time, he waved from his car with his typical warm smile, eyes still sparkling. His courage and strong spirit never wavered. Vehpar Hayrabed, may your vision and wisdom guide us, and may your soul rest in heavenly peace.

Ս. ԳՐԻԳՈՐ ՏԱԹԵՒԱՑԻ ԼՍԱՐԱՆԻ ՈՒԽՏԱԳՆԱՑՈՒԹԻՒՆԸ
9-16 Յուլիս, 2000

Ազգային Առաջնորդարանի Ս. Գրիգոր Տաթևացի Լսարանը 14ամեայ տեղական իր ծրագրին զուգահեռ երկրորդ անգամ ըլլալով ձեռնարկեց ուխտագնացութեան՝ դէպի Երուսաղէմ, Տէր Զօր եւ Լիբանան (առաջինը՝ Հայաստան 1998թ.): Սոյն ուխտագնացութեան գլխաւոր նպատակն էր հաւատքի եւ ազգային ինքնագիտակցութեան վերանորոգման քացառիկ առիթ ընծայել մեր երիտասարդներուն՝ անձամբ գտնուելով Երուսաղէմի սրբավայրերը, ինչպէս նաեւ Հայ Ժողովուրդի նահատակութեան եւ վերածնունդի խորհրդանիշ՝ Տէր Զօրի անապատը եւ ասպնջական Մայրեաց երկրին մէջ հիւրընկալուած Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսարանը:



Տաթևացիները Երուսաղէմի Հովիւներու Քարայրին առջեւ

Կիրակի, 9 Յուլիս, 2000թ. Նիւ Եորքի Ս. Սարգիս եկեղեցւոյ մէջ Ս. Պատարագի եւ վկայականաց քաշխման հանդէսէն ետք, Տաթևացի 26 ուխտաւորներ, գլխաւորութեամբ Գեորգ. Հայր Անուշաւան Ծ՛ Վրդ. Դանիէլեանի, Արժանապատի Գահանայ Հայրեր՝ Ս. Մեսրոպ Ա. Քեն. Թաշնեանի, Ս. Անդրանիկ Ա. Քեն. Պալեանի եւ Ս. Ներսէս Քեն. Մանուկեանի Air France օդանաւով Ամմանի համարվ ժամանեցին Երուսաղէմ, ուր դիմաւորութեան Սաղիմական Միաբանութեան կարգով միաբաններէն Հագ. Տ. Աւետիս Վրդ. Իփրանեանի կողմէ, որ խումբին եօթնօրեայ առաջնորդը պիտի ըլլար:

Երեքշաբթի առաւօտ ուխտաւորները այցելեցին Հայոց Պատրիարքարանը, որ կը հանդիսանայ մեր հաւատքի եւ մշակոյթի գլխաւորագոյն օրրաններէն մին եւ կը վայելէ ոչ միայն Հայոց, այլ նաեւ տարբեր եկեղեցիներու եւ կրօններու հետեւորդներու քացառիկ յարգանքը: Երկուրորեան, սեմապատմի եւ հպարտանքի քացառիկ պահեր ապրեցան երիտասարդները Վանէն ներս՝ աղօթելով Ս. Յակոբեանց գերեզմանիկ առաքելոց դարաւոր խնկարայր Տանարին մէջ, Սրբոց Հրեշտակապետաց եկեղեցւոյ մէջ, ուր Քրիստոսի հարցաձեռնութիւնը տեղի ունեցած էր Աննա Բահանայապետին կողմէ, Ս. Թէոդորոս Մատուռը, ուր շուրջ 3000 հայկական անգին ձեռագիրներ ամփոփուած են: Յետ միջօրէին այցելութիւնները ընդգրկեցին Լացի Պատը, Գեհեռնի ձորը, ուրկէ յառաջացած է Գեհեռն (ձեհեռնէմ) անունը, Եգեկիայի փապուղի ջրանցքը, կառուցուած 7-րդ դարուն՝ Բաղաթ ջուրով ապահովելու համար երկար պաշարումի ընթացքին: Մինչեւ ծունկը հասող ջուրի մէջ թաթախուած, մտով, շարականներու երգեցողութեամբ, շուրջ 1600 մեքր այս ջրանցքի մէջէն Բալիլը անգուզական փորձառութիւն մը եղաւ բոլորին համար: Ուխտագնացութեան առաջին օրը իր աւարտին հասաւ երեկոյեան՝ Ամենապատիւ Ս. Թորգոմ Ս. Պատրիարք Հօր հետ հանդիպումով: Պատրիարք Սրբազան Հայրը Բաշալեթեց երիտասարդները իրենց հաւատքին մէջ եւ յուշանուէրներ քաժնեց անոնց:

Յաջորդ օրերուն Տաթևացիները շարունակեցին Ս. տեղեաց այցելութիւնները, Խաչի ձանապարհը՝ իր 14 կայաններով, Ս. Յարութեան Տաճարը, որ մատուռներու համալիր մըն փրկագործութեան հետ առնչուած մեր Տիրոջ երկրաւոր կեանքի վերջին դրուագներուն՝ Չարչարանաց, Խաչելութեան, Թաղման, Յարութեան: Երուսաղէմէն կէս ժամ Արեւելք Բեթղեհէմ, Հովուաց Բարայրը, Ծննդեան Ս. Այրին, Կաթի մատուռը, ուր ըստ աւանդութեան, Եգիպտոս փախուստի ժամանակ էրր Ս. Կոյսը կը դիտեցրէ Յիսուս մանուկը, իր կաթէն ծորած էր այդ վայրը: Երուսաղէմի Հիւսիսը, մօտ երկու ժամ հեռու՝ Նազարէթ Բաղաթը, ուր Քրիստոս ապրեցաւ իր ընտանիքին հետ մինչեւ իր սրբազան առաքելութիւնը, Կանա՝ ուր առաջին հրաշքը գործեց, Թապալա՝ ուր հինգ հազարի հրաշքը կատարեց, Գալիլիոյ Ծովը՝ ուր փոթորիկներ հնազանդեցան Անոր, Երանիններու լեռը, ուր առաջին անգամ հնչեց Քրիստոսական աստուածամուտագ վարդապետութիւնը: Արդարեւ Երանիններու լեռնէն դիտուած Գալիլիայի կապոյտ ծովը գլուխ գործոց մըն է գեղեցկութեան, հայրին դառնալով Երկնաւորին համարելի ստեղծագործութեան: Այցելութիւնները ներառեցին նաեւ Լագարոսի յարութեան գերեզմանը, Գեթսեմանի պարտէզը, Ս. Կոյսին ննջման եւ Վերափոխման Տաճարները, Յորդանան գետը, Մեռեալ Ծովը եւ Մասատա՝ հերոսամարտի քաղաքը, գոր երկար պաշարումէ ետք երբ Հռոմայեցիք գրաւեցին, եւ գտան բոլոր քնակիչները անձնապան՝ Հռոմայեցի գորավարը գոչեց. «Հռոմը այստեղ պարտուեցաւ»:

Ուխտագնացութիւնը այս նախ այցելութեանց առընթեր առաւել եւս անմոռանալի դարձաւ Շարաթ առաւօտ Ս. Յակոբեանց Տաճարի Ս. Մակարայ մատրան մէջ մատուցուած պատարագով, երեկոյեան թափօրով՝ Ս. Յարութեան Տաճարին մէջ եւ Կիրակի առաւօտեան Ս. Պատարագով՝ Աստուծամօր Վերափոխման եկեղեցւոյ մէջ: Հայր Անուշաւան եւ Տէր Անդրանիկ Ա. Քեն. Պալեան մատուցին ուխտի գոյգ պատարագները իսկ Տաթևացի մասնակցեցան երգեցողութեան:

Կիրակի, 16 Յուլիսին Տաթևացիները Երուսաղէմէն անցան Լիբանան: Երկուրորքի առաւօտ՝ Անթիլիասի մէջ, անոնք ընդունուեցան Գեորգ. Տ. Եփրեմ Արքեպիսկոպոսի կողմէ՝ տեսուչ Թանգարանի, Գեորգ. Տ. Վարդան Արքեպիսկոպոսի կողմէ՝ տեսուչ Մատենադարանի, Պիֆֆայայի մէջ, Կաթողիկոսական Ընդհանուր Փոխանորդ՝ Գեորգ. Տ. Արտաւազ Արքեպիսկոպոսի կողմէ, իսկ Պէլոսի՝ Առաջնորդ Գեորգ. Տ. Գեղամ Եպիսկոպոսի կողմէ: Սրբազան Հայրերը քարճօրէն զննեցին երիտասարդներուն կրօնական եւ ազգային նախնաձայնութիւնը եւ մաղթեցին որ նոյն այս ոգիով շարունակեն իրենց գործն նպաստը բերելու Հայ կեանքին մէջ:

Երեքշաբթի, 18 Յուլիսի գիշերը Տաթևացի ուխտաւորները ուղեւորուեցան դէպի Տէր Զօր: Սուրբ տասը ժամուան մարտիրոսներէ ետք՝ Բարաթախ ու յոգնարեկ, սակայն վնասակարտեամբ առցուն անոնք թակեցին Տէր Զօրի անապատի մէջ «լոյս հագած» Ս. Աստուածածին եկեղեցւոյ դարպասը, որ քացուեցաւ ժայտաղէմ եւ երիտասարդ Տ. Եգնիկ Քեն. Զոչանեանի կողմէ, որ ամենայն ազնուութեամբ քացատրութիւններ տուաւ համալիրին տարբեր քաժնեներուն մասին: Յազումախառն Հագեհանգստեան պաշտօն կատարուեցաւ եւ ամէն ոք իր էութեան ակունքները խորասուզուած, իր հարազատներու հագույն համար աղօթք մը մըմնջեց: Ապա խումբը ուղղուեցաւ դէպի Երազային Բաղաթը՝ Հալէպ, ուր հիւրասիրութեան ՀՄԸՄ-ի պարտէզը Տիար Գեորգ Կարապետեանի կողմէ եւ մինչեւ ուշ ժամեր վայելեցին հալէպահայ երիտասարդներու ընկերակցութիւնը: Յաջորդ առաւօտ ընդունուեցան Բերիոյ Թեմի Առաջնորդ Գեորգ. Տ. Սուրբ Արքեպիսկոպոսի կողմէ, որ Նահատակաց հաւատարիմ ժառանգորդներ կոչեց Տաթևացիները եւ մաղթեց որ այդ ոգին քաժնեն իրենց սերնդակիցներուն հետ: Ապա Տաթևացի աղօթեցին վեցարեան պատմական Ս. Քառասնից Տաճարին մէջ, եւ առիթը ունեցան Առաջնորդարանի Թանգարանը վայելելու: Հալէպի քերդի եւ հուսկ ապա Քարէն Եփփէ ձեմարանի այցելութեամբ աւարտեցաւ ուշտագնացութիւնը Բերիոյ Թեմէն ներս եւ Տաթևացի վերադարձան Լիբանան:

Լիբանանի մէջ Տաթևացի առիթը ունեցան դարեկանեցիներու հետ ըլլալու, Թոնոց Բոյն գտնուելու, ուր վայելեցին տեսուչ՝ Հագ. Տ. Մեղրիկ Վրդ. Բարիբեանի ասպնջականութիւնը, Զմմառի վանքը եւ Նշան Փալանեան ձեմարան այցելելու, հայաշատ շրջաններ՝ Պուրն Համուտ եւ Այննար գտնուելու, ուր աղբիւրի մօտիկ հաշարան մը տօնախմբեցին անդամներէն՝ Նշան Պալեանի ծննդեան 24-րդ տարեդարձը, եւ տեսարժան վայրեր՝ Հարիսա, Ժըիթայի հրաշալի Բարայրը եւ Պապալէպ այցելելու:

Կիրակի առաւօտ Ս. Գրիգոր Տաթևացի Լսարանի ուսանողները մասնակցեցան Անթիլիասի մայրավանքի՝ Ս. Գրիգոր Լուսաւորիչ մայր տաճարին մէջ մատուցուած Ս. Պատարագին, հաղորդութեան եւ փառք տուին ամենակալին Աստուծոյ, որ արժանի ըրաւ գիրենք այս ուխտագնացութեան, եւ Երկուրորքի առաւօտ վերադարձան Ամերիկա, արմատաւորուած իրենց հաւատքին մէջ, հարստացած անգուզական փորձառութեամբ, քայց մանաւանդ հպարտ՝ իրենց ազգային պատկանելիութեամբ:

Կիրակի առաւօտ Ս. Գրիգոր Տաթևացի Լսարանի ուսանողները մասնակցեցան Անթիլիասի մայրավանքի՝ Ս. Գրիգոր Լուսաւորիչ մայր տաճարին մէջ մատուցուած Ս. Պատարագին, հաղորդութեան եւ փառք տուին ամենակալին Աստուծոյ, որ արժանի ըրաւ գիրենք այս ուխտագնացութեան, եւ Երկուրորքի առաւօտ վերադարձան Ամերիկա, արմատաւորուած իրենց հաւատքին մէջ, հարստացած անգուզական փորձառութեամբ, քայց մանաւանդ հպարտ՝ իրենց ազգային պատկանելիութեամբ:



Տաթևացիները Տէր-Զօրի Նահատակաց Համալիրին մէջ

Բացառիկ խնամքով պատրաստուած «յոգնաշատ» սակայն դաստիարակիչ ու հոգեպարար այս ուխտագնացութեան մասնակցողները անխտիր իրենց սրտագին երախտագիտութիւնը կը յայտնեն Բարճարշնորհ Տ. Օշական Արքեպիսկոպոսին որ ոչ միայն հովանաւորեց այլ նաեւ մղիչ ոյժը դարձաւ պատմական այս ուխտագնացութեան, Ազգային Վարչութեան որ գորավիզ կանգնեցան Առաջնորդ Սրբազան Հօր երիտասարդութեան հոգեմտաւոր վերելքին համար ծրագրուած այս մանապարհորդութեան, Ամենապատիւ Ս. Թորգոմ Պատրիարքին որ աստարեց Երուսաղէմ ուխտագնացութեան յաջողութեան եւ տնօրինեց որ Աւետիս Վրդ. Իփրանեանը առաջնորդը ըլլայ Տաթևացիներուն, քաժնելով հաւատքի եւ գիտութեան իր հարուստը պաշարը ամէնքին հետ եւ Բարեշնորհ Շանթ Աւագ Սարկաւազին, որ ծրագրի տնօնարան աշխատանքէն ետք թէպէտ չկրցաւ միանալ խումբին, որպէսզի որդիական իր պարտաւորութիւնը կատարէ իր մօր հանդէպ, այնու ամենայնիւ բոլորին հետ եւ բոլորին աղօթքներուն մէջ էր:

Ոչ մէկ կասկած որ երկու շաբթուան ընթացքին շտեմարանուած անգին փորձառութիւնը ժամանակի կը կարօտի լեռնի ըմբռնելու, քայց որ իւրացուի, իւրաքանչիւր երիտասարդ ուխտաւորի համար պիտի դառնայ անսպառ խթան՝ վաղուան դեկավարի ազգանուէր եւ անսակարակ ծառայութեան...
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TWENTY FIRST CENTURY PILGRIMAGE:
IMPRESSIONS OF ARMENIAN PILGRIMAGE TO PERSIA
JULY 2000



St. Thadé monastery filled with thousands of pilgrims

The Pilgrimage to St. Thade was organized by the Eastern Prelacy and hosted by the Committee for the 1700th anniversary commemoration in Iran. The ten-day tour was a unique spiritual experience. It included sites of Armenian interest in the cities of Tehran, Shiraz, Isfahan and New Julfa, Tabris, and Macu. Not only did the pilgrims witness Armenian culture and life in present Iran, but experienced Christian monuments that provide validation for the historic Armenian presence in that part of the world.

Here is the church built over the tombstone of the Apostle Thaddeus, called Soorp Thade monastery in the North Western corner of Iran. It was rebuilt and renovated several times since the fourth century. It is a large complex. The outside walls of the church are decorated with beautiful stone relief work. An estimated 10,000 pilgrims attended the religious ceremonies. The blessing of the water by His Holiness Catholicos Aram I was a memorable spiritual experience. At the conclusion of the ceremonies, a few dozen children, young and old were christened that Saturday.

Also spiritually moving was the site of Sandookhd Gooy's cemetery, on a hill facing Soorp Thadé monastery. Sandookhd, the first Armenian Christian nun and the Apostle Thaddeus were martyred in the first century by King Sanatruk of Armenia.

In the environs and south of Soorp Thade, on an area map one can count over 150 Armenian churches on what was once the land of historic Armenia forming a triangle between Lake Van, now in Turkey, Lake Sevan, now in Armenia and Lake Urmia, and south of the historic city of Macu. In the region of Urmia is situated the town of Salmasd where the noted historic novelist, Raffi grew up.

To the east of Soorp Thadé is the monastery of Soorp Stepanos, close to the river Arax. Here the pilgrims celebrated traditional Vartavar after walking the steep road up to the breathtaking monastery complex, lodged in the palm of tall mountains. On July 30, the Catholicos, like the pilgrims, walked up the crowded road, blocked with cars and buses to participate in the church services. Soorp Stepanos is known for its wonderful bas-reliefs lining the outside walls of the cathedral and the cupola. The Cathedral like Soorp Stepanos was supported with scaffolding, needing repairs.

Along the river Arax, the cemetery of Julfa in Nakhichevan, Azerbaijan, was visible with its many desecrated khachkars.

A highlight of the Pilgrimage was the visit to Soorp Asdvadzadzin church in the area that was Dzor-Dzor monastery. The church was transported up the hill by volunteers when a dam was built in its location in 1987. To reach Dzor-Dzor, the pilgrims crossed the river Tghmoot and the valley of Avarayr where the Vartanantz War took place in 451 AD. In this area is Gris, or Nvarsak, the city where the peace treaty was signed between Persians and Armenians and from whence Armenians were able to maintain their Christian identity.

To the southeast of this region is Tehran. Here, at the Prelacy, the pilgrims were received by Bishop Sebouh Sarkissian, the Prelate. The Prelacy complex includes Soorp Sarkis Cathedral, administrative offices and a courtyard where a monument to Martyrs of the Genocide is erected and where the tomb of the late Archbishop Ardak Manoukian is situated.

A historic church in Tehran, Soorp Kevork is situated in the old Armenian quarter, where the pilgrims attended Sunday service. This is the second oldest Armenian church in Tehran, built in the 19th Century. Like most churches in Iran it displays a prayer table adorned with Krikor Lusavoritch's holy relic in a golden hand, or *ach*.

The pilgrims attended a religious concert in honor of the Catholicos, the presentation of traditional Armenian costumes by *Hai Guin* organization and a lecture by Jenig Papoomian on "The Role of Armenian Women in the Christian Era." At Ararat Club, the pilgrims met Armen Hakhnazarian, an architect with expertise in restoring historic monuments and a member of the corresponding committee in Armenia. He advised the pilgrims to "remain quiet and listen to the language of the stones" when visiting monuments. He considered Armenians privileged to have received the ministry of Christ's Apostles and urged us to care for our Christian heritage.

Also of historic significance is Soorp Asdvadzadzin in the old Armenian quarter of Shiraz which dates to the 17th Century when Armenian and European merchants traversed Persia on their way to India in their trade of silk and spices. In the church-yard and within the church walls one finds tombstones of English and Armenian travelers. On the tomb of the noted scholar, author and editor, Mesrob T. Taghian, a pilgrim sang, "Der getzo too Zhays" (Lord protect Armenians) written by the scholar.

Vazken Ghougassian, Ph.D. an expert on 17th Century Iranian-Armenian history and author of *The Emergence of the Armenian Diocese of New Julfa in the Seventeenth Century* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998) told a brief history of Taghian's life and work.

New Julfa is another important seat of Armenian history of the past 400 years. Armenians were forcefully emigrated from the Armenian plateau by Shah Abbas and brought to Iran to work as servants and artisans. The merchants of Julfa, a town at the banks of the River Arax were brought to Isfahan, the capital of the Safavid kingdom

and were granted a large parcel of land, where they built New Julfa. The refugees in New Julfa within a short time built 24 churches. Of them, 13 remain today as functioning churches. The pilgrims visited Soorp Hagop, the first church built in New Julfa in 1606, Soorp Asdvadzadzin, Soorp Bethlehem, Soorp Kevork, which contains stones from Echmiadzin (brought by Shah Abbas to deter Armenians from returning to their lands) and Soorp Amenapergich cathedral.

Among all the relics of Armenian interest in Iran, Amenapergich (All Savior's) cathedral in New Julfa, called Vank Church by locals is the most magnificent. It was built from 1655 to 1664. Its inside walls are covered with magnificent paintings, depicting scenes from the Old and the New Testaments, life of Christ and persecutions of Krikor Lusavorich. The paintings are the works of Minas, Stepanos, Hovhannes Merkooz and other Armenian painters. The cathedral is considered unique and it is reportedly visited by close to 175,000 visitors annually. Archbishop Gorun Babian has been the Prelate since 1978. He succeeded Archbishops Karekin Sarkissian and Mesrob Ashjian.



Our pilgrims on the bank of River Arax. Across the river is Nakhichevan and the historic cemetery of Julfa which has been recently repeatedly vandalized by Azeris

The Armenian cemetery of New Julfa with its several acres of tombs of Armenians buried from 1605 forward is a moving testament of Armenian culture and life in Iran.

Words of appreciation are not sufficient to express a pilgrim's gratitude to the Eastern Prelacy and to the exceptional guide, Dr. Vazken Ghougassian, for initiating this spiritual experience.

Meliné Karakashian, Ph.D.

ՕՐԻՆԱԿԵԼԻ ԱՐԱՐԻ ՄԸ

Ազգային Առաջնորդարանիս Մեծն Ներսէս Բարսեղրական Հաստատութիւնը, որ Հայաստանի մէջ ունի որբերու յատուկ ծրագիր, ստացաւ ուշադրութեան արժանի նուիրատուութիւն մը Պրն. Սուրէն Անաստասեանի կողմէ: Յարգելի երիտասարդը իր համալսարանական ուսման աւարտին, յայտնած է իր ազգականներուն եւ բարեկամներուն, որ այդ առիթով իրեն տրուելիք նուէրները ինք պիտի յատկացնէ Ազգային Առաջնորդարանի որբերուն ծրագրին:



Հախէն աջ՝ Մարտո Անաստասեան, Օշական Սրբազան եւ Սուրէն Անաստասեան

Առաջնորդ Սրբազան հայրը, Օշական Արքեպիսկոպոս, բարձր գնահատելով Պրն. Սուրէնի ցուցաբերած այս ոգին, շնորհաւորեց զինք եւ ուզեց իմանալ թէ ինչն'ու այսպէս մտածած էր: Պրն. Սուրէն պատասխանեց ըսելով թէ, «անիլի ուրախ պիտի զգամ երբ կարենամ որբի մը կերակուր տալ, անոր հագուստ տալ կամ ուսման առիթ ընծայել, քան անճակամ վայելիս յատկացնել»: Աւետարանի խօսքերը անգամ մը եւս կեանք առին (Մատթ. 25:35-36): Յանուն մեր որբերուն, շնորհակալութիւն կը յայտնենք Պրն. Անաստասեանին \$1825 տոլարի նուիրատուութեան համար: Կը շնորհաւորենք զինք, մաղթելով առողջութիւն եւ կատարեալ յաջողութիւն կեանքի ասպարէզին մէջ:

Պրն. Սուրէն Անաստասեան որդին է Տէր եւ Տիկին Մարտո եւ Գարօյ Անաստասեաններուն: Եղած է աշակերտ Ս. Լուսաւորիչ ամենօրեայ Վարժարանին եւ Սիամանթօ լսարանին: Իր համալսարանական ուսումը ստացած է Փէյս համալսարանին մէջ:

DIARY OF A PILGRIM

"Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
who have set their hearts on pilgrimage" (Ps. 84:5)

Since childhood I have read and heard numerous stories about pilgrimages to Jerusalem. I have listened with awe to eyewitness accounts of pilgrims about the holy land, but never did I grasp their excitement until I personally walked on the cobblestoned streets of old Jerusalem.

With biblical images in mind, my, Yeretzgin and I begin our pilgrimage to Jerusalem with a group of Datevatzi Seminarians

On Monday evening, July 10, we fly through Paris and arrive at Amman Airport. We are met by our guide, the very Reverend Avedis Iprakjian, a member of the St. James brotherhood. He is a very enthusiastic and vibrant young clergyman and greets us warmly. We forget our hardships and with an air-conditioned bus set out on our journey to Jerusalem.

Passing through the 10,000 year old city of Jericho at midnight, we enter into the holy city. Like a schoolboy who has memorized his lines, I repeat in my mind with faith and excitement these lines from Psalms: "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'let us go to the house of the Lord.' Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem" (Ps. 122:1-2).

The bus stops at Notre Dame Hotel. A huge statue of our Lady the Mother of God at the top of the hotel embraces us in the darkness of the night and we all fall into a deep sleep in her bosom.

July 11

Our first visit was naturally to the St. James Armenian monastery complex in the heart of the Old City. From our hotel we walk to "New gate," and through the crawling narrow streets and covered markets we make our way to St. James. As an Armenian I feel proud that a handful of Armenians has been in possession of this complex, where the most dominant structure is the cathedral, a church of hundreds of lanterns and magnificent paintings.

This church was built on the relic of the head of St. James, the brother of Christ. This was the house of St. James, the first bishop of Christians. It was here that the first apostolic meeting was held. The Jews later beheaded St. James for his Christian beliefs. The place of his execution became a shrine in later years, and Armenians somehow inherited it, built a chapel on the shrine and enclosed the chapel in St. James Cathedral. The relic of his head was buried under the throne of the Patriarch but later was buried under the main altar. In the Cathedral is also St. Stephen's chapel, under whose altar is buried the baptismal font of St. Cyril of Jerusalem. The actual chains of Patriarch Krikor the Chain Bearer are kept here as well. He was the savior of the Armenian quarter. During his reign (1715- 1749) when the Patriarchate was subdued by heavy taxation and debt and was deemed confiscated by its creditors, this Patriarch placed chains around his neck and visited all Armenian communities in the world to raise money for the St. James monastery. He vowed not to remove the chains until he had met his fundraising goal. Ultimately he raised more than he had expected, saved the Armenian quarter, and made many renovations as well.

Our guide Father Avedis, who was holding these chains in his hand, approached me and said jokingly; "Der Nerses, why don't you wear the chains around your neck?" I put them on. They were heavy. Then I thought that all Armenian Christians should metaphorically feel the weight of chains around their necks as a reminder and a commitment to protect the Armenian properties of Jerusalem. On the left wall of St. James Cathedral is another chapel called St. Etchmiadzin. Blue ceramic tiles from Keotahia adorn the walls of St. James.

We lit our candles, and after hanging our prayers from the lanterns, we visit one by one all the institutions in the St. James monastery compound. The museum, Tarkmanchatz School, Holy Archangels Church, the manuscript library of St. Theodoros Church, the bookstore, etc.

We were told that at one time 10,000 Armenians lived on this complex. Now there are scarcely 1000 Armenians left.

We leave St. James, and walking around the great walls of the city, Father Avedis leads us to the valley of Gihon, a deep valley, at the bottom of which is the water tunnel of Ezekiel. Most of the seminarians venture to walk through this dark tunnel.

After the adventure, we visited first the "The Wailing Wall" and then the Via Dolorosa, the path over which Jesus dragged his cross. There are fourteen stations.

The Cathedral of the Holy Sepulcher is a magnificent edifice. It is not a church, but a little village. Under its roof are enclosed areas related to the episodes of the Trial, Tortures, Crucifixion and Burial.

We visit first the prison of Jesus, where he was held briefly after his conviction. Then we go to the place where the Roman soldiers divided his tunic amongst themselves. The altar belongs to Armenians. From there we ascend to Golgotha, which is a huge rock. The altar once belonged to Armenians but later became the property of the Greek Patriarchate. Under this rock they say is the tomb of Adam and Eve.

From there we visit the place where Joseph of Arimathea laid the body of Jesus and wrapped it in the linen shroud.

Then, one by one we enter into the empty tomb of our Lord. We kiss the tomb where the Christian religion was born.

I am kneeling now by the tomb and feel the flow of inexplicable energy and spiritual excitement. The spirits of my parents and other family members and the souls of my deceased parishioners kneel by my side. I light a candle and walk out. Standing a few feet from the tomb like the dumb-struck women on the morning of resurrection, I try to immerse myself in the mystery of the resurrection.

After this uplifting and exhilarating experience, we return to the hotel.

That same night, at 8:30 p.m. we had the honor to be the guests of the Armenian Patriarch, His Beatitude, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian. He received us in the magnificent official hall of the Patriarchate, which was very ornate and majestic. His Beatitude extended warm welcoming words to us, gave us each a little souvenir, and graciously agreed to pose with us for a group picture.

July 12

Our destination is Bethlehem (The House of Bread), a half-hour drive from Jerusalem. The hills are covered with olive trees. The population here is entirely Muslim, and the city is under Palestinian rule.

From the parking lot we walk about ten minutes through streets full of the smell of Arabic food. Vendors on the pavement sell almost everything, and young lads swarm around us, competing to sell souvenir cards.

We are already in "shepherds' field," where the angels appeared to the shepherds and heralded the good news of Christmas.

We enter into the shepherd's cave and joyously sing the hymn of the angels; "Glory to God in the highest."

The Bethlehem cathedral was built in the 4th century. The main altar belongs to the Greeks. On the right side of the cathedral the Armenians have their own altar. We start our descent to the cave where Jesus was born. It is our good fortune that an Armenian mass is in progress. We join our 26 strong voices to the voices of two monks, Father Razmig, the Rector of Bethlehem, and Father Nerses. Seeing us, they too are pleased. In this dark and humid cave we sing with all our souls and bodies and wish that it would never end. The moment is simply majestic. There on the left is the actual manger where the baby Jesus was placed. The orange flames of the candles create an exceptional religious ambience. I didn't know what to do to capture this moment - take a picture, kiss the manger, or pray? We were as happy and excited as children on Christmas morning. In this cave time is frozen. I remember the lines of the Armenian Christmas hymn, "Great Mystery and Wondrous." (Khorhoort Medz Yev Skanchelee).

At the end of the mass we receive communion and a little portion of holy bread, which I kept in my wallet to feed myself each day.

In the reception hall of the Armenian convent, Father Razmig gives us refreshments and coffee and offers us little goblets full of Bethlehem blessed oil.

With the oil in our bags and the Baby Jesus in our hearts, we board the bus and head to Mount Zion.

The first place we visit is the Church of Dormition where St. Mary passed away. On this location the Latins have built a magnificent cathedral with dazzling mosaics ornamenting the walls. Here we sing yet another hymn dedicated to St. Mary, "We prostrate before thee." Our voices fill the cathedral as curious tourists stand transfixed and enjoy our "strange" hymn.

We descend to the actual place of Dormition in the basement of the cathedral. We put a handful of prayers and supplications on the lap of our Lady and sister, the Virgin Mary, and step to the upper room of Pentecost, where the Holy Spirit descended with fiery tongues upon the apostles.

We sing a few verses of the Pentecostal hymn and descend to the street as new apostles of our time.

July 13

Our destination is Lake Tiberias or the Sea of Galilee.

The bus crawls through Jericho and stops at the foot of the Mount of Temptation. It is a very rugged and dry mountain. There is no sign of life. It is completely barren. On the top of the mountain are the huts of hermits. It is a very warm day. It seems to me that the entire mountain is a thirsty land waiting for heaven's downpour. It is a natural place for self-denial and repentance where Jesus spent forty hungry and thirsty days before beginning his ministry.

But we, at this early hour of the morning, stand holding bottles of cold water in contrast to the suffering of Jesus in this barren place.

I think to myself, it is so blessed that Jesus did not succumb to the temptations of Satan; otherwise we would be wandering in a spiritual wilderness.

We continue our journey towards Nazareth where the holy family lived.

In the heat of mid-day we arrive at Nazareth and head towards the Cathedral of the Annunciation adjacent to which Muslims are trying to erect a Mosque.

Our next stop is the village of Cana where Jesus performed his first miracle, turning the water into wine. (John 2)

On the location of the house, the Latins have built a church with dazzling mosaics and placed six jars on the walls to remind visitors of the miracle.

Our bus cruises through the beautiful and green hills of Gennesaret and descends to the Sea of Galilee 700 feet below sea level.

We embark on an excursion boat and have a joyful trip on the sea that our Lord and his disciples so often frequented. Under the canopy of the boat we rest and sing hymns. Small waves hit the bow of the ship and bring with them the echo of Jesus' voice, saying, "It is I, do not be afraid."

I think that we humans are still like the frightened and doubtful Peter when it comes to walking on the stormy sea of our lives.

After an hours ride we disembark in Capernaum and eat "St. Peter's fish" in a restaurant.

After lunch we enter Capernaum and from there to Bethsaida, the birth place of St. Peter, St. Andrew and St. Matthew. We visit the house of Peter, the house of his in-law where Jesus performed another miracle.

Afterwards a few of us venture to walk into Galilee and wash ourselves. I picked up a few pebbles, and now they are on my desk at home. I look at them as often as I sit there to write an article or speech or a sermon and try to hear Jesus' encouraging words, "It is I, do not be afraid."

July 14

We are in the village of Bethany, where Jesus' friend Lazarus lived with his sisters Mary and Martha.

On the narrow and dusty streets I try to hear echoes of the crowd's wondrous exclamation after the resurrection of Lazarus.

Some of us descend to Lazarus's tomb and from thence we enter the church of St. Lazarus, enjoy the mosaics, and sing our hymns. We take Lazarus with us and head toward the Dead Sea.

We eat lunch in a restaurant and take the cable car to the Peak of Massada Mountain where King Herod had his summer home. According to historians, the

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Diary of a Pilgrim

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Roman Army encircled the place for months, made their way to the top of this steep mountain, and finally captured the fortress. The Israelite soldiers at the last minute committed suicide rather than witness the Roman victory.

It is so hot up here that you cannot think about anything but cold water. We descend and spend an hour at the shore of the Dead Sea.

On the way back to the hotel, we stop at the Mount of Olives from whence our Lord ascended to heaven forty days after his resurrection.

The place is very windy. We cool off a little and enjoy a camel ride.

July 15

Today is Saturday. We are planning to spend our day mostly in religious activities. In the morning we are in St. James Cathedral to attend a Badarak celebrated by our leader, Father Anoushavan Tanielian.

The Mass was celebrated in the chapel of St. James on the spot where he was beheaded. The moment is sweet, the Mass is different. It is our own. Everything is ours, the lanterns, the columns, the candelabras, the church music, and even the voices that fill the cathedral. A few monks and St. James Seminarians and our boys and girls are the only attendants. The saints of the paintings descend and join us in singing.

The voice of the celebrant pierces the air and grows louder and louder, echoing in the air. "Peace to all." I pray that peace be in this city where everyday the sons of Abraham hate each other fiercely. Peace be on this city of Peace where even the Christians beat each other up to protect their rights.

At the end of Badarak I pick up a wafer for my church in Philadelphia to grace the life of my parish with the perpetual blessing of the Holy Land. That wafer is now in the Tabernacle of our Altar next to the wafer I had brought two years ago from Etchmiadzin.

At 5 p.m. in the evening we were to experience yet another exalting religious service, the traditional procession in the cathedral of the Holy Sepulcher.

The procession began in the Armenian Quarter, headed by Hayr Anoushavan. With hymns and incense we proceed first to the prison where Jesus was held briefly before his crucifixion. Next we go to the spot where the Roman soldiers divided his tunic among themselves and then to Golgotha, the scene of the crucifixion. Our procession continues to the place where Joseph of Aramathia prepared the body of our Lord for burial and then to the Tomb of Jesus.

Here, thanks to Hayr Avedis we have a second chance to enter the Tomb and light our candles. Illuminated with the mystery of the empty Tomb we step out.

July 16

This is the last day of our trip. A Sunday, we awaken to a magnificent symphony of church bells. We are given permission to celebrate our own Mass in the church of St. Mary, built on her tomb.

The church is at the edge of the Garden of Gethsemane and belongs to the Armenians. The celebrant is Der Antranig Baljian and his son Deacon Nshan his helper. We Datevatzis are both the choir and congregation.

In this deep cave, illuminated by the orange flames of candles, we sing with such vigor that I wonder what is filling us with such energy. Is it the empty tomb of St. Mary behind the altar or the magnificent paintings of the Saints on the walls?

"For every good and perfect gift is from above". With these closing words of the celebrant our pilgrimage comes to an end.

I stroll in the Garden of Gethsemane and meditate about this week. It flew by so quickly.

I hear Hayr Avedis' commanding voice "Are you ready, boys and girls?" Who could be ready to bid farewell to these holy places. I think. After a week we have just begun to awaken from our dream, to start touching reality and to digest the sacredness of the places we have visited. How can we leave Armenian Jerusalem when each Armenian monk and Armenian holy place is so much in need of Armenian people? The Armenian population has decreased tremendously in this holy city. For the protection of the Armenian holy places, the Patriarch Krikor the Chain Bearer wore chains around his neck.

But our return is inevitable. Pilgrims come and go. Tens of thousands if not millions of Armenians have come and gone. It is our turn now. With the images of the shrines ingrained in our memories, rejuvenated by the blessedness of the Holy Land, and like good pilgrims carrying candles and incense in our bags, we return home to be called Hajji.

Rev. Nerses Manoogian

IMPRESSIONS FROM DATEVATZIS

This year I had the opportunity to attend the St. Gregory of Datev Institute from July 2nd to 9th at the St. Mary of Providence Center in Elverson, Pennsylvania. Datev is an annual Armenian Christian studies program.

I was most impressed with the atmosphere at Datev. A sense of comfort and overall kindness and friendliness accompanied the entire program.

Aside from the positive ambiance, everything was excellent. We were able to pray and reflect on our spirituality during the morning and evening services. Our classes were also a time of understanding and discussing the Armenian Church. Some of the classes we had dealt with the Badarak, the Liturgical Calendar, and Armenian Church History. In addition, we had an Armenian language class every morning and open discussion, general lectures, and group bible studies throughout the week. Needless to say, there was not an uninteresting minute the entire time I was there.

Linda Khatchadrian

St. Gregory the Illuminator's Church PA

My pilgrimage experience rebuilt my faith stronger because this trip laid the foundation to my Christian religion. In the future, I have the responsibility to continue to build on top of this new foundation.

Garine Palandjian
Sts. Vartanantz Church RI

This pilgrimage changed our lives; it even brought us, datevatzis, closer together like a family instead of friends. The places we've been, the things we've seen are indescribable and unforgettable. I cannot describe it to you. All I can say is in order to experience these places, you must make the trip for yourself to see with your own eyes.

Nanor Harutunian
St. Sarkis Church NY

Ուխտագնացութիւն դէպի Երուսաղէմ եւ Տէր Զօր... Երկու սրբավայրեր, որոնք հիմա դարձած են իմ հաւատքին եւ պատկանելիութեանս կեդրոնը:

Տէր Զօրի Սր. Նահատակաց Եկեղեցւոյ մէջ, Հոգեհանգստեան յուզիչ պաշտօն կատարուեցաւ մեր մեծ հայրերու եւ մեծ մայրերու սուրբ յիշատակին: Տէր Զօրի յուշարձանը ինձի յիշեցուց Թիծեռնակաբերդը ի անշէջ բովով: Իմ նախահայրերուս ոսկորները աչքերովս երբ տեսայ, անդրադարձայ որ Մեծ Զարդը միայն մեր Հայոց Պատմութեան գիրքերու մէջ գրուած պատահար մը չէր, այլ իրականութիւն:

Քամար Փայանեան
Սրբոց Վարդանանց Եկեղեցի ՐԱ

This year, some of the Datev students and teachers participated in a two week pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. This unforgettable trip has opened the hearts and minds of the pilgrims to Armenian life in holy lands. The most memorable experience for me was Jerusalem. I hope I have another opportunity to explore the wonders of Jerusalem, but until then, I will savor the memories of this extraordinary pilgrimage.

Arousiag Markarian
St. Sarkis Church NY

Antelias is the most religious Armenian establishment I have ever seen. Besides Antelias we also visited the Armenian settlements of Bikfaya and Anjar. Anjar is a municipality outside of Beirut. The population of Anjar is almost all Armenian. I was impressed with what I saw. As we walked down the streets we heard Armenian being spoken. The stores and business were owned by Armenians. We saw Armenian churches and schools. It was as if we were in our homeland. There are not many places in the diaspora with such large and dense Armenian populations.

Nazareth Nazarian
St. Sarkis Church NY

ARCHBISHOP OSHAGAN CHOLOYAN PARTICIPATES IN WHITE HOUSE BREAKFAST FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, was one of a hundred participants in a breakfast meeting at the White House on September 14. The breakfast was hosted by President Clinton who brought the religious leaders together to discuss some issues of common concern.

Attending were the heads or representatives of many faiths and denominations throughout the United States. The main focus of the meeting was the global economy and the information revolution. The President especially wanted the input of the religious leaders of how organized religion can help poorer nations, especially in fighting disease and providing more economic opportunities. The President also spoke about the possibility of forgiving foreign debts incurred by the poorer nations.

The meeting also provided an opportunity for the religious leaders and the administration to discuss issues like coexistence and religious liberty.

SPEAKER OF ARMENIA'S PARLIAMENT ARMEN KHATCHATRIAN AT THE PRELACY



On September 1, 2000 Armen Khatchatrian, Speaker of Armenia's Parliament, paid an informal visit to the Prelacy of the Armenian Church headquarters in New York. He was accompanied by Member of Parliament Hranoush Hagopian.

The Prelate, Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan welcomed the Armenian delegation, and during a small reception held in the Prelacy tahlij, a discussion took place about current conditions in Armenia.

Mr. Khatchatrian and Ms. Hagopian had been in New York to attend the Millennium Heads of Parliament meeting held at United Nations headquarters in New York. Mr. Khatchatrian was one of several heads of Parliament from U.N. member countries who made a formal address in the General Assembly.

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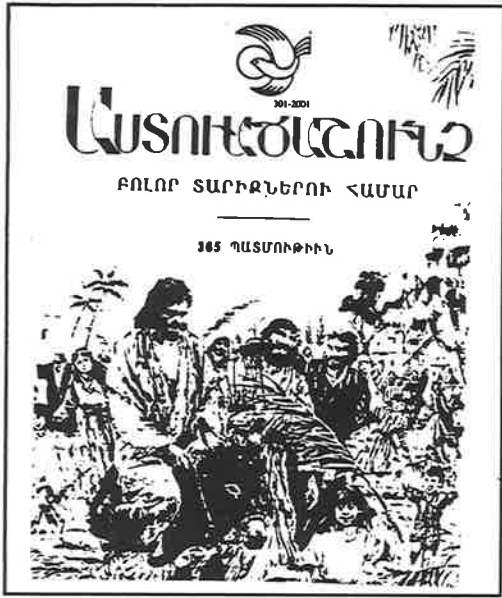
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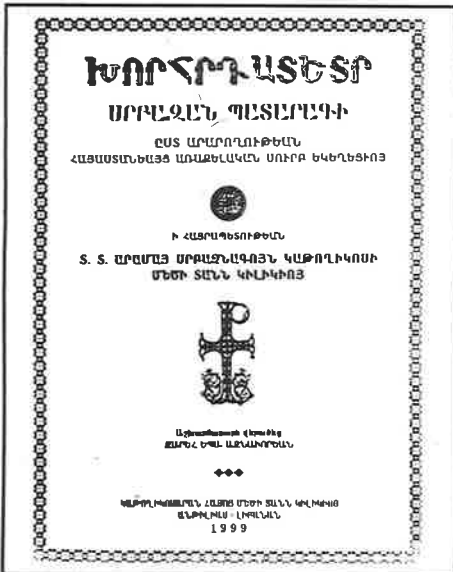
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Commemorating the 1700th Anniversary of Christian
Armenia
October 27 - 28, 2000
Center of Theological Inquiry
50 Stockton Street, Princeton, New Jersey

sponsored by the
Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America
(Eastern United States and Canada)

under the auspices of
His Holiness Aram I
Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia

PROGRAM

First Session-Friday, October 27
2 p.m.

Opening Remarks
Professor Vigen Guroian, chairman

Welcoming Remarks
His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan, Prelate

Message
His Holiness Aram I
Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia
Moderator of World Council of Churches

(2:30 p.m.) **Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan**
St. Nersess Seminary and Pontifical Oriental Institute
"Prayer and Gemflexion in the Liturgy of the Armenian Church"

(4:00 p.m.) **Professor Nina Garsoian**
Columbia University
"Problems of Early Armenian Monasticism"

(5:15 p.m.) **Professor Robin Darling-Young**
Catholic University of America
*"Features of Monastic Organization in the Collected Homilies
Ascribed to St. Gregory the Illuminator"*

Second Session-Saturday, October 28

(9:30 a.m.) **Professor Karlfried Froelich**
Princeton Theological Seminary
*"The Chair of Peter: Thoughts on an Ancient Christian Concept
and Its History"*

(11:00 a.m.) **Professor Robert W. Jenson**
Center of Theological Inquiry
"On Dis/Agreeing with Chalcedon"

Third Session

(2:00 p.m.) **Professor Vigen Guroian**
Loyola University
"Learning How to Die Well: Lessons from the Ancient Church"

(3:30 p.m.) **Professor John H. Erickson**
St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary
*"Beyond Dialogue: The Quest for Eastern and Oriental Orthodox
Unity Today"*

(4:30 p.m.) Concluding Remarks
H.E. Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan

Advance Registration Required / space is limited
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