

ARCHIVE COPY

Please return.



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

Volume XXIII No. 8 — April 2001

ՄԻՇՏ ՅԻՇԷ ԶԻՐԵՆԻ

Ահա կրկին Ապրիլ 24-ը կը բացուի մեր առջեւ, իր արհաւիրքով, համատարած ջարդով, ահաբեկով, վերապրումով եւ այսօր, մանաւանդ, իր պահանջատիրութեամբ:

Բոլորիս մտքին ու հոգիին մէջ նշմարտապէս կը գծուի արհաւիրքին ահաւորութիւնը: Ջարդը, տեղահանութիւնը եւ անպատմելի ահաբեկը ի գործ դրուեցաւ բարի ժողովուրդի մը դէմ: Ձկայ տրամաբանութիւն որ կրնայ անոր իրաւացիութիւնը ժխտել: Ապրիլ 24-ը եւ տարուան մնացեալ օրերը փաստերը հաւաքելով Ցեղասպանութեան իրականութիւնը նշմարտութեան բերելու նիւթ չէ միայն մեր ընկիւղը, այլ յարատեւ յիշեցում, որ մեր անմեղ գոհերը ի գուր չմեռան, անոնց արիւնը չցամաքեցաւ անպատմելի մէջ, այլ ընդհակառակը, անոնք տակաւին ցցուած կը մնան անարդարութեան դէմ եւ անոնց արիւնը կ'եռայ մեր երակներուն մէջ՝ արդարութիւն աղաղակելով:

Հայոց դէմ կատարուած Ցեղասպանութիւնը խախտումն է միջագային կանոններուն, մրոտումն է մարդկային խիղճին, պղծումն է արդարութեան աստուածային օրէնքին: Դժբախտաբար ոսմակոխուած են միջագային կանոնները, պետութիւններ քարստութեամբ սպաննած են իրենց խիղճը՝ ժամանակաւոր, պարագայական եւ շահադիտական քաղաքական հաշիւներով, բայց պէտք չէ ըլլայ, չի կրնար ըլլալ որ Աստուծոյ օրէնքը, արդարութիւնն ու անոր անմիջապէս փետեւող արդար հատուցումը ջնջուի մարդոց հոգիներէն:

Այսօր աշխարհի կարգ մը պետութիւններ կ'արթնան հայկական ցեղասպանութիւնը անտեսելու քմիրէն, այսօր նահատակներուն արիւնի ձայնը աւելի լսելի կը դառնայ միջագային օրինականութեան մօտ: Սակայն չի քաւեր նանաչումը, անհրաժեշտ եւ միանգամ ընդմիջտ դատապարտել ոնիրը, ատենան բերել ոնրագործը եւ հատուցանել անմեղը: Միայն այն ատեն է որ մենք մեր հաւատարմութիւնը գոհացուցիչ կերպով կատարած կ'ըլլանք հանդէպ գոհերուն, միայն այն ատեն է որ մենք կրնանք իրաւունքը ձեռք բերելով, հանդարտ խղճով նայիլ մէկուկէս միլիոն նահատակներուն տակաւին բաց մնացած աչքերուն մէջ:

Ահաւասիկ ժամն է կրկին նշմարտութեան աղաղակը բարձրացնելու, ահաւասիկ պահն է իրաւունքի համար պայքարելու: Տէր կանգնէ բու նահատակներուդ, անոնց հաւատքին ու հոգիին, եւ բնաւ մի լոնցներ մէջդ աղաղակող արդարութեան ձայնը: Հետապնդէ իրաւունքդ եւ գոհացիր միայն այն ատեն երբ արդար հատուցումը ձեռք կը ձգես: Միշտ յիշէ գիրեն:

Two Catholicos in Pilgrimage to Deir Zor



His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, and His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, joined in a Pilgrimage to Aleppo and Deir Zor, April 22-23.

Thousands of Armenians enthusiastically welcomed the Catholicoses upon their arrival to Aleppo where they were welcomed by the Prelate, Archbishop Souren Kataroyan.

The emotional pilgrimage to the village of Markade where a few years earlier remains of Armenian deportees were discovered and especially the visit to the Holy Martyrs Church complex in Deir Zor will be remembered by all who attended. The entourage included the Primates and Prelates of North America.

See Page 3 for more photos

The Suffering God of Armenian Christology: Toward an Ecumenical Theology of the Cross

by Vigen Guroian

*Holy God, holy and mighty, holy immortal
Who wast crucified for us,
Have mercy upon us.*

Trisagion of the Armenian Liturgy

Between 1915-1922 the Armenian population living within Turkey was destroyed—reduced from two million to no more than several hundred thousand. Somewhere between one million and one and one half million Armenians had lost their lives in forced marches of deportation and bloody massacres. Ancient centers of Armenian culture and learning were wiped clean of Armenians, and historic monuments were deliberately destroyed or left to ruins. Nearly all Armenian communities in a global diaspora carry the memory of this genocide through survivors and their progeny. One must add to this the continuing history of Turkish denial that a genocide was attempted plus the betrayal of nations from whom Armenians expected sympathy and acknowledgements of the crimes committed against them.

The genocide also engendered a crisis of faith in the Armenian Church. I turn to this phenomenon in order to set the actual context and occasion for my later remarks about Armenian christology and a theology of the cross. The Armenian genocide (Armenocide) has not been faced squarely by Armenian clergy or laity. Instead, a massive denial and repression of suffering has been the subject of repeated lamenta-

tions with commemorations of those who perished held all over the world every April 24th. The remembering has not remedied, however, the Armenian pain and woundedness. Turkish denial and the acquiescence of the United States government to the lie have not helped matters. ¹ But neither has recognition of the injustice quieted the Armenian soul.

Presently in Armenia, the refusal by Azerbaijan to return the historic Armenian region of Nagorno-Karabagh to Armenia and Azeri attempts in fact to drive the Armenians off that land are interpreted as continuations of the Ottoman Turkish (Azeris are ethnically Turkish) policies of ethnic cleansing which reached the proportions of genocide in 1915. In Armenian consciousness realities of national peril become difficult to distinguish from national paranoia. And a nervous Armenian pride worn like a band-aid on a superficial wound does not work the deep healing that is needed.

This denial has manifested itself theologically. While the material effects of dispersion from the historic land and the deaths of millions have been recited incessantly, the church has not addressed honestly the psychological trauma and its impact upon faith. The hurt and threat to faith has not been answered by reference to the cross of Jesus Christ. Modern disbelief has left some Armenians incapable of finding redemptive meaning in their suffering. One contemporary Armenian author has

called this crucifixion without the cross.² Angry railing against God and Turk becomes itself a mechanism for escaping from the awful, existential pain. Similarly, the ready use by the traditionally pious of the resurrection symbol as solution for the affliction becomes another form of averting the truth. Sermons and episcopal messages skip over the crucifixion to comfort the faithful with promises that God will bring a national and collective resurrection.

During my first visit to Armenia in July of 1990, I had several long conversations with a young Armenian priest whose pastoral activities in the wake of the devastating earthquake in December of 1988 had pressed him to confront this psychology of denial personally. He said to me:

We priests, the church itself, have not been able to deal with the pain [of the genocide]. Our own personal denial of this suffering has muted us. It has made us unable to meet the needs of our people in the churches, who also have been denying the true nature of their suffering, while all of us, priest and lay people alike, have screamed at others, demanding justice when justice alone could not relieve our pain or suffering.

Armenian denial has reinvented the memory of the genocide into a projective myth of national restoration. The church itself no longer thinks of itself so much as the body of Christ as the soul of a wounded nation awaiting vindication and empowerment. The martyrs and victims of

(Continued on page 4)

Martyrs Monument Dedicated in Granite City



Archbishop Oshagan leads the Dedication Ceremony.



Young parishioners place flowers at the newly dedicated Martyrs Monument.

Sunday, April 29 was a memorable day for the parish of St. Gregory Armenian Church in Granite City, Illinois. A large crowd of the faithful gathered to commemorate not only the 86th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide but to also dedicate the newly erected Martyrs Memorial in front of the Church. Surrounding the monument is a memorial walk consisting of bricks which remember not only the Armenian Martyrs of 1915-1921, but in memory of those who settled in the Granite City-St. Louis area.

The monument is designed in the Armenian tradition with an exceptionally beautiful khatchkar (stone cross), created by Leo Hanian of Philadelphia.

The Divine Liturgy on that special Sunday morning was celebrated by the Prelate, His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan and was followed by the dedication of the monument. Mr. Grant Korkoyan, a devoted and generous parishioner and board member was named Godfather of the monument for his very generous donation and support of this special project.

A brief program followed the consecration at which time addresses were delivered by Congressman Jerry Costello, a long-time supporter of the Armenian American community; Granite City Mayor Ron Selph; Rev. Fr. Vartan Kassabian, parish priest; and Archbishop Oshagan.

Rev. Kassabian extended special thanks to Stephen Hagopian, chairman of the board of trustees, who sacrificed a great amount of personal time and devoted himself unselfishly to this project. Father Vartan also expressed thanks to all parishioners, friends, and supporters who helped to make this project a reality. "The memorial is witness to the endurance of the Armenian Spirit," Father Kassabian said.

ՔԱՆԱՏԱՑԻ ԱՌԱՋՆՈՐԴՈՒԹԵԱՆ ՓՈԽԱՆՈՐԴՈՒԹԵԱՆ ՆԵՐԿԱՑԱՑՈՒՑԶԱԿԱՆ ԺՈՂՈՎ

ՔԱՆԱՏԱՑԻ ԱՌԱՋՆՈՐԴՈՒԹԵԱՆ ՓՈԽԱՆՈՐԴՈՒԹԵԱՆ ԿԱՐԳԱՎԻՋԱԿԻ ՄԱՍԻՆ ԿԱՐԵՒՈՐ ՈՐՈՇՈՒՄ



Քանատայի Առաջնորդական Փոխանորդության Գ. ներկայացուցչական ժողովը կայացրաւ Քեմպրիջի Ս. Նշան Հայց. Ատաբ. Եկեղեցւոյ ներքնասրահին մէջ, 6 եւ 7 Ապրիլ 2001-ին, նախագահութեամբ Հիւս. Ամերիկայի Արեւելեան Շրջանի եւ Քանատայի Կիլիկիոյ Թեմի Առաջնորդ Բարձր. Տ. Օշական Արք. Զօրայեանի, մասնակցութեամբ Քանատայի Առաջնորդական Փոխանորդ Գերշ. Խաժակ Եպիսկ. Յակոբեանի, Ազգային Վարչութեան ներկայացուցիչներուն, Գործադիր Խորհուրդին եւ հոգեւորական ու աշխարհական երեսփոխաններուն եւ հոգաբարձութեանց ներկայացուցիչներուն:

Առաջնորդ Սրբազան Հայրը իր պատգամին մէջ շեշտեց անհրաժեշտութիւնը նուիրումի եւ գոհողութեան այն ոգիին հանդէպ Հայ Եկեղեցւոյ, ինչ որ իւրաքանչիւր պատասխանատու պէտք է ունենայ: 1700ամեակը առիթ պէտք է ըլլայ Հայ Եկեղեցւոյ առաջնութիւնը յստակեցնելու եւ մեր ճիգերը ի մի հաւաքելու՝ ապահովելու համար Հայ Եկեղեցւոյ գորութիւնը:

Երկօրեայ նիստերու օրակարգի գլխաւոր նիւթերն էին՝

Ա.- Քանատայի Առաջնորդական Փոխանորդութեան կարգավիճակի բնագրում:

Բ.- Յառաջիկայ տարեշրջանի նախահաշիւի հաստատում:

Գ.- Կրօնական եւ Գործադիր Խորհուրդի լրացուցիչ ընտրութիւններ:

Ժողովը ունկնդրել էր Գործադիր Խորհուրդի միամեայ գործունէութեան նիւթական եւ բարոյական տեղեկագրերը եւ ընթացիկ հարցերու լուծումներ տալէ ետք, Քանատայի Առաջնորդական Փոխանորդութեան կարգավիճակին գծով յանգեցաւ այն որոշումին, որ Բարձր. Տ. Օշական Արքեպիսկոպոս Առաջնորդ Սրբազան Հօր եւ Ազգային Վարչութեան միջոցով, պաշտօնական դիմում ներկայացուի Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Վեհափառ Հայրապետին ու Ազգային Կեդրոնական Վարչութեան Խառն Ժողովին, Քանատան անյապաղ օժտելու Առաջնորդական իիւրա կարգավիճակով:

Լրացուցիչ ընտրութիւններու որպէս արդիւնք, Կրօնական Խորհուրդին մաս կը կազմեն՝ Տ. Արմէն Ա. Քեմլ. Իշխանեան, Տ. Հրայր Քեմլ. Նիկոլեան, Տ. Գառնիկ Քեմլ. Գոյունեան:

Գործադիր Խորհուրդին մաս կը կազմեն՝ Մեքք Վարդգէս Շամեան, տնարք Ստեփան Զաւազեան, Կարպիս Փալանեան, Երուանդ Շահինեան, Յակոբ Թաշեան, Յարութիւն Մարգարեան, Արթուր Գապասաբալեան:



Archbishop Oshagan and Robert Haig Setrakian (left) recently met with Representative Frank Pallone (D-NJ), at a luncheon in New York. The gathering was attended by area young professionals and community leaders.

You can either complain that rose bushes have thorns—or rejoice that thorn bushes have roses.

Outreach

A publication of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America Eastern United States and Canada
138 E. 39th Street
New York, NY 10016
Tel: (212) 689-7810 Fax: (212) 689-7168
E-mail: prelacy@armprelacy.org
Web page: www.armprelacy.org

Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate

Iris Papazian, Editor
Mardiros Minas-Haftvani, Business Manager

OUTREACH (USPS 426-490) is published monthly, with the exception of a combined summer (June, July, August) issue by the Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, 138 E. 39th Street, New York, NY 10016. Signed articles do not necessarily reflect the policy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America. Send all correspondence to the above address to the attention of the editor. Printed in the United States of America. Periodical rate postage paid at New York, NY 10016. Postmaster: Send address changes to Outreach, 138 E. 39th Street, New York, NY 10016. ISSN: 10643087

Mark the Date

Nov. 10, 2001

New York Debut Performance of the National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia

Alice Tully Hall
Lincoln Center

Pilgrimage to Deir Zor

(Continued from page 1)



A solemn moment.



Many thousands of people welcomed the Pontiffs.



The Holy Martyrs Church Complex in Deir Zor.



The steeple of Forty Martyrs Cathedral in Aleppo, 1912.

National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia to Make New York Debut in November

Eastern Prelacy Sponsors Event in Honor of 1700th Anniversary of Christian Armenia



The National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia

Since its formation four years ago, the National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia has attracted international attention from critics and the public, with their spirited performances and unusual programming under the leadership of Maestro Aram Gharabekian.

The New York debut of the Chamber Orchestra will take place on Saturday, November 10, 2001, at Alice Tully Hall in New York City's Lincoln Center, under the sponsorship of the Eastern Prelacy. The event, which is dedicated to the 1700 years of Christian Armenia, is expected to attract the attention of a wide cross section of the Mid-Atlantic and New England communities.

In the spring of 1997, Armenia's Minister of Culture extended a special invitation to the Armenian American conductor Aram Gharabekian and appointed him artistic director and principal conductor of the newly formed National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia (NCOA).

In a short period of time under Maestro Gharabekian's dynamic leadership, the NCOA's spirited performances attracted unprecedented attention from the critics and the public. The 25 NCOA members represent the finest chamber music players in Armenia and are selected through a meticulous audition process.

Archbishop Oshagan expressed his pleasure that the Chamber Orchestra will be making its New York debut performance under the sponsorship of the Prelacy. "We are very proud of the cultural progress being made in Armenia even under difficult circumstances. The Chamber Orchestra has delighted audiences not only in Armenia but also in various countries around the world. In a short time they have achieved recognition in the concert hall in recordings. This is a very meaningful celebration of this important anniversary," said the Prelate.

A committee was formed some months ago and has already met several times to oversee every aspect of the concert and ensure its cultural and financial success. The committee, under the leadership of His Eminence and the co-chairs, Mrs. Linda Chirinian and Mrs. Silva Zadourian, will make every effort to make this an exciting and memorable cultural evening.

A Conductor That Inspires

The Boston Globe critic, Richard Dyer, describes Aram Gharabekian as one who "knows to inspire an orchestra to give him what he wants."

Gharabekian was formerly the Principal Guest Conductor of the Ukrainian Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra in Kiev. During his eight years as Music Director and Conductor of the Boston Sinfonova Orchestra (1982-1990), he won national recognition and praise for his innovative and enterprising programming, as well as his critically acclaimed performances in major American venues, including Carnegie Hall, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, and Boston's Symphony and Jordan halls.

He is the recipient of the Lucien Wulsin Performance Award for the best concert performance aired on National Public Radio in the United States, and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) Award for Adventurous Programming. He has been twice honored by the Harvard Music Association's "Best Performance Award" and, on four occasions, his performances have been singled out "Best of the Year" by the Boston Globe.

Born in 1955, Gharabekian moved to the United States at a young age where he continued his studies in composition and piano. He graduated from the New England Conservatory in Boston with a Master's degree in Composition, and continued his postgraduate studies in Musical Phenomenology at Mainz University in Germany. He studied conducting with Franc Ferrari in Italy, and in 1979 became one of a few conducting pupils of the legendary Sergiu Celibidache in Germany. He was also granted a fellowship to study composition and conducting under Jacob Druckman and Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood Music Center.

Mark the Date

Nov. 10, 2001

New York Debut Performance of the National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia

**Alice Tully Hall
Lincoln Center**

The Suffering God of Armenian Christology: Toward an Ecumenical Theology of the Cross

(Continued from page 1)

the genocide are interpreted not in the light of the gospel but as fallen heroes of the struggle for nationhood. Patriotism displaces discipleship. Presently, Armenians have the longed for sovereign nation. But they are learning that its mere existence has not relieved the anguish or healed the still open and bleeding psychological and spiritual wounds. Self-pity and vengefulness continue to fester.

The Suffering of God

The theology of national resurrection has been a cheap theology and a false theology of hope. Often it has added only torment to the suffering and contributed to the sense of affliction. It has the potential of fueling an irrational nationalism. Persons need to be healed in their individual anguish and crises of faith. The community needs to know that its protest and suffering is taken up into the life of God and that healing is not solely dependent upon winning earthly justice. I want to impress upon my readers just this point about healing and its relationship to God. The story of Armenian tragedy and faith may be singular but it is not unique. At stake is a fundamental issue of the mission of the church located as it always is within the finiteness and brokenness of human community.

There is a special lesson in the Armenian Church's failure to grasp its essential post-Armenicide mission. The Armenian Church has a resource in its ancient christology which preserves some deep truths about the cross and the suffering of God. This distinctive christology, which owes much to the great fourth-century church father Cyril of Alexandria, preserves early apostolic insights into the suffering of God in Jesus Christ. These insights were muted by later fifth-century efforts to nuance the meaning and relationship of the two natures of Christ. The Armenian christology has been called monophysite because it refused to accept the Chalcedonian doctrine of the two natures of Christ. But the Armenian Church's refusal was not a rejection of the humanity of Jesus. Rather Armenian Christianity sought to safeguard the truth that the subject who suffered and died on the cross was none other than the divine World and Son of God the Father.

I prefaced this essay with a quotation from the Trisagion of the Armenian liturgy. The phrase "who wast crucified for us," was added to the trisagial hymn by the Patriarch of Antioch, Peter Fuller, in 471. The phrase was intended to emphasize the real suffering of the Second Person of the Trinity. The Byzantine and Latin churches have not retained this formula. The Armenian Church accepted the addition and has kept it to this day, even in the face of unfair accusations that it was guilty of the theopaschal heresy of attributing death to the triune Godhead itself.

In twentieth-century ecumenical settings, Armenian churchmen and theologians have defended the Armenian christology. They have remained true to the letter of the ancient teaching. But this seems often to have had more to do with service to national pride and the desire to remain distinct from others than with theological conviction put to the test of pastoral practice. Ironically, Armenian church apologists have not invoked this christology in pastoral situations to remedy the unrelieved Armenian anguish.

Luther, Moltmann, and the Armenians

Here again denial has overcome the creative spirit—thus my protest and my plea for a re-imagining of God in the Armenian Church. Novelty is not what is called for but rather faithfulness to tradition and the courage to make it live for contemporary people. Meanwhile, in this century, Protestant and Catholic theologians have been returning to the ancient christology of a suffering God. That the suffering and



The Martyrs Chapel and Rebirth Chapel in Deir Zor.

death experienced by Jesus Christ is God's own suffering is fundamental to Martin Luther's christology. The Formula of Concord cites Luther's saying flatly, "If it is not true that God died for us, but only a man died, we are lost."³ Contemporary Reform theologian Jürgen Moltmann takes his point of departure from Luther to his book, *The Crucified God*, and develops it further.

Luther...took seriously the fact that it is not a matter of thinking of two natures of equal worth in one person, but rather that a divine person assumed an anhypostatic human nature...

...For Luther...Christ and God form a unity not only in revelation, but already in their very being, as his formula indicates: "Christ alone and no other God." Jesus Christ is: "the Lord Sabaoth." "The one whom the whole circle of the world never encompassed lies in Mary's womb," we find in his hymns. "For God is not solely present and substantial in him as to all other [creatures], but also dwells in him corporeally in such a way that one person is man and God..."

For Zwingli, God remains untouched in his sovereignty by taking the human nature of Christ. Christ suffers and dies according to his manhood, his veil of flesh, on our behalf. But for Luther the person of Christ is determined by the divine person. Therefore the divine person also suffers and dies in the suffering and death of Christ.⁴

Moltmann cites as an example of this Lutheran christology the Good Friday hymn of Johann Rist,

He died upon the cross,
O died amidst the God,
In this he won the kingdom of heaven
For love of us.⁵

The parallel of this Lutheran emphasis upon the suffering and dying of the Second Person of the Godhead with the ancient Armenian christology is impressive. It lends to the persuasiveness of Moltmann's thesis about Luther's theological debt to Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria. It contributes to our appreciation for the contemporary ecumenical possibilities in such a discussion of christology. For example, one cannot help but be struck by the kinship of Rist's hymn with a much older Armenian hymn for Holy Saturday:

The Life Giver of all today
is being put into a new tomb.
And the treasure of immortality is sealed off...
The Savior of creatures
is being put in a newly carved rock.⁶

Moltmann argues that Luther followed the Alexandrian Logos christology which emphasized that the pre-existent divine subject, the Word of God, is the one who suffers and dies on the cross as a human being. In another Armenian hymn for Holy Week this very same christology is displayed in exacting fashion. The following verses belong to a Good Friday hymn com-

posed by the twelfth-century Armenian theologian St. Nersess the Graceful.

[Christ] was sorrowful about his suffering while apart from the three [disciples]: "My soul is willing to save the world, but the nature of my body is weak." Not the one [nature] was strong and powerful, and the other feeble and endangered, but *being one and the same person* (my stress) bore the suffering willingly.⁷

In *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, Moltmann argues that "the experience of being forsaken by God is the nadir of Christ's humiliation."⁸ However, the depth of this experience of abandonment to death is not wholly grasped by the two-natures doctrine alone. Only by focusing on the divine sonship of Christ is the full measure of God's love and suffering understood. Luther captured this truth in *Table-Talk*.

The greatest wonder ever on earth is, that the Son of God died the shameful death on the cross. It is astonishing, that the Father should say to his only Son, who by nature is God: Go let them hang thee on the gallows. The love of the everlasting Father was immeasurably greater toward his only begotten Son than the love of Abraham towards Isaac; for the Father testified from heaven: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"; and yet he was cast away so lamentably, like a worm, a scorn of men, and outcast of his people.⁹

The sixth-century Armenian philosopher and theologian, David the Invincible, powerfully displays this very same insight in his "Encomium of the Holy Cross of God." Here is how David described suffering love in the temporal and eternal relations of Father and Son.

This the clear and unambiguous sign of the love of God toward men, for thus does divine Scripture teach: "God revealed His love unto us, for Christ died for us who are sinners. And...God so loved all men and women as to give His only-begotten Son...." Now He who laid Himself down indeed did so through and on the Cross. And He who gave Himself on it is still on it and does not distance Himself from it. For though he who was nailed on it was removed from it bodily, nevertheless the power of the nailed one is united to it even to this day. For He who pleased to dwell in it did not depart from it but dwelt, dwells, and will dwell there....

Therefore the Cross is the Cross of God, and He Himself, the Crucified One, God immortal, uncircumscribable and infinite.¹⁰

These passages expose the error in the often repeated generalization that in the East the emphasis is on resurrection at the expense of the cross and that in the West a theology of the cross develops which is unparalleled in the East.

Conclusion

My reflections in this article have focused on the Armenian experience of genocide and its aftermath. I believe, however, that such a theological exploration

has universal applicability to human suffering in its consequences for faith and the challenges it presents for the church. I also happen to think that there is ecumenical potential in a theology of the cross which has yet to be uncovered and explored. This brief juxtaposition of Moltmann's and Luther's theologies of the cross with the Armenian christology is one demonstration of that ecumenical potential.

The ramifications for ecclesial life and conduct are also great. In spite of the Armenian "Golgotha" of 1915, the Armenian Church has persisted in its triumphalism. Many of the most sensitive and creative Armenian spirits of this century have been driven to a protest atheism precisely because they have not been able to live the lie of a cheap theology of resurrection or abide the denial in the church's ecclesiastical triumphalism. This triumphalism is unseemly in view of the affliction in modern Armenian experience. And it is inconsistent with the traditional Armenian christology. This christology requires the church to recover Christ in his humility, suffering, and compassion on the cross. The Armenicide and its legacy stand as a tragic reminder that the redemptive worth of the Armenian Church depends upon whether it practices a sacrificial and cruciform existence. The opportunities for this renewal of discipleship and mission have been brought to the fore with the earthquake of 1988, the Azeri massacres of Armenians at Sumgait and Baku, and the Armenian struggle for national survival in a post-soviet world. Yes, on the cross Christ defeated Satan and death. But that's just it. On the cross this was accomplished. As David the Invincible says: "He who worthily embraces the Cross...does so not...with a mere cross, but with the awesome power of God crucified on it."¹¹

FOOTNOTES

1. See my article, "The Politics and Morality of Genocide," *The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, Ethics*, Richard G. Hovannissian, ed. (New York: St. Martin's, 1992) 311-339.

2. Leonardo P. Alishan, "Crucifixion Without 'The Cross': The Impact of the Genocide on Armenian Literature," *Armenian Review* 38 (Spring 1985) 27-50.

3. Formula of Concord in *The Book of Concord*, ed. by Theodore G. Tappert (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1959) 599. When it comes to suffering on the part of Christian believers, Luther emphasizes that it must be suffering beset upon us and not suffering we have chosen. Such suffering identifies us with Christ, so that "our faith may increase and grow stronger and thus bring the Savior more deeply into our hearts." *Luther's Works*, American Edition, 55 vols. (Minneapolis and St. Louis: Fortress and Concordia, 1955-69) 51:207.

4. Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974) 232-233.

5. *Ibid.*, 233.

6. *Services of Common Prayer of the Armenian Church* (Venice: St. Lazarus, 1898) 503.

7. *Ibid.*, "Aysor Anjar" (This Ineffable Day), verse 16.

8. Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981) 77.

9. Quoted from *A Compend of Luther's Theology*, ed. Hugh Thomson Kerr, Jr. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1948) 52 (Table-Talk, #228).

10. "An Encomium of the Holy Cross of God," by David the Invincible Philosopher," *David Anghaht: The Invincible Philosopher*, ed. Avedis K. Sanjian (Atlanta: Scholars, 1986) 85, 87.

11. *Ibid.*, 86.

Vigen Guroian teaches theology and ethics at Loyola College in Baltimore, Maryland. This essay is part of a collection which will see print later this year published by the Eastern Prelacy as part of its 1700th publication program. Other recent books by Professor Guroian include *Life's Living toward Dying* (Eerdmans); *Tending the Heart of Virtue: How Classic Stories Awaken a Child's Moral Imagination* (Oxford); *Inheriting Paradise: Meditations on Gardening* (Eerdmans). A full selection of Professor Guroian's books are available at the Armenian Prelacy Bookstore.