

OUTREACH

Volume 30, No. 1

September 2008



**New Pew Book for the Faithful...
Another remarkable Davey Summer Program...
Celebration of milestone anniversaries...
and much more...**



50 Years of Growth in Spirit and Service

50

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ՀԱՅՈՑ ԱՄԵՐԻԿԱՅԻ

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC
CHURCH OF AMERICA

1958 - 2008

Celebrating 110th anniversary of
the official establishment of the
Armenian Church in America by
Catholicos Khrimian Hairig
&

50th anniversary of
the Prelacy's affiliation with
the Great House of Cilicia

Celebratory Banquet
Saturday, October 25, 2008

Marriott at Glenpointe
Teaneck, New Jersey
Reception: 7 o'clock
Dinner: 8 o'clock
\$150.00 per person

An exhibit and DVD presentation
will be on view during the reception.

From the editor

With this issue of *Outreach* we have reached Volume 30, Number 1. The first issue, Volume 1, No. 1, was published in May 1978, four months after the new Prelate, Bishop Mesrob Ashjian, took office. The format was a very simple four-page tabloid size newsletter, published monthly without fail. Subsequently, whenever needed the number of pages was increased.

The name *Outreach* was selected after much back and forth discussion. I remember the exact moment very distinctly. We were at a reception at the home of Bob and Lucy Derian in Hackensack, New Jersey, and Srpazan and I were again discussing a proper name for the new publication. He began describing what he expected this publication to accomplish and one of the things he said was "I want it to be an outreach to the people." I stopped him in mid-sentence and said, "Srpazan, I think you just named the publication—*Outreach!*" He loved it.

The editorial in the first issue started with a dictionary definition of outreach ("to reach or go beyond; surpass.") and then went on like this:

"To simply say that communication is important, is to be trite. Yet, the importance of communication in modern society transcends importance; it is vital.

"The name *Outreach* was chosen for the Prelacy's new monthly publication because it best describes its purpose. Our aim is to reach out to all areas, near and far, not only in areas heavily populated by Armenians, but also into areas where there are only a few Armenian families, and hence only a minimum, if at all, of Armenian life.

"Our reach, however, is not a blind reach. We are reaching out to *you*, and we hope you will respond. It is only through mutual dialogue that relationships can be maintained, nurtured and enlarged.

In Christian history perhaps the person most involved with an "outreach" program was St. Paul. When we read the letters of Paul in the New Testament we are first struck with the 'humanness' of his words and thoughts. A letter written by a friend to friends. The tone of Paul's writings is completely different because you know he is writing to people—people he is genuinely concerned about, and you are also aware that those people are responding. Indeed, the loss of those responses to Paul's letters, has made his writings the most difficult to analyze for theologians, because they constitute only one part of a two-way dialogue.

"Too often modern religion seems to operate in a vacuum. While it is true that the church has a message for the people, we believe that the people also have a message for the church. It is this reciprocal communication that is the ultimate goal of *Outreach*. Mutual communication, however, does not imply a search for a consensus. On the contrary, it is with the airing of opposing opinions that the church can truly grow and keep up with—and ahead of—society."

Thirty years later, although *Outreach* is now in magazine format with more pages and less frequency of publication, the goals remain the same. ❖

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: In the October 2007 issue of *Outreach*, an error got by us in a caption on page 23. The Rev. Canon Professor J. Robert Wright was incorrectly identified. The caption should have read: "Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar, greets the ecumenical guests. Left to right: Archbishop Mar Cyril Ephyrem Karim, Syrian Orthodox Church; Bishop Anoushavan; The Rev. Canon Professor J.



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Front Cover: Datev students during worship services this summer.

Back Cover: Ordination of Rev. Fr. Stephan Baljian.



Robert Wright, of General Theological Seminary; and Professor Thomas Bird of Queens College."

The Rev. Canon Wright, a close and good friend of the Armenian Church, has attended many Prelacy services and events, which makes the oversight more embarrassing. Note to *Outreach* designer: Is it time to make the captions a point or two larger for the aging editor?

Պատգամ Երեսփոխանական Ժողովին Թեմիա 50-Ամեակին Առիթով 7-10 Մայիս, 2008, Ս. Ստեփանոս Եկեղեցի Ութօրյա Մասէջուսէց

Հայ եկեղեցւոյ առաքելութեան ճամբուն վրայ ոեւէ յաջողութիւն վստահաբար ուրախութեամբ կը լեցնէ Հայ Հաւատացեալի Հոգին, որովհետեւ եկեղեցւոյ ծառայութեան ճամբով Հայ անհատը յիպաէս կը ճանչնայ այն հոգածութիւնը, որ Հայ եկեղեցին ցուցաբերած է իր ժողովուրդին նկատմամբ, ցաւի թէ ուրախութեան, տաճնապի թէ իսաղաղութեան պահերուն:

Հիւսիսային Ամերիկայի ցամաքամասին վրայ Հայ եկեղեցւոյ ծառայութիւնը կը սկսի 19-րդ դարու վերջերուն, երբ տնտեսական թէ ապահովական պայմաններու բերումով, մեր ժողովուրդի գաւազները կարօտի կրակը իրենց սրտին մէջ, ճգեցին տուն-տեղ, ընտանիք՝ Հայր ու մայր, կին ու գաւազներ, եւ ինկան Ամերիկեան ցամաքամաս՝ ապրուստ ճարելու, եւ օր մըն ալ վերադառնալու իրենց նախահայրերու բնակավայրը, յուսալով որ ապագան պիտի ըլլար աւելի տանելի, յատկապէս երբ այն ատենուան մեծ պետութիւնները կը ճնշէին Օսմանեան պետութեան վրայ, որ բարեկարգութիւններ կատարէ մեր Հայրենիքէն ներս:

Հայ Հաւատացեալին պանդխտութիւնը եւ իր հոգեւոր մօր՝ Հայ եկեղեցիին գուրգուրանքն ու հոգածութիւնը անբաժան եղան իրարմէ մեր պատմութեան ոեւէ ժամանակաշրջանին:

Այս տարի պաշտօնական նշումն է Ազգային Առաջնորդարանի Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան Հովանաւորութիւնը ընդունելուն 50-ամեակին, ինչպէս նաեւ տօնախմբումը՝ Ամերիկայի ցամաքամասին վրայ Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցւոյ Ազգային Առաջնորդարանի Հաստատման 110-ամեակին:

Այս գոյգ ամեակները մեզի առիթ կը հանդիսանան արագ ակնարկ մը նետելու Հայ եկեղեցւոյ Հիմնադրութենէն մինչեւ ներկայ օրերու պատմութեան վրայ, որպէսզի կարենանք իր առաքելութեան, մտածողութեան եւ մեր ժողովուրդի կեանքին սերտօրէն առնչուած կացութիւններուն մասին աւելի յստակ գաղափար մը ունենալ:

Ա.-ՀԱՅ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻՈՅ ՀԻՄՆԱԳԻՐՈՒԹԻՒՆԸ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՄԷՋ

Հայաստանի մէջ քրիստոնէութեան քարոզութիւնը սկսաւ Յիսուսի Համբարձումէն անմիջապէս ետք, երբ առաքեալները տարածելու համար իրենց Մեծ Վարդապետին կրօնքը շրջեցան զանազան երկիրներ: Անոնցմէ երկուքը՝ Ս. Թադէոս եւ Ս. Բարթողիմէոս առաքեալները եկան Հայաստան, ուր նետեցին քրիստոնէութեան սերմերը, զարձի բերին ոմանք, նոյնիսկ թագաւորական եւ իշխանական պալատականներ, որոնցմէ կը յիշատակուի



Սանատրուկ թագաւորի աղջիկը՝ Սանդուխտ Կոյսը, որ իր հաւատքին համար նահատակուեցաւ: Հայաստանի մէջ նահատակուեցան նաեւ Յիսուսի գոյգ առաքեալները, որոնց գերեզմանները կը գտնուին ներկայ Հայաստանի սահմաններէն դուրս, պատմական Հայաստանի մէջ, մէկը՝ Թուրքիոյ եւ միւսը՝ Պարսկաստանի մէջ:

Քրիստոնէութեան քարոզութիւնը սակայն կանգ չառաւ նահատակութեամբ: Ընդհակառակը, նահատակութիւնը առաւել հոգեկան քաջութիւն տուաւ քրիստոնեայ նորադարձներուն, որոնք, իրենց կարգին իրենց հաւատքի պաշտպանութեան համար մինչեւ անգամ ընդունեցին նահատակութիւնը: Մինչ անդին, Աստուածօրդիին կրօնքը կը ծաղկէր, կը տարածուէր, մինչեւ այն ատիճան, որ հրաշալի դէպքերու բերումով, Տրդատ թագաւոր 301-ին քրիստոնէութիւնը կը հռչակէր պետական կրօնք եւ Ս. Գրիգոր Լուսաւորիչ կը դառնար մեր եկեղեցւոյ եւ ազգին առաջին կաթողիկոսը: Ս. Թադէոս ու Ս. Բարթողիմէոս առաքեալներուն նետած սերմերը արմատ նետած էին ու կը ծաղկէին:

Առանց պատմական մանրամասնութեանց մէջ մըտնելու, անհրաժեշտ է կատարել կարգ մը հաստատումներ, որոնք մեր եկեղեցւոյ կոչումին եւ մեր ժողովուրդին վրայ անոր կատարած յեղաշրջումին վրայ մեծ դրոշմ դրած են:

1. Հայ Եկեղեցին, ինքզինք նկատելով հարազատ մէկ հաստուածը քրիստոնէական ամբողջական եւ ընդ-

Հանրական եկեղեցւոյ, քրիստոնէական հաւատքի տարածումին մէջ կանգ չառաւ միմիայն մեր ժողովուրդին դիմաց: Հաւատարիմ Քրիստոսի վերջին պատգամին՝ «Գացէք եւ բոլոր ժողովուրդները ինծի աշակերտ դարձուցէք» (Մտ. 28.19), լուսաւորեց նաեւ հոգիները աղուաններուն, վրացիներուն եւ հոններուն, մեր Հայրենիքի արեւելքի եւ հիւսիսի ժողովուրդներուն, որոնք իրենց փորձառութեան եւ ազգային դիմագիծի յատկացումէն եւ աստուածաբանական ուղղութենէն ետք, դարձան անկախ եկեղեցի:

Քրիստոնէութեան արդիւնաւոր քարոզութեան համար ամենէն մեծ հրաշքը որ կատարուեցաւ Հայաստանի մէջ, Հայ գիրերու գիւտն էր: Ոչ մէկ ազգի մէջ գիր ու գրականութիւն ստեղծուած է՝ հաւատքը անմիջական եւ հարազատ կերպով տարածելու համար: Հայ ժողովուրդը իր դիմագիծով եւ ստեղծագործ թոփշով կերպարանափոխուեցաւ Աստուածաշունչի թարգմանութեամբ եւ քրիստոնէական կրօնքի սկզբունքներու իւրացումով: Աստուածաշունչը իմաստաւորեց մեր կեանքը, թէ՛ գոյատեւելու մեր կամքին մէջ եւ թէ՛ նահատակութեամբ մահուան իսկ մէջ տեսնելով անբացատրելի նպատակ մը, որ ինքնին յաւիտենականութիւն կը ներշնչէ եւ անմահութիւն կ'ապահովէ հերոսներուն: Այս հասկացողութեամբ հաւատքի պաշտպանները իրենց պայքարին մէջ տեսան նաեւ պայքար՝ յանուն ինքնութեան, յանուն Հայութեան անմահութեան: «Մահ իմացեալ անմահութիւն»ը պարզապէս գրական կամ փրիլոսոփայական հնարք մը չեղաւ, այլ հաւատքի, ազգին լինելութեան համար մարտնչում ու յաղթանակ: Վարդանանքէն մինչեւ Սարգսրապատ Հայր ապրեցաւ այս համոզումով, պայքարեցաւ յանուն ինքնութեան, յանուն կրօնքի եւ Հայրենիքի ազատութեան, եւ եթէ նահատակուեցաւ, այդ մարտիրոսացումը ընդունեց որպէս սնունդն ու աւելը իր ապագայ յաղթանակներուն:

Մշակոյթը, գիր ու գրականութիւն, աստուածաբանութիւն, արուեստներ – մանրանկարչութիւն, ճարտարապետութիւն, երաժշտութիւն, եւ երկարեցէք շարքը մեր ստեղծագործ հոգիին – եղան սուրին չափ եւ աւելի զօրաւոր պայքարի զէնքեր, որոնք դիմացան ժամանակի մաշումին ու մահուան դիմաց, որոնք ո՛չ թէ միայն ապրեցան, այլեւ ապրեցուցին մեզ մինչեւ այսօր: Հայրենիքը միայն ու սոսկական հող չեղաւ, Հայրենիքը օրրան եղաւ հոգեւոր թէ՛ իմացական այն ժառանգութեան, որ ի պահանջել հարկին սրբագործուեցաւ հաւատաւոր իր գաւակներուն արիւնով: Ահա թէ ինչո՞ւ Հայրենիքը սուրբ է, ահա թէ ինչո՞ւ մեր լեզուն հրաշագործ է, որովհետեւ հոն կը վերակենդանանան մեր հերոսները, որովհետեւ հոն հողին ու ջուրին, օդին ու արե-

ւուն խառնուած են մեր արարչութիւններն ու ինքնութիւնը:

Հայ եկեղեցին այսպէս հասկցաւ ինքզինք եւ այսպէս արտայայտեց իր ծառայութիւնն ու նուիրումը իր ժողովուրդին հանդէպ: Միայն արարողութիւն ու պատարագ չեղաւ Հայ եկեղեցին, միայն ծէս ու խորհուրդ չմատակարարեց իր գաւակներուն, այլ եղաւ ճշմարիտ պատկերը Հայու հոգիին, յոյս՝ երկմտողին, լոյս՝ խաւարածին, մայր՝ անտէրին ու թափառականին: Չգտնուեցաւ Հայ մը, հաւատքին մէջ տատանող ու թերի, նոյնիսկ անհաւատ, որ չսիրեց Հայ եկեղեցին ու հոն չգնաց իբրեւ հարազատ տուն եւ հոն չաղօթեց եւ անոր չվստահեցաւ՝ ինչպէս հարազատ մօր մը: Հայ եկեղեցւոյ հանդէպ անտարբերութիւնը մեր ինքնութեան եւ լինելութեան դէմ մեղանչում է: Տե՛ս թէ ամբողջական ու մաքուր հաւատքը ինչպէ՞ս հրաշք կը գործէ ազգի կեանքին եւ մարդ անհատի օրերուն մէջ: Հոն Աստուած կը խօսի, հոն Աստուած կը գործէ, անով Աստուած կ'անմահացնէ:

2. Հայ եկեղեցին Պատմութեան մէջ

Ս. Գրիգոր Լուսաւորիչով եւ Տրդատ թագաւորով պետականացած քրիստոնէութիւնը եւ Հայ եկեղեցւոյ վարչական կեանքի հիմնադրութիւնը, բնական է որ մեր եկեղեցւոյ պիտի տային ազատութիւնը՝ տիրական հեղինակութեամբ շարունակելու իր առաքելութիւնը: Հաւատքի քարոզութիւնը եւ եկեղեցիներու կառուցումը սկսաւ հետզհետէ տարածուիլ ամբողջ Հայաստան աշխարհի նահանգներուն մէջ, Հայ գիրերու գիւտով դարոցներու եւ վանքերու ծաղկումը ծայր առաւ, եւ կաթողիկոս ու թագաւոր ձեռք-ձեռքի զօրացուցին ու տէր կանգնեցան թէ՛ եկեղեցւոյ եւ թէ՛ անոր առաքելութեան: Որպէս գործակիցներ, առաջին իսկ օրէն եղան միասին, այնքան որ Հայրապետանոցը եղաւ ա՛յն քաղաքին մէջ ուր էր Հայոց թագաւորը: Այսպէս, Ս. Գրիգոր Լուսաւորիչ իր Հայրապետանոցը հաստատեց մայրաքաղաք Վաղարշապատի մէջ, ուր կը գտնուէր Ս. Էջմիածնի եկեղեցին, եւ հոն մնաց մինչեւ 485, երբ մայրաքաղաքը փոխադրուեցաւ Դուին, ուր մնաց մինչեւ 927 թուական:

Այստեղ անհրաժեշտ է նշել, որ Հայկական միահեծան եւ միաճոյլ իշխանութեան չգոյութեան պատճառով եւ երբեմն այլ ժողովուրդներու եւ կրօնքներու աշխարհազրահական վայրերուն մէջ մեր ժողովուրդին գտնուելուն բերումով, ունեցած ենք զուգահեռ կաթողիկոսներ, որոնց մահէն ետք դադրած է Աթոռի շարունակութիւնը, ինչպէս Մօրիկ կայսեր օրով (590-ին) երկուքի բաժնուած Հայաստանի յոյներու Աւան քաղաքին մէջ, կամ Հոնիի մէջ (Մարաշ, 1076-ին), որ կը գտնուէր Փիլարտոսի իշխանութեան սահմաններէն ներս, եւ այլն:

Դուինի կործանումէն ետք, երբ քաղաքական թէ՛

արտաքին եւ թէ՛ ներքին պայքարներ կը մղուէին, հայ իշխաններ իրարու դէմ կը պատերազմէին, երբ Կաթողիկոսական Աթոռն ալ թափառական կը դառնար, Յովհաննէս Դրասխանակերտցի Կաթողիկոս ի վերջոյ յարմարագոյն եւ այն ժամանակներուն համեմատաբար խաղաղ վայր ընտրեց Արծրունեաց նահանգը, ուր Գագիկ Արծրունի ինքզինք թագաւոր հռչակած էր, եւ Աթոռը հաստատեց Աղթամարի մէջ, ուր մնաց մինչեւ Բագրատունիներու թագաւորներու կողմէ Անի քաղաքին կառուցումը: Անանիա Մոկացի Կաթողիկոս 947-ին Աթոռը նախ հաստատեց Արգինայի մէջ (Անիէն 15 մղոն հիւսիս) եւ ապա Սարգիս Սեւանցի Կաթողիկոսին օրով փոխադրուեցաւ մայրաքաղաք Անի, 992 թուին:

Յոյներու յարձակումներուն դիմաց, երբ Անի մայրաքաղաքը գրաւուեցաւ եւ Բագրատունեաց թագաւորութիւնը կործանեցաւ, Խաչիկ Անեցի Կաթողիկոս, պատերազմի եւ հալածանքի օրերուն, անցաւ Թաւաշուր, 1062-ին: Քաղաքական ծանր կացութիւններու մէջ ինկած նախարարական տոհմերը եւ ժողովուրդը կաթողիկոս ընտրեցին Գրիգոր Վկայասէրը, որ Աթոռը փոխադրեց Ծամբալ 1065-ին: Թէ՛ Թաւաշուրը եւ թէ՛ Ծամբալը Կիլիկիայի հիւսիսը գտնուող կեդրոններ էին: 1116-ին Գրիգոր Պահլաւունի Կաթողիկոս Աթոռը փոխադրեց իր եղբօր՝ Վասիլի դղեակը, Ծովքի մէջ, քանի քաղաքական անապահով կացութիւն մը ստեղծուած էր: Երբ Ծովքի շրջանն ալ վտանգուեցաւ, 1149-ին, Գրիգոր Պահլաւունի Կաթողիկոս յարմար նկատեց Աթոռը փոխադրել Հոռովկա, որ կը գտնուէր Կիլիկիոյ Ռուբինեան Թորոս իշխանի սահմաններուն մէջ, եւ ուր մնաց մինչեւ 1292, երբ եգիպտացիներու արշաւանքի ընթացքին գրաւուեցաւ եւ աւերուեցաւ: Հեթում թագաւոր եւ Գրիգոր Անաւարդեցի Կաթողիկոս Աթոռը փոխադրեցին Սիս՝ Ռուբինեանց թագաւորութեան մայրաքաղաքը՝ ուր մնաց մինչեւ 1915-ի Յեղասպանութիւն, որմէ ետք փոխադրուեցաւ Անթիլիաս, Լիբանան:

Այստեղ շատ կարեւոր կը նկատեմ նաեւ կատարել պատմականը Հայոց Կաթողիկոսութեան Սուրբ Էջմիածնի մէջ վերահաստատման:

Հայոց Կաթողիկոսական Աթոռը, որ 485-էն սկսեալ քաղաքական կացութեանց բերումով կը փոխադրուէր թագաւորական ուստաններ, ուր որ ալ գտնուեցաւ իր ծառայութիւնը մատուցանեց Հայաստանի մէջ գտնուող թէ՛ նոր սփիւռքի հայ ժողովուրդին, եւ գլխաւորեց Հայ եկեղեցին՝ իր դաւանական, վարդապետական եւ վարչական հարցերու մէջ: Փոխադրութեան գլխաւոր պատճառներէն մէկը ապահովական կացութիւնն էր, որ ստեղծուած էր պատերազմներու եւ յատկապէս արաբական, սելճուքեան եւ թրքական արշաւանքներուն բերու-

մով: Մայր Հայրենիքը աւելի ապահով էր մերժելու օտար ազդեցութիւններ, որոնց կ'ենթարկուէր սուրբ Աթոռը Հայաստանէն դուրս, յատկապէս լատինամիտ իշխաններու եւ խաչակիրներու կողմէ: Այսուհանդերձ, Կիլիկեան շրջանի հայրապետները եւ հոգեւորականները ոչ մէկ ձեւով նուազ եղան իրենց սրբակեցութեամբ, գրական արդիւնաւորութեամբ եւ ծիսական ժառանգութեամբ: Սուրբ Ներսէս Շնորհալին, Սարգիս Շնորհալին, Ներսէս Լամբրոնացին, Գրիգոր Վկայասէր եւ նման հայրապետներ ու հոգեւորականներ ամենէն հեղինակաւոր դէմքերը դարձան Հայ եկեղեցւոյ պատմութեան մէջ: Կիլիկեան շրջանին ծաղկեցաւ նաեւ մանրանկարչութիւնը: Սարգիս Պիծակի, Թորոս Ռոսլինի նման գագաթներ ծաղկեցին մեր մագաղաթները, որոնք հիացումի առարկայ են մանրանկարչական արուեստին մէջ: Մշակութային հանճարներու եւ ծաղկումին պատճառով է որ Կիլիկեան դարաշրջանը կոչուեցաւ Արծաթէ Դար, գրեթէ համահասար Սուրբ Մեսրոպ Մաշտոցով սկսուած Ոսկեդարուն, երբ մեր ժողովուրդը ունեցաւ այբուբեն, թարգմանական նախանձեղի երախտիք, մատենագրական եւ պատմական բացառիկ վաստակ:

Սակայն Կիլիկիոյ թագաւորութեան անկումէն ետք, 1375-ին, քաղաքական կացութիւնը վատթարացած էր: Արեւելեան վարդապետները (այսպէս կը կոչուէին արեւելեան Հայաստանի հոգեւորական յայտնի դէմքերը), Հայ եկեղեցին դուրս բերելու համար լատինական ճշնոյններէն եւ ազդեցութիւններէն, ինչպէս նաեւ ենթարկուելով պարսիկ խաներու միջամտութեան եւ ճշնոյններուն, ինչպէս կը վկայէ Թովմա Մեծոփեցի, «Հրաման եղեւ ի բռնաւորէն օրհնել կաթողիկոս, առանց հակառակութեան», դիմեցին Կիլիկիա գտնուող Գրիգոր Մուսաբեկեան Կաթողիկոսին, որ Աթոռը փոխադրէ Սուրբ Էջմիածին, Աթոռին առաջին նստավայրը: Սակայն Գրիգոր Կաթողիկոս մերժեց եւ միւս կողմէ չառարկեց նոր ընտրութիւն մը կատարելուն վրայ Սուրբ Էջմիածնի մէջ: Ուստի 1441-ին, Էջմիածնի մէջ կաթողիկոս ընտրուեցաւ բարի նկարագրով վանական մը՝ Կիրակոս Վիրապեցի Վարդապետը, երբ Կիլիկիոյ մէջ կը բազմէր Հայոց Կաթողիկոսը:

Այստեղ չենք ուզեր մտնել զանազան վէճերու մէջ, ո՛չ Արեւելեան վարդապետներու մտադրութեան եւ նպատակներու հետապնդման, ոչ ալ Գրիգոր Մուսաբեկեան Կաթողիկոսի որոշումներուն եւ վերաբերմունքին մասին, այլ կը գոհանանք հաստատելով որ թէ՛ Հայաստանի մէջ եւ թէ՛ Կիլիկիոյ մէջ գտնուող հայութեան համար անհրաժեշտութիւն նկատուեցաւ ունենալ երկու կաթողիկոսներ, ինչպէս նախապէս ալ պատահած էր եւ փորձառութիւնը ունէինք զուգահեռ կաթողիկոսներու:

Թէ՛ Կիլիկիոյ Գրիգոր Մուսաբեկեան Կաթողիկոսը եւ թէ՛ Էջմիածնի Կիրակոս Վիրապեցին, վերջինիս կաթողիկոս ընտրուելէն ետք, եղբայրական գիրեր փոխանակեցին, ինչ որ ցոյց կու տայ յարգալիք ու սիրալից մօտեցումը երկու կաթողիկոսներուն: Եկեղեցին պէտք է ծառայէր իր ժողովուրդին:

Հետագայ պատմութեան ընթացքին, սակայն, միշտ ալ ներդաշնակ ու համերաշխ չեղաւ յարաբերութիւնը երկու Աթոռներուն: Եւ երբ հակառակութիւնները բազմացան, իմաստուն որոշումով մը, Կիլիկիոյ Ներսէս Սեբաստացի Կաթողիկոսը եւ Էջմիածնի Փիլիպպոս Աղբակեցի Կաթողիկոսը հանդիպեցան Երուսաղէմի մէջ, 1652-ին: Նախ իրարու հանդիպեցան Հայէպի մէջ եւ անկէ ուղեւորուեցան Երուսաղէմ, ուր իրենց ուխտը կատարելէ ետք ունեցան ժողով մը, ուր քննուեցան ընդհանրապէս վարչական եւ հոգեւորականներու կենցաղային հարցերը:

Այս դէպքը յիշատակելու մեր նպատակին մէջ կ'ուզենք արձանագրել ժողովին որոշումներէն հինգերորդը, որ կ'ըսէ. «Մէկ թեմին մէջ պէտք չէ երկու եպիսկոպոսներ ըլլան եւ երկու առաջնորդներ, բացի երբ անհրաժեշտ պատճառ մը գոյութիւն ունի», ինչ որ գոյութիւն ունեցաւ Ամերիկեան ցամաքամասին վրայ հետագային:

Էջմիածնի եւ Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսներու գործուճեութիւնը, կասկած չկայ, որ մեծ բարիք եղաւ թէ՛ Հայրենիքի մեր ժողովուրդին եւ թէ՛ Հայրենիքէն հեռու սփռուք կազմած մեր ժողովուրդին համար, որով հոգեւոր կարիքներու գոհացում տրուեցաւ՝ իւրաքանչիւրին աշխարհագրական իր սահմաններուն մէջ: Անհրաժեշտ է հաստատել որ Էջմիածինը ընդհանրապէս կը գտնուէր պարսկական տիրապետութեան տակ եւ հետագային՝ ռուսական, մինչ Կիլիկիան եւ Մեծ Հայքը կը գտնուէին Օսմանեան տիրապետութեան տակ:

Հայ ժողովուրդի աստանդակական կեանքը կանգ չառաւ միայն Հայաստանի արեւմտեան տարածքին վրայ, Կիլիկիոյ մէջ: Մեր ժողովուրդը թէ՛ քաղաքական եւ թէ՛ տնտեսական ճնշումներու բերումով գաղթեց բոլորովին նոր երկիրներ, ինչպէս Խրիմ (10-րդ եւ յատկապէս 14-րդ դարուն), Պարսկաստան՝ Իսֆահան, յատկապէս 1603-ի Շահ Աբասի բռնի տեղահանութեամբ, տարբեր բան որ Թաւրիզի շրջանին մէջ շատ հնուց Հայեր կը բնակէին, ունէին թեմ ու եկեղեցիներ, Լեհաստան, 11-րդ դարէն սկսեալ: Բիւզանդական կայսրութեան զանազան շրջաններուն մէջ ալ Հայեր բնակութիւն հաստատած էին եւ կառուցած էին եկեղեցիներ: Բոլոր նորահաստատ գաղութներուն մէջ հետագային նշանակուեցան եպիսկոպոսներ, կազմուեցան թեմեր, որով մեր ժողովուրդը սկսաւ ունենալ սփռուքեան փորձառութիւն:

Գաղթականութեան այս հոսքը չկասեցաւ ոչ մէկ ատեն: Այն օրուրէն, երբ արաբական թէ՛ սելճուքօսմանեան արշաւանքները սկսան նեղել մեր ժողովուրդը եւ ստեղծուեցան անցուկ եւ անընդունելի պայմաններ, մեր Հայրենիքի զաւակները գաղթականի ցուպը ձեռքին գացին բոլորովին նոր յայտնուած շրջաններ, արեւելքէն՝ ծայրագոյն արեւելք, մինչեւ Հնդկաստան ու Ինտոնիզիա, արեւմուտքէն՝ եւրոպական ոստաններ, մինչեւ Ամերիկա:

Եւ ինչպէս միշտ, Հայ եկեղեցին գնաց Հայ գաղթականին հետ: Հոն ուր բնակութիւն հաստատեց Հայը, կառուցուեցան աղօթքի տուններ, եւ այսպիսով թէ՛ հոգեւորապէս կապուեցաւ իր Հայրենիքին եւ թէ՛ ստացաւ հոգեկան մխիթարութիւն, կարօտի սփոփանք, յոյս եւ ապրելու կամք:

Հիւսիսային Ամերիկայի մեր ցամաքամասին վրայ Հայերը, ոչ մեծ թիւով, հետզհետէ սկսան գալ 18-րդ դարէն ետք եւ յատկապէս 19-րդ դարու վերջաւորութեան, այնքան որ 1898-ին Սուրբ Էջմիածնի Մկրտիչ Խրիմեան Կաթողիկոս, ժողովուրդին կողմէ կոչուած «Խրիմեան Հայրիկ», իր Հայրական հոգածութեան տակ առաւ ժողովուրդի մեր զաւակները: 1891-ին կառուցուած էր արդէն առաջին եկեղեցին՝ Ուստրի մէջ:

Տեղին է մէջբերել, Մկրտիչ Խրիմեան Կաթողիկոսի կոնդակէն հատուածներ, խրատական խօսքեր, մտահոգութիւններ, որոնք այսօր ալ թարմ կը հնչեն մեր ականջներուն: (Կոնդակին լեզուն գրաբարեան ըլլալով, աւելի պարզացուած է):

«... Իմ Հայրական խրատս ու պատուէրս հետեւեալն է. Դուն քեզ ճանչցիր: Աշխարհի վրայ փորձութիւնները եւ պատահարները միշտ անպակաս են: Ծիշդ է, Հայուն կեանքը հալածական եւ թափառական եղած է. բայց Աստուած զայն չէ մոռցեր՝ երբ Հայը չէ մոռցած Հայաստանը, իր Լուսաւորչական կրօնը, երբ չէ կորսնցուցեր իր մայրենի լեզուն, երբ ամենայն երկիւղածութեամբ եւ սրբութեամբ պահպաներ է իր Հայրենական աւանդութիւնները եւ նահապետական ու բարոյական յատկութիւնները: Սիրեցէք ձեր Մայր Սուրբ Եկեղեցին:

Պանդուխտ եւ սիրեցեալ ժողովուրդ,

Այս է իմ պատուէրս, որ դուք իրար սիրէք: Խաղաղութեամբ եւ սիրով ապրեցէք իրարու հետ, որպէսզի կարենաք այդ օտար երկիրին մէջ, բազմալեզու այս աշխարհին մէջ ձեր գոյութիւնը պահպանել. ձեր պարկեշտ կեանքը եւ քաղաքավարի ընթացքը թող ձեզ պատկառելի դարձնեն օտարներու աչքին: Օտարներուն փայլքը, անոնց պերճախօս քարոզները թող չչլայցնեն ձեզ: Այսքան դարեր եկան ու անցան, հազարաւոր սաստիկ փոթորիկներ եւ հեղեղներ եկան ու հարուածեցին, սակայն

քու Մայր Եկեղեցիդ անդրդուելի եւ Հաստատուն մնաց իր բարձրութեան վրայ:

Եկեղեցւոյ Հետ սիրեցէք եւ Հաստատուն պահեցէք ձեր մայրենի լեզուն, որով խօսեցան ու աղօթեցին, երգեցին ու լացին ձեր Հայրերն ու մայրերը իրենց Հայրենիքին մէջ, իրենց պանդխտութեան մէջ եւ իրենց եկեղեցւոյ մէջ: Նոյնը եւ սրբութեամբ աւանդեցէք ձեր գաւազաններուն:

Հաւատարիմ մնացէք ձեր Հայրենի աւանդութեանց, դուք ձեզ մաքուր եւ անարատ պահեցէք ձեր կեանքի ընթացքին, հեռու կեցէք բոլոր տեսակի մոլորութիւններէն: Զանազէք որ դուք իրարմով ապրիք, իրարու օգնէք...:

Ընդունեցէք ծերունի Հայրիկին սիրալիւր ողջոյնն ու օրհնութիւնը»:

Մէկ բան յտակ է մեր ժողովուրդի կեանքին մէջ: Ամերիկեան ցամաքամասին վրայ պահել ինքնութիւնը, գոհացնել իր հոգեւոր ծարաւը, պորտը չկտրել Հայրենիքէն եւ հողէն ու ընտանիքէն, եւ այս բոլորը տեսնել եկեղեցւոյ շուրջ, աղօթքին, իրարու հանդիպելուն, կարօտը առնելուն ընդմէջէն: Եկեղեցին որպէս գուրգուրացող մայր, իր թեւերուն տակ պիտի առնէր պանդխտ մեր գաւազանները, տիրութիւն պիտի ընէր, որովհետեւ տիրութիւն ու ծառայութիւն ընելը եկեղեցւոյ ստորոգելին է, գոյութեան նպատակը:

Միտքով պէտք է երթանք այդ օրերը, ապրելու համար այն ցաւալի զգացումները որ մեր եղբայրներն ու քոյրերը կ'ապրէին իրենց հոգիներուն մէջ: Պանդխտի կեանք, օտար երկիր, օտար լեզու եւ բարք, տեղացիներուն կողմէ անհանդուրժողական, նոյնիսկ թշնամական վերաբերմունք, անարգանք: Գործատեղին ու փողոցը հարազատ չէին իր հոգիին: Իրենց խցիկներուն մէջ, յաճախ քանի մը հոգիով, ինչե՛ր չէին պատմեր իրարու, ի՛նչ կարօտներ չէին սեղմեր իրենց սիրտերը, «երկիր»էն եկած լուրեր՝ Հալածանք, հարազատներու մահ, ընդվր՝ գում կը պատճառէին իրենց որբացած հոգիին, այսուհանդերձ կ'ապրէին յոյսով՝ դիմանալու եւ յաղթելու համար ամէն փորձութեանց եւ տկարութեանց: Միակ յենարանը իրենց հաւաքական կեանքը պիտի ըլլար, միակ մխիթարութիւնը հաւանաբար Կիրակի օրը պիտի ունենային, երբ եկեղեցւոյ մէջ աղօթէին, յոյսով լեցուէին, զիրար քաջալերէին եւ սպասէին «երկիր» դառնալուն: Զկորսուելու համար անհրաժեշտ էր պահել կրօնք, սրբութիւն, աւանդութիւն, Հայրենիքի սէր, լեզու, երգ ու պար: Եւ այս բոլորը պահեցին մեր պանդուխտ Հայերը, օտարութիւնն ու դժուարութիւնները չտկարացուցին հայու կամքը, չմթազնեցին հայու մաքուր ու պայծառ հոգին: Եւ սպասեցին...

Եւ ահա եկաւ սեւ 1915-ը: Հայրենիքի մէջ մեր ժո-

ղովուրդը կը ջարդուէր, մեր օճախները կ'ամայանային, մեր գիւղերն ու քաղաքները կ'աւերուէին: Տառապանքի, ընդվզումի, պոռթկումի, նոյնիսկ յուսահատութեան օրեր: Իւրաքանչիւրը կը լսէր իր ընտանիքի անդամներուն մահուան մասին, շատեր չհաւատարով եկած լուրերուն, դեռ կը սպասէին...: Չէին հաւատար: Հաւատարութեան չէր:

Ու հնչեց աւետիսը Հայաստանի անկախութեան: Նոր յոյս, ապրելու վճռակամութիւն: Բայց նորածագ արեւը կը խափանուէր համայնավարութեան ամպրոպին դիմաց: Գարձեալ անորոշութիւն, հոգիի խռովք: Ազգային ու համայնավար գաղափարախօսութեան դիմաց եղբայրներ կը բաժնուէին, քաղաքականութիւնը մտերիմ ընկերներ ու բարեկամներ իրարու թշնամի կը դարձնէր, ինչ որ հայու ընկերային կեանքին մէջ կը ստեղծէր հատաճներ՝ անհանդուրժող իրարու նկատմամբ:

Այս կացութեան մէջ բնական էր որ եկեղեցին ալ տառապէր եւ հաւատացեալներու քաղաքական պատկանելիութեան դիմաց՝ քաղաքականանար: Խմբաւորումներ հատուածական պիտակ պիտի ունենային, այսուհանդերձ եկեղեցական վարչական կեանքը պիտի պահէր իր միութիւնը, ունենալով մէկ թեմ եւ մէկ առաջնորդ ամբողջ Ամերիկեան ցամաքամասին համար: Դրժբախտաբար հատուածական չահերը, միջազգային գաղափարախօսութիւնները այնքան զօրացան, որ եկեղեցին ալ կամայ թէ ակամայ մտաւ խռովալից ալիքներուն մէջ, թեմական վերին մարմինէն մինչեւ հոգաբարձական կազմեր ծրագրած կերպով «կողմ»երու վերածուեցան, ծեծկոտը, նոյնիսկ սպանութիւններ պատահեցան, ընտանիքի անդամներ իրարու դէմ լարուեցան: Այս լպըրժոն եւ պղտոր կացութենէն պիտի օգտուէին մեր ներքին կազմակերպութիւններէն անդին եղող արտաքին ոյժեր, որոնց նենգ հաշիւները պիտի տեսնուէին մեր միասնական կեանքին հաշտոյն եւ անոր ի վնաս: Պիտի կուրնայինք մտապէս, որուն որպէս արդիւնք 1933-էն անդին պիտի ըլլայինք կիսուած, երկու կէսերն ալ՝ իրարու թշնամի:

Խօսքիս այս հանգրուանին չեմ ուզեր խօսիլ պայքարէն ծնած ազգային-եկեղեցական երկու մարմիններու իրաւական գոյութեան մասին, պիտի չքննարկեմ օրինական եւ հակաօրինական հարցեր, պիտի չդատապարտեմ օրինաւոր եւ ապօրէն կողմեր: Սակայն մէկ բան յստակօրէն ամենայն պատասխանատուութեամբ պիտի յայտարարեմ, որ ժողովական պատգամաւորներուն մեծամասնութիւնն ունեցող հատուածը, այսինքն օրինաւոր մարմինը, պահեց իր գոյութիւնը 1933-էն ետք ալ: Հայ եկեղեցւոյ հաւատարիմ ու հաւատացեալ գաւազանները անտեսուեցան եւ զրկուեցան արժանի օրհնութենէն, որ

Էջմիածինը պէտք է հայրօրէն ու արդարօրէն տարածէր իրենց վրայ: Դատապարտուեցանք, սրբալոյս միւսոնէ ու աղօթքէ գրկուեցանք: Որք մնացինք: Կարօտ հոգածու ծնողքի, ծարաւ Էջմիածնի օրհնութեան:

Այս տուայտանքին ու մինակութեան մէջ ի վերջոյ մեր աչքերը յարեցինք Կիլիկեան Կաթողիկոսութեան: Մենք որոշեցինք թէ ո՛վ պիտի ըլլար մեր նոր ծնողքը եւ հրաւիրեցինք որ դար եւ մեզի տիրութիւն ընէր: Կիլիկեան Աթոռը, ցեղասպանութենէն ետք ինքն ալ տարագիր, կրցեր էր հոգեկան արիւթեամբ եւ բուռ մը նուիրեալ եկեղեցականներով ոտքի կանգնիլ, զարթօնք ապրել եւ տէր կանգնիլ սփիւռք դարձած մեր ժողովուրդի ցիրուցան զաւակներուն, յատկապէս հոգեւոր եւ մշակութային բնագաւառներէն ներս: Անիկա հաւատարիմ իր կոչումին՝ սիրով ընդառաջեց մեր խնդրանքին, որդեգրեց մեզ, խնամեց մեզ, կազմակերպեց մեզ եւ դարձանք թեմ, իրաւունք մը որ արդար էր, ընդունելի հին որոշումով, 1652-ի Երուսաղէմի ժողովով համաձայնուած, բայց մանաւանդ՝ գործնական նկատառումներով: Կիլիկեան Կաթողիկոսութիւնը նորահաստատ իր թեմով պիտի սկսէր կազմակերպել մեր կեանքը, քրիստոնէական եւ ազգային ծրագրեալ ճամբու մէջ դնելով մեզ: Մեր օրինապահութեամբ եւ ծառայութեամբ օրինակելի պիտի ըլլայինք ուրիշներու եւ այսպիսով պիտի սկսէինք հաւատքի մեր ուղեւորութիւնը, առաջնորդութեամբ երիտասարդ հոգեւորական՝ Երանաշնորհ Տ. Հրանդ Արքեպիսկոպոս Խաչատուրեանի:

Բ.- ԿԻԼԻԿԵԱՆ ԹԵՄԻ ՀԱՍՏԱՏՈՒՄԸ ՀԻՒՄԻՍԱՅԻՆ ԱՄԵՐԻԿԱՅԻ ՄԷՁ

Երջանկայիշատակ Զարեհ Ա. Կաթողիկոս սրբատառ կոնդակով մը, ուղղուած Ազգային Երեսփոխանական ժողովին, 12 Հոկտեմբեր, 1957 թուակիր, կը պատասխանէր այն դիմումին, որ Ամբրիկայի անտեսուած եւ ծնողազուրկ ժողովուրդը եւ հոգեւորականները կ'ընէին, ըսելով.-

«Զեր գրութիւնը սրտածմլիկ նկարագրութիւնն էր անտիրական այն կացութեան, որուն մատնուած էք, հովիւք եւ ժողովականք, որպէս հետեւանք պատճառներու, որոնք կապ չունին քրիստոնէական մեր սուրբ կրօնին եւ Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցոյ էութեան հետ: Գործադրուած է խտրական աններելի եղանակ, որով Հայաստանեայց ՄԻ եւ ՆՈՅՆ Սուրբ Եկեղեցոյ մէջ արուեստակեալ բաժանում յառաջ բերած եւ զիտակցաբար շահագործուած է: Հայաստանեայց Սուրբ Եկեղեցոյ բնական անդամակցութեան ի պաշտպանութիւն, ձեր բոլոր ձեռնարկները ի դերեւ ելան: Հաց ուզեցիք, քար ներկայացուցին, ձուկ խնդրեցիք, քարը մատուցուեցաւ ձեզի:

«Կը հրճուինք սակայն, ի տես եւ ի լուր ձեր վճռական կեցուածքին ու դարերու ընդմէջէն եւ ձեր միջոցաւ անգամ մը եւս ի յայտ եկած ոգւոյն, որով Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցիէն ձեզ պոկել ուզողներուն արիւթեամբ պատասխանեցիք. “Յայսմ հաւատոց զմեզ ոչ ոք կարէ խախտել”»:

Եւ Երջանկայիշատակ Զարեհ Վեհափառ Հայրապետը, Հովուապետի իր պաշտօնին պատասխանատուութեան նկատմամբ սուրբ եւ բարձր զիտակցութեամբ կ'ըսէ, թէ Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութիւնը «ձեզ կ'առնէ իր հովանիին ներքեւ»:

Ինչպէս Խրիմեան Հայրիկ, Զարեհ Կաթողիկոսն ալ կը թելադրէ չմոռնալ Հայ եկեղեցին, հայ լեզուն, ազգութիւն եւ ընտանեկան սրբութիւն եւ աւանդութիւն: Հայոց Կաթողիկոսները չէին կրնար տարբեր մտածել: Իրենց խրատականով պարտականութիւն կը տրուի մեզի սիրել մեր եկեղեցին, մեր լեզուն, մեր ազգը, մեր ընտանիքը եւ մեր սրբութիւնները:

Այդ օրերը պէտք է ապրած ըլլայինք զգալու համար գոհունակութիւնն ու խանդավառութիւնը, որ ստեղծուեցաւ երբ Կիլիկեան Կաթողիկոսութիւնը մեզ որդեգրեց: Կաթողիկոսութիւնը թեմ չգրաւեց: Մենք հրաւիրեցինք զինք: Կաթողիկոսութիւնը հայրութիւն ըրաւ, ծանրագոյն կարիքի դիմաց հոգեւոր ու ազգային հաց ու ջուր տուաւ, որով աճեցանք, հասակ առինք եւ այսօր 50 տարեկան կորովի, տոկուն եւ աշխուժութեամբ գործող թեմ ենք:

Սիրելի եւ պատկառելի ժողովականներ,
Այս բոլորը կ'ըսեմ ոչ թէ դատ պաշտպանելու, ոչ թէ հակառակութիւն եւ գրգռութիւն սերմանելու, այլ պարզապէս ձեզ ամրապնդելու, դրական մօտեցումով մը, ձեր համոզումներուն, հայ եկեղեցոյ եւ ազգին հանդէպ ձեր սիրոյն եւ նուիրումին մէջ: Ինչ որ մեր նախորդները եւ դուք ըրիք հպարտութեան առիթ ու պատճառ է, եւ ինչ որ պիտի ընենք՝ նոյն գոհունակութեամբ ծառայութիւնն է հանդէպ մեր եկեղեցոյ եւ ժողովուրդին: Նուիրեալին գերագոյն երջանկութիւնը իր մասնակցութիւնն է եւ անով՝ յաջողութեամբ յառաջդիմութիւնը իր եկեղեցոյ, լեզուին, հայրենիքին ու ազգին: Այսպէ՛ս հաւատացինք, այսպէ՛ս գործեցինք:

Մեր Թեմին հաստատման առաջին տարիները եղան կազմակերպումի տարիներ: Չունէինք կեդրոն, բայց ունէինք եկեղեցիներ եւ եկեղեցականներ: 1958-ին, արդէն իսկ կառուցեր էինք 26 եկեղեցիներ 28 գործող եւ 7 հանգստեան կոչուած եկեղեցականներով:

Անհրաժեշտ էր Առաջնորդարանն ալ ունենալ: Ծնորհիւ Երջանկայի-շատակ խորհն Ա. Կաթողիկոսի ջանքերուն կարելի եղաւ Նիւ Եորքի մէջ գնել չորս յարկանի շէնք մը, որ եղաւ Ագ-գային Առաջնորդարան: Հոն պաշտօնավարեցին անցեալի երեք առաջնորդները, որոնք Հայ եկեղեցւոյ պատմութեան մէջ իւրայատուկ եւ տիրական տեղ ունին: Հիմնադիր Հրանդ Արք. Խաչատուրեանին յաջորդեց Գարեգին Արք. Սարգիսեան (հետագային Կաթողիկոս Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ եւ Կաթողիկոս Ամենայն Հայոց ի Սուրբ Էջմիածին): Իր օրով Առաջնորդարանը ընդարձակեց իր ծառայութեան դաշտերը, հեղինակաւոր ներկայութիւն եղաւ մեր գաղութներուն մէջ, մշակութային շունչ սփռեց, միջեկեղեցական յարաբերութիւններ մշակեց: 1977-ին, Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան Աթոռակից Կաթողիկոս ընտրուելուն պատճառով, շատ կարճ եղաւ իր պաշտօնավարութիւնը եւ չկրցաւ կեանքի կոչել այն բոլոր մտածումները, որոնք ծրագրելու սկսած էր:

Կիլիկեան մեր Թեմի ամենէն երախտաշատ Առաջնորդը եղաւ Երանաշնորհ Տ. Մեսրոպ Արք. Աշճեանը: Ուղիղ քսան տարի, իր սիրտն ու հոգին դրաւ մեր եկեղեցւոյ ծաղկումին մէջ, ամբողջական նուիրումով կրցաւ իրագործել այն բոլոր ծրագրերները, որոնց ձեռնարկեց: Առաջնորդարանի շէնքը ընդարձակեց ու բարեկարգեց, կրօնական եւ հայեցի դաստիարակութեան բաժանմունքները աշխուժացուց եւ օժտեց վարիչ տնօրէններով, հոն ուր պէտք էր եկեղեցի նորոգել կամ նորը կառուցանել՝ իրագործեց, մշակութային, արուեստի ձեռնարկները քաջալերեց, ագգային եւ կրօնական դէմքերու եւ դէպքերու ամեակներ իրականացուց բացառիկ յաջողութեամբ, հրատարակչական գործին զարկ տուաւ, եւ երբ մեր Հայրենքիը ցնցուեցաւ ու ցաւեցաւ երկրաշարժէն, անբացատրելի նուիրումով օգնեց երկրաշարժէն աղէտեալներուն, հաստատեց Մեծն Ներսէս Բարեսիրական Հիմնարկը Հայաստանի մէջ, որբին արցունքը սրբեց, անօթիին հաց տուաւ, մտաւորականը քաջալերեց: Քանի մը տողերով անկարելի է ներկայացնել այն հսկայական վաստակը, որ Մեսրոպ Արքեպիսկոպոս իրագործեց քսանամեայ իր ծառայութեան տարիներուն:

Թող Աստուած հանգիստ ու երկնային խաղաղութիւն տայ մեր նախորդ երեք առաջնորդներուն, որոնք ամենայն զոհողութեամբ, սրբազան հաւատարմութեամբ եւ անսակարկ համոզումով իրենք զիրենք նուիրեցին Հայ եկեղեցւոյ պայծառութիւն եւ իրենց հաւատացեալներուն հոգեւոր բարօրութիւն: Խոնկ ու աղօթք իրենց յիշատակին:

Միրելի՛ ժողովականներ,

Մերուսերունդրուած է ծանր պատասխանատուութիւն եւ պարտականութիւն, ոչ թէ ամենօրեայ մեր աշխատանքները գլուխ հանելու տեսակէտէն, բայց մանաւանդ գալի-

քի մեր ընելիքներուն տեսանկիւնէն, քննելով անցեալն ու ներկան եւ ծրագրելով ապագան:

Արագ ակնարկ մը մեր ներկայ կացութեան վրայ ցոյց կու տայ թէ երբեմն յաջողած ենք, երբեմն թերացած կամ չկարողացած իրագործել ամէն ինչ: Դժուարութիւնները, ճախողութիւնները, ընկերային մեր շրջապատի պարտադրանքները՝ որոնք մեզ բազմազբաղ կը պահեն եւ կը հեռացնեն կեդրոնացնելէ մեր ճիգերը մնայունին եւ անհրաժեշտին վրայ, անտարբերութիւնը, անհոգութիւնը, հաւատքի աղարտումը եւ Հայ եկեղեցւոյ դերին աղօտացումը, ապակրօնութիւնը (secularism), խառն ամուսնութիւնները, հայախօսութեան նահանջը եւ ասոնց նման մտահոգիչ երեւոյթներ, թերեւս յուսալքութեան մատնեն մեզ: Այս բոլորը մարտահրաւէրներ են, որոնք պէտք է դիմազրարենք մեր հաւաքական ոյժերով, միասնական ճիգերով եւ անանձնական ոգիով: Ըսողներ պիտի ըլլան որ՝ կորսուելու դատապարտուած ենք հսկայական այս երկրին մէջ եւ մշակութային ծանր ազդեցութիւններու տակ: Բայց զգոյշ ըլլալու ենք: Եթէ բանանք պատասխանատու անձերու կողմէ արձանագրուած էջերը, ոչ թէ 1990-ին կամ 2000-ին, այլ շատ աւելի կանուխ, 1890-ական թուականներէն սկսեալ եւ յաճախ կրկնուած, հոն ալ պիտի տեսնենք ավտոսանք մեր ըրածներուն համար, յոռետեսութիւն ապագային նկատմամբ եւ այս պատճառով՝ պարտուողական ոգի: Կը պարտուինք, երբ չենք կազմակերպուիր եւ ծրագրեալ աշխատանք ու տեսիլք չենք ունենար: Կը կորուինք, երբ եկեղեցւոյ, ազգի, հայերենիքի, մշակոյթի մեր նուիրումը կը պակսի: Բայց ո՛չ, մենք չենք կոչուած պարտուելու, մենք չենք տկարանար որ նահանջենք: 50 տարիներու աշխատանքը եւ յառաջդիմութիւնը ճիշդ հակառակը կը փաստեն:

Բոլորս գրահաւորուած մեր հաւատքով, եկեղեցիով, մեր պատմութեամբ, մեր լինելութեամբ անհրաժեշտ է որ ամբողջական զոհողութեամբ նուիրուինք նախ մեր հոգեմտաւոր արժէքներու պահպանումին, հայ ընտանիքի ամրացումին, ընտանեկան սուրբ, հայեցի եւ քրիստոնեայ դաստիարակութեան: Եւ գօտեպնդուած մշակութային անկորնչելի մեր գանձերով ու հաւատքի անպարտելի գրահով, խոր գիտակցութեամբ մենք մեզ նուիրենք մեր Հայրենիքին ու եկեղեցիին, մշակոյթին ու սրբութեանց, որպէսզի կարենանք մեր ապագան աւելի փայլուն կերտել, ժամանակին դէմ եւ ամէն տեսակի ժխտական ու քանդիչ ոյժերու դէմ պատնէշ կանգնելով եւ հոգեկան արիւթեամբ յաղթանակներ ապահովելով:

50 տարիները մեզի օրինակ: Յառաջ, ապագայի յաջողութեանդ եւ նուաճումներուդ ի խնդիր:

ՕՇԱԿԱՆ ԱՐՔԵՊԻՍԿՈՊՈՍ
Առաջնորդ

Keynote Address to the National Representative Assembly

[Translated from the Armenian]

By Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan

Any success along the road of the mission of the Armenian Church undoubtedly fills the soul of the Armenian faithful with joy, because in serving the Church, the individual Armenian recognizes the care that the Armenian Church has given her people, in times of sorrow and happiness, as well as in periods of tribulation and peace.

The Armenian Church's service on the shores of North America began toward the end of the 19th century, when for both economic and security reasons, many left their homes and families—father, mother, wife and children—and arrived on the American continent, to earn a living and one day return to the homeland of their forefathers, with the hope that the future would be more bearable, especially because the powerful nations of that time were pressing the Ottoman Empire to institute reforms in our homeland.

The exile of our Armenian nation and the loving protection and care given by the Armenian Church—our spiritual mother—became inseparable at any time in our history.

* * *

This year is the 50th anniversary of the Armenian Prelacy under the auspices of the Holy See of Cilicia, as well as the 110th anniversary of the official establishment of the Prelacy of the Armenian Church in America.

These dual anniversaries provide us the opportunity to give a quick glance back to the establishment of the Armenian Church up to the current day, so that we can have a clearer idea of the Church's mission, thinking, and the situations closely related to our people's lives.

A. The Establishment of the Church in Armenia

Christian preaching began in Armenia soon after Christ's Ascension, when the apostles, in order to spread the words of their great teacher, traveled to different countries. Two of the apostles—Thaddeus and Bartholomew—came to Armenia where they planted the seeds of Christianity, converting some, even royalty and princes, of whom we remember the daughter of King Sanatrouk, Sandought Virgin, who was martyred for her faith. Jesus' two disciples were also martyred in Armenia; their tombs are out of the boundaries of present day Armenia, in historic Armenia—one in Turkey and the other in Iran.

However, the preaching of Christianity did not end because of martyrdom. On the contrary, martyrdom provided more spiritual bravery to the Christian converts, who in their turn accepted martyrdom in defense of their faith. In the meantime the religion of the Son of God was blooming and spreading. Due to miraculous events, King

Tiridat proclaimed Christianity as the official religion in 301, and St. Gregory the Illuminator became our church's and our nation's first Catholicos. The seeds sown by Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew had taken root and were flourishing.

Without going into historical details, it is necessary to state a series of facts that have made a great imprint on our people through our church's calling and evolution.

1. The Armenian Church, considering herself to be one of the true parts of Christendom and the universal church, did not stop evangelizing the Christian faith with the conversion of our people. Faithful to the final commission of Christ, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Mt. 28: 19), the church also illuminated the souls of the Alwans, Georgians, and Huns—the people to our nation's east and north, who after obtaining experience and establishing their own national identity and theological direction, became independent churches.

The greatest miracle for the preaching of Christianity in Armenia was the discovery of the Armenian alphabet. There is no other nation whose alphabet and literature were created in order to spread their religion immediately and in a genuine way! The Armenian people with its identity and soaring creativity were transformed by the translation of the Bible and by the adoption of the principles of Christianity. The Bible gave meaning to our life, the will to survive, as well as an unexplainable goal of martyrdom, which inspired eternity and the promise of immortality for heroes. With this understanding, the defenders of the faith saw in their struggle a struggle for identity, in the name of immortality for the Armenian nation. The phrase, "Death with purpose is immortality," was not just an ingenious literary or philosophical phrase, but was the struggle and victory of faith and the continuation of the nation. From Vartanantz to Sardarapat, Armenians lived with this conviction, struggled in the name of identity, in the name of religion, and in the name of liberty of our homeland. If they were martyred, they accepted martyrdom as the nourishment and sap for future victories.

Culture, literature, theology, miniature art, architecture, music and the long list of our creative spirit, became as strong a weapon, and stronger, than the sword, which withstood the wear of time and death. They not only lived, but made us live to this day. The homeland was not just ordinary land. The homeland became a cradle for both our spiritual and intellectual heritage, which in time of necessity was sanctified by the blood of its faithful children. That is why our homeland is holy, why our language creates miracles, because our heroes are reborn there because our creativity and identity are mixed with the soil, and water, air and sun.

The Armenian Church understood herself in this way, and expressed her service and dedication toward her people. The Armenian Church was not just ceremony and liturgy, was not just ritual and sacrament. It became the true image of the Armenian spirit, hope for the doubtful, light for those in darkness, mother to the orphan and homeless. There are no Armenians who waiver in their faith—even those who are non-believers—who do not love the Armenian Church, and do not go there as a true home, and do not pray there and do not have confidence as one would have for his real mother. Indifference toward the Armenian Church is a sin against our identity and our existence. Complete and pure faith works miracles in the life of a nation and in the life of individuals. God speaks there. God works there. God gives eternal life through the Church.

2. The Armenian Church in history.

With St. Gregory the Illuminator and King Tiridat's national Christianity and the establishment of the administrative life of the Armenian Church, it was natural that our church would be given the freedom to continue her mission with more authority. Preaching of the faith and the construction of churches began to spread throughout the Armenian world. The invention of the Armenian alphabet resulted in the opening of schools and monasteries. Catholicos and King, hand-in-hand, strengthened and defended both the church and the church's mission. As co-workers, from the very first day, they were together, so much so that the Catholicosate was established in the same city as the King's residence. For example, St. Gregory established his Catholicosate in the capital city of Vagharshapat where Holy Etchmiadzin Cathedral stood. And the Catholicosate remained there until the year 485 when the capital was transferred to Dvin, where it remained until 927.

It is important to note, that due to the absence of a totalitarian or unified sovereignty and our people's dispersion into areas populated by different ethnicities and religions, we have had parallel catholicoses. These seats have ceased to function after the death of the catholicos. Examples include the city of Avan, in the Byzantine part of Armenia, during the days of Emperor Morik (590 AD) or in Honi (Marash, 1076 AD), which was under the jurisdiction of Philartus, and others.

After the fall of Dvin, during a time of various internal and external political conflicts when Armenian princes were warring with one another and the catholicosal seat had turned nomadic, Catholicos Hovhaness of Draskhanakert chose to settle in the state of the Artsrunis. Gagik Artsruni had declared himself king and secured a relatively peaceful and advantageous environment for the catholicos who chose Aghtamar as his seat, which lasted there until the Bagratunis built Ani. In 947 AD, Catholicos Anania of Mok initially moved the seat to Arguina (15 miles from Ani). Catholicos Sarkis of Sevan then transferred the seat to the capital of Ani in 992 AD.

Faced with the attacking Byzantines, Catholicos Khachik

of Ani, during a time of war and persecution, moved to Tavblour in 1062, which resulted in the occupation of Ani and the fall of the Bagratuni dynasty. Having fallen in deep political turmoil, the aristocracy and people chose Grigor V kayaser as catholicos who in turn moved the seat to Dzamndav in 1065. Both Tavblour and Dzamndav were cities in the northern regions of Cilicia. In 1116 Catholicos Grigor Pahlavuni moved the seat to his brother Vasili's castle in Tsovk to escape political turbulence. When Tsovk itself faced danger, in 1149, the catholicos decided the safest place would be Hromkla, within Cilician Prince Toros Roubinian's borders. The seat remained there until 1292, when the Mameluks of Egypt sacked and destroyed Hromkla. King Hetum and Catholicos Grigor of Anavarza moved the seat to Sis, the capital of the Roubinian kingdom where it remained until the Genocide of 1915, when it moved to Antelias, Lebanon.

I think it is important here to mention the reestablishment of the Armenian Catholicosate at Holy Etchmiadzin.

Starting in 485 AD, the seat of the Armenian catholicoses was moved to various royal capitals because of turbulent political climates. Wherever it settled it found a way to serve both its people in Armenia and in the newly established diasporan centers. It steadfastly led the Armenian Church in matters of faith, doctrine and administration. During the Arab, Seljuk and Turkish invasions, security was the foremost reason for moving the seat. Armenia proper was more protected from outside influence, particularly from princes' adherent to Rome or the Crusaders, which exerted pressure on the Holy See outside Armenia's borders. Nevertheless, the catholicos and clergy of Cilicia shone in their holiness, literary output and liturgical heritage. These included Nerses Shnorhali, Sarkis Shnorhali, Nerses of Lambron, Grigor V kayaser and others who became some of the most influential individuals in the history of the Armenian Church. Manuscript illumination even flourished during the Cilician period. Great artists like Sarkis Pidzak and Toros Roslin left their indelible marks on the art of manuscript illumination. It was because of a flourishing of culture that the Cilician period is known as the Silver Age, second only to the Golden Age, which began with St. Mesrop Mashtots, when our people acquired an alphabet, translated important works and produced a rich literary tradition.

However, after the fall of the Cilician Kingdom in 1375, the political climate worsened. The eastern clergymen (the name given to the well known clergymen of Eastern Armenia) wanted to bring the Armenian Church out from under Latin influence, being pressured themselves by Persian khans. Tovmas Medzophetsi wrote, "A decree was made by the dictator to consecrate a catholicos, without opposition." They asked Catholicos Grigor Musabekian to move the seat to Holy Etchmiadzin, the original location of the See. Although Catholicos Grigor refused to move to Etchmiadzin, he did not oppose the election of a new catholicos at Holy Etchmiadzin. Thus, in 1441, Vardapet Kirakos Virapetsi, a pious man, was elected catholicos, while the Armenian Catholicos was still enthroned in Cilicia.

Here we do not want to get into the various quarrels, neither the thinking nor the intention of the eastern clergy nor the decision and action of Catholicos Krikor Mousabegian. Suffice it to say that both the people in Armenia and Cilicia felt it necessary to have two catholicoses, similar to past occurrences when we had two catholicoses. Both the Cilician Catholicos Krikor Mousabegian and the Etchmiadzin Catholicos Giragos Virabetzi—the latter after being elected—exchanged brotherly messages, which shows the respect and love they had for each other. The Church had to serve her people.

However, in later history, the relationship between the two Sees did not always remain harmonious and friendly. And when the disagreements increased, a wise decision was made and the Cilician Catholicos Nerses Sebasdatzi and the Etchmiadzin Catholicos Philibos Aghbaketzi met in Jerusalem in 1652. First they met each other in Aleppo and then went on to Jerusalem where after making their pilgrimage, they met and examined administrative questions and the conduct of the clergy.

In recalling this incident, we want to note the fifth decision which stated: “There should not be two bishops or two prelates in one diocese, except when necessary reasons exist,”—which existed in the future on the American continent.

There is no doubt that the function of the Catholicosates of Etchmiadzin and Cilicia was a great asset for both our people in the homeland and for those far from the homeland, in the diaspora, as they met the spiritual needs of our people throughout the world within their boundaries. It is necessary to state that Etchmiadzin was generally under Persian rule (and later Russian), while Cilicia and Greater Haik were under Ottoman rule.

The Armenians’ tenuous life did not stop only in Western Armenia, in Cilicia. Our people, for both political and economic reasons, emigrated to new countries, for example, Crimea (10th century and especially the 14th century); Isfahan in Persia, specifically in 1603 by force by Shah Abbas; Armenians lived in Tabriz from earlier days and even had a diocese and churches; Poland starting from the 11th century. In the Byzantine Empire Armenians had settled in various areas and built churches.

Later on, in all of the newly formed communities, bishops were designated, dioceses were formed, and our people began to have the experience of a diaspora.

The refugee status did not stop at any time. From that time on, when the Arab and Seljuk-Ottoman invaders began to oppress our people and created unacceptable conditions, the children of our homeland took up the rod of the refugee in hand and went to totally new areas, from east to far east—to India, Indonesia; in the west to European cities, and all the way to America.

And as always, the Armenian Church went with the Armenian refugee. Wherever the Armenian established a home, a house of prayer was built. In this way they remained connected spiritually to the homeland and received spiritual

comfort, as well as soothing of their yearning, and the hope and the will to live.

Armenians began arriving on the North American continent, not in large numbers, after the 18th century and especially during the latter part of the 19th century. So much so that in 1898 Catholicos Mgrdich Khrimian of Etchmiadzin, known by all as Khrimian Hayrig, took America under his care. The first Armenian Church had already been built in 1891 in Worcester.

It is appropriate here to present some excerpts of the advice and concerns expressed by Khrimian Hayrig in his encyclical—words that are just as timely today.

“My fatherly advice to you is this: Know who you are. The temptations and calamities of this world are endless.... It is true that the Armenians have always been persecuted and have wandered from place to place. But God has never abandoned us, as long as the Armenians have not forgotten their homeland, and the faith of their Illuminator, as long as they never lost their native tongue, and preserved with awe and sanctity their ancestral traditions, patriarchal and moral attributes, and their native respect for family and morality.... Love your Holy Mother Church.

“Dear expatriate loving children: This is my commandment—that you love one another. Live with each other in peace and in love, so that you may preserve your existence in a foreign land where many languages are spoken. Let your honest way of life and your civilized demeanor gain respect for you in the eyes of the non-Armenians.... Do not be dazzled by the glitter of foreigners, and their eloquent sermons.... Remember that many centuries came and went and thousands of fierce tempests and floods have struck our people. But your Mother Church has stood firm and unshaken on her dignity.

“Besides the church, love and preserve your mother tongue in which your fathers and mothers spoke, prayed, sang and cried in their homeland, in their exile and in their churches. Bequeath the same to your children with sanctity.

“Remain faithful to the traditions of your homeland. Keep yourselves clean and spotless in every aspect of your lives. Stay clear of every kind of vice.... Make an effort to live together, help each other.... Accept the elderly Hayrig’s love and heartfelt blessing....”

One thing is clear in the life of our people: Maintaining our identity on the American continent, fulfilling the spiritual thirst, keeping ties to the homeland—to the land and family—and seeing all these revolve around the church through prayer, fellowship, and the satisfaction of the yearning. The church, as a devoted mother, was going to take her exiled children under her wings. The church was going to take care of her children, because caring and serving is the church’s *raison d’être*.

We must go back to those days, to experience the sorrowful existence of our brothers and sisters. They lived a life of an exile, in a foreign country, with a foreign language and habits, and the intolerance of the native inhabitants, where they were even looked upon as enemies.

The workplace or the streets were not genuine to their soul. They shared stories with each other in their small rooms, where several lived together. Longing filled their hearts. They waited anxiously for news from the Yergir. News of the death of relatives caused resentment against their orphaned souls, but nevertheless, they lived with hope to stand and conquer all temptations and weaknesses. Their only support was their community life. Their only comfort would come on Sunday when they prayed in church, and filled with hope provided support to each other, while waiting to return to the Yergir. In order to not be lost, it was necessary to keep the religion, sanctity, traditions, love of fatherland, language, song and dance. And our exiled fathers and mothers did that exactly. Being foreign with all of its tribulations did not weaken the will of the Armenian; it did not obscure their clean and bright soul. And they waited...

And then came the dark year of 1915. Our people in the homeland were being slaughtered; our homes destroyed; our villages and cities ravaged. These were days of torment, resentment, emotional outbursts, even despair. Everyone heard about the death of members of their families; many could not comprehend the news. They still waited. They did not believe. It was unbelievable.

Then came the good news: The independence of Armenia. New hope to live. But the coming dark storm of communism obstructed the new sunrise. Once again uncertainty and turbulence filled our souls. In the face of debates on nationalism and communism, brothers parted ways. Politics turned close friends into enemies, which resulted in divisions in our community life, intolerant of each other.

In this environment it was natural that the church would also suffer, and with the politicalization of the community the church would also become politicized. Groups had divisive labels. In spite of this, the church administration kept its unity of one diocese, one prelate for the entire American continent. Unfortunately, partisan gains and international ideologies grew so much that the church, willingly or unwillingly, became caught in the turbulent waves, from the top administrative body to the boards of trustees. "Sides" were established, leading to violence, even murder. Family members were against one another. This elusive and cloudy situation was to benefit foreign forces, beyond our own organizations, whose cunning calculations were done supposedly on behalf of our collective life, but were actually against it. We became mentally blinded, which resulted in our community being split from 1933 on, with the two sides regarding each other as enemies.

At this point in my address, I do not want to discuss the two national-ecclesiastical church bodies that came into existence following the struggle. I am not going to examine the question of legitimacy or illegitimacy; will not condemn the legal or illegal "sides." However, the one thing I am going to responsibly state is that the group with the majority of delegates, i.e., the legitimate body, kept its existence from 1933 on. The loyal and faithful children of the Armenian Church were ignored and were deprived of worthy blessings that

Etchmiadzin should have justly and fatherly spread on them. We were condemned. We were deprived Holy Muron and denied prayers. We were orphans. We yearned for the care of a parent; we were thirsty for the blessing of Etchmiadzin.

In this state of pain and loneliness we finally cast our eyes on the Catholicosate of Cilicia. We decided who was to be our new parent and we invited the Holy See to come and provide us leadership. After the Genocide the Cilician See itself was in exile. However it was able to stand up, thanks to spiritual strength and a few dedicated clergymen, and protect our nation's scattered children in the diaspora, especially in spiritual and cultural arenas. Faithful to its calling, the Holy See accepted our plea with love, adopted us, took care of us, organized us and we became a prelate—a right that was just—in the spirit of the old decision, agreed to in a meeting in Jerusalem in 1652, but especially with practical considerations. The Cilician Catholicosate, with its new prelate, was going to start to organize our life, putting us on the road of Christian and national organized life. We were going to be a model for others in our loyalty and service and we were going to start in this way our journey of faith, with the leadership of a young clergyman, Archbishop Hrant Khatchadourian, of blessed memory.

B. The Establishment of the Cilician Prelacy in North America

In an encyclical addressed to the National Representative Assembly, on October 12, 1957, Catholicos Zareh I, of blessed memory, answered the appeal of America's ignored and orphaned people and clergy, saying:

"Your communication is a heartfelt description of a helpless situation that has been cast on you—clergy and lay leaders—because of a series of reasons, which have no bearing on our holy Christian religion and the essence of the Armenian Church. It was imposed on such a discriminatory and unforgivable way which brought forth a manipulated division in the ONE and SAME Armenian Holy Church and was knowingly exploited. All of your attempts to defend your natural membership were in vain. You asked for bread, and you were given stones. You pleaded for fish, and you were offered a snake.

"We are pleased to hear and see your decisive stand and the spirit which comes through centuries; once again you answered bravely to those who wanted to pull you out from the Armenian Church, saying, 'From this faith no one can shake us.'"

And Zareh Vehapar, of blessed memory, with holy and high awareness toward the responsibility of his position, said that the Cilician Catholicosate "accepts you under its auspices."

Like Khrimian Hayrig, Catholicos Zareh also directed us to never forget the Armenian Church, the Armenian language, nation and the sanctity of family and traditions. Armenian catholicoses could not think differently. Their advice gives us the duty to love our church, our language,

our nation, our family and our holy traditions.

One had to have lived in those days in order to feel the thankfulness and excitement that was created when the Cilician See adopted us. The Holy See did not occupy a prelacy. We invited the See. The Holy See exhibited paternal care; in face of heavy need gave spiritual and national bread and water, with which we flourished, grew, and today at age 50, we are a strong, energetic and durable prelacy.

Dear and honored delegates, I relate all of this not as a defense, nor to stir controversy, but rather to strengthen your feelings of love and dedication to the Armenian Church and nation in a positive way. Whatever our predecessors did and whatever you did are occasions and reasons for pride. And whatever you are going to do is the satisfaction of your service toward our church and people. The greatest joy of a devoted person is participation, and with participation comes the successful advancement of his church, language, homeland and nation. This is how we believed, and this is how we worked.

* * *

The first years of our prelacy under Cilicia were years of organization. We did not have a central headquarter, but we had churches and clergymen. In 1958 we already had 26 churches, 28 active and seven retired clergymen. It was necessary to have a prelacy office. Thanks to the efforts of Catholicos Khoren, of blessed memory, it became possible to purchase a four-story building in New York City, which became our *Azkayin Arachmortaran*. It was in that building that the three former prelates served, and who hold a special and authoritative place in the history of the Armenian Church. Archbishop Hrant Khatchadourian, the founding prelate, was succeeded by Archbishop Karekin Sarkissian (later Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia and Catholicos of All Armenians in Etchmiadzin). During his tenure the prelacy expanded the field of its service. He was a creative presence in our community, gave life to our culture, and cultivated ecumenical relationships. His tenure was short, due to his election as catholicos-coadjutor in 1977, and he was, therefore, unable to bring to life all of his plans.

Our Prelacy's most prolific prelate was Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian, of blessed memory. He put his heart and soul into the advancement of our prelacy for 20 years. With total dedication he was able to realize all of his projects. He expanded and renovated the prelacy building, established offices with full-time directors for religious education and Armenian education, he renovated churches and built new ones, he encouraged cultural and artistic programs, he organized anniversary commemorations for religious and national personalities and historical events, he gave impetus to publications, and when our homeland was shaken and wounded from the earthquake, he helped the survivors of the earthquake with unexplainable dedication. He established the St. Nerses the Great Charitable Organization in Armenia, he wiped the tears of orphans, gave food to the hungry, and encouraged the intellectual. It is impossible to describe in a

few sentences the monumental work that Archbishop Mesrob accomplished during the 20 years of his service.

May God give rest and heavenly peace to our three former prelates, who with every sacrifice, holy faithfulness and total belief, dedicated themselves to the glory of the Armenian Church and the spiritual well-being of their faithful. Incense and prayers to their memory.

Dear Delegates,

A great responsibility and duty has been put on our shoulders, not only to bring to fruition our every day work, but especially our future plans. We must examine the past and present and then plan for the future.

A quick glance at our current situation shows that sometimes we have succeeded, and sometimes we have been unable to accomplish everything. Difficulties, failures, the social demands of our environment, our demands keep us over occupied and take us away from concentrating our efforts on permanent and necessary issues. Indifference, carelessness, the distortion of faith, and the diminishing role of the Armenian Church, secularism, mixed marriages, the withdrawal of speaking Armenian, and similar concerns, may cause us to lose hope. All of these are challenges that we must encounter with our collective strength and effort and unselfish spirit. Perhaps some will say that we are doomed to assimilation in this large country under its heavy cultural influence. But we should be careful. If we open the pages written by responsible people—not in 1990 or 2000—but much earlier, beginning in 1890 and repeated often, we will see that our efforts then were also described as futile with pessimism toward our future and thus expressing a defeating spirit. We are defeated when we are unorganized, when we do not have plans, and when we have no vision. We will be lost when our dedication to our church, nation, homeland and culture diminishes. But, no we are not destined for defeat; we will not weaken in order to withdraw. Fifty years of work and advancement prove just the opposite.

All of us, fortified with our faith, church, history and existence must devote ourselves totally to the preservation of our spiritual and intellectual values, to the strength of the Armenian family toward the Holy, Armenian and Christian family education. Girded by our imperishable cultural treasures and undefeated armor of our faith with deep awareness, let us dedicate ourselves to our homeland and our church, to our culture and sacred traditions, so that we can build a brighter future, and stand as a barrier against time and all kinds of negative and destructive powers, so that by standing firm and showing spiritual bravery we secure victories.

We have fifty years of guiding precedents. Let us move forward toward our future success and accomplishments. ✠

Քրիստոնէական Դաստիարակութեան Տարի 2008 Պատգամ Ն.Ս.Օ.Տ.Տ. Արամ Ա. Կաթողիկոսի Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ

2008 տարուան սեմին, Հայրապետական օրհնութեամբ եւ քրիստոնէական ջերմ սիրով կ'ողջունենք ձեզ՝ Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան Անթիլիասի Մայրավանքէն, մաղթելով աստուածային բարիքներով լեցուն հարուստ տարի մը:

Ինչպէս գիտէք, իւրաքանչիւր տարի, Հայրապետական Պատգամի ճամբով կոչ կ'ողղենք մեր ժողովուրդի զաւակներուն խորհրդածելու, անհատաբար թէ հաւաքաբար, եւ լուսարձակին տակ բերելու մեր ընդհանրական կեանքին հետ աղերս ունեցող հիմնահարցեր եւ առաջնահերթ մտահոգութիւններ:

Այս ծիրէն ներս, ձեր յատուկ ուշադրութեան յանձնած էինք Աստուածաշունչի (2003), Ընտանիքի (2004) եւ Հայ Դպրոցի (2006) կեդրոնական տեղը ու կենսական դերը մեր եկեղեցւոյ ու ազգի կեանքէն ներս: Արդարեւ, խօսելով այս սրբազան արժէքներուն ու կառոյցներուն մասին, շեշտած էինք քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան առանցքային կարեւորութիւնը հայ մարդու հոգեմտաւոր կազմաւորման եւ ընդհանրապէս մեր ժողովուրդի քրիստոնէական հաւատքի ամրապնդման մէջ:

Արդ, մեկնելով այս անհերքելի իրողութենէն, ինչպէս նաեւ նկատի ունենալով ներկայ աշխարհի պայմաններէն ու մարտահրաւէրներէն յառաջացող լուրջ մտահոգութիւնները, որոշեցինք 2008 տարին հռչակել՝

«ՔՐԻՍՏՈՆԷԱԿԱՆ ԴԱՍՏԻԱՐԱԿՈՒԹԵԱՆ ՏԱՐԻ»

Եկէք, նախ փորձենք հասկնալ, ամփոփ գիծերով, քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան իմաստը, անոր նպատակը ու անհրաժեշտութիւնը: Եւ ապա, մեզ շրջապատող իրականութիւններու լոյսին տակ տեսնենք թէ՛ ի՞նչ են մեր ժողովուրդի զաւակներուն կրօնական առողջ դաստիարակութիւն ջամբելու ազդու միջոցները:

Ա.

Ի՞նչ կը հասկնանք քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւն ըսելով

Ընդհանուր մօտեցումով կրօնական դաստիարակութիւն կը նշանակէ անհատի մը կամ համայնքի մը կեանքէն ներս ներարկել իր պատկանած կրօնին ճշմարտութիւնները ու սկզբունքները, արժէքները ու աւանդութիւնները, որոնք պէտք է շաղախուին տուեալ անհատի կամ համայնքի կենցաղակերպին, գործելակերպին ու

մտածելակերպին հետ: Այլ խօսքով, կրօնական դաստիարակութեան նպատակն է կրօնը իր հաւատալիքներով ու ուսուցումներով, իր պատմութեամբ ու առաքելութեամբ ամբողջական, մնայուն ու կենդանի ներկայութիւն դարձնել անոր հետեւող անհատի մը կամ համայնքի մը կեանքէն ներս՝ հոգեմտաւոր զարգացման ու կազմաւորման ընթացքի մը ընդմէջէն:



Ընդհանուր գիծերով նոյնն է նաեւ նպատակը քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան: Աւելի յստակօրէն ընդգծելով՝ քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւն կը նշանակէ.-

ա) Քրիստոսի եկեղեցւոյ անդամ դառնալու կոչուած, կամ արդէն իսկ դարձած, անհատը կազմաւորել աստուածաշնչական ճշմարտութիւններով ու արժէքներով, որպէսզի ան կարենայ գիտակից հաւատքով ու ամբողջական նուիրումով հետեւիլ Քրիստոսի:

բ) Աստուածաշնչական ուսուցումներուն ու բարոյական սկզբունքներուն աւրելիք, կրօնական դաստիարակութեան նպատակն է քրիստոնէայ մարդուն կամ համայնքին փոխանցել՝ ընդհանրապէս քրիստոնէական կրօնի պատմութեան եւ մասնաւորաբար իր պատկանած եկեղեցւոյ դաւանական կեցուածքներուն, աստուածաբանական մօտեցումներուն, ինչպէս նաեւ իր եկեղեցւոյ Հայրերուն, սուրբերուն ու վկաներուն կեանքին ու գործին մասին հիմնական տեղեկութիւններ:

գ) Քրիստոնէութիւնը ուսուցումներու ամբողջութիւն մը չէ, ո՛չ ալ սոսկ հոգեւոր արժէքներու համակարգ մը: Քրիստոնէութիւնը կեանք է: Քրիստոս ըսաւ՝ “Ես եկայ, որպէսզի առաւել կեանք ունենան” (Յովհ. 10.10): “Առաւել կեանք”ը մարդկային կեանքը ըմբռնելու, արժեւորելու ու ապրելու այնպիսի իւրայատուկ եղանակ է, ուր կը ճառագայթէ Քրիստոս իր աստուածային ճշմարտութիւններով ու յաւիտեանական պատգամներով: Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան նպատակն է ցոյց տալ դէպի «առաւել կեանք» տանող ճամբան:

դ) Ըշմարտօրէն քրիստոնէայ ըլլալը մարդու էութեան ու գոյութեան հետ ամբողջական նոյնացում է, որովհետեւ գիտակցօրէն հետեւել է Քրիստոսի (Մատթ.

16.24) եւ Քրիստոսը զգենուլ է, ինչպէս կը բնորոշէ Առաքեալը (Հոռմ. 13.14): Հետեւաբար, լոկ գիտելիքներու փոխանցում մը չէ քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը. այլ՝ անհատի մը կամ համայնքի մը հոգեմտաւոր կերտումն է, Քրիստոսը ունենալով որպէս «ճանապարհ, ճշմարտութեան եւ կեանք» (Յովհ. 14.6): Ահա թէ ինչու քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը պէտք է իրագործել էապէս որպէս մասնակցութիւն Քրիստոսի խորհրդական մարմնոյն՝ եկեղեցւոյ առաքելութեան, հաւատքի վկայութեան:

Բ.

Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը սիրտն է եկեղեցւոյ կեանքին ու առաքելութեան

Մեկնելով քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան նպատակէն եւ նկատի ունենալով անոր ունեցած եզակի կարեւորութիւնը, բոլոր եկեղեցիներու մօտ, Հին դարերէն սկսեալ, քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը նրկատուած է եկեղեցւոյ առաքելութեան սիրտը: Աւետարանչութիւնը, քարոզչութիւնը, ընկերային ծառայութիւնը եւ եկեղեցւոյ առաքելութեան առնչուած այլ նախաձեռնութիւններ, անկասկած, հրամայական են քրիստոնէական հաւատքի տարածման համար: Սակայն, այս բոլորին մէջ քրիստոնէայ մարդուն հոգեւոր ու բարոյական կազմաւորումը բացարձակ անհրաժեշտութիւն է, որպէս նախապայման եկեղեցւոյ հոգեւոր շինութեան: Եկեղեցին որպէս հաւատքի համայնք կազմուած է անհատներէ: Եկեղեցին կը դառնայ զօրեղ ու կենսունակ, հոգեւոր ու բարոյական իմաստով, երբ անոր անդամները կրօնական առողջ կազմաւորում ունին: Արդարեւ, մարդը արժէք է քրիստոնէական կրօնին համար: Քրիստոս իր երկրաւոր առաքելութեան ընթացքին մօտեցաւ Հիւանդին թէ աղքատին, հարուստին թէ գրկեալին, որովհետեւ ան եկած էր մարդը վերամարդացնելու՝ իր «աստուածային պատկեր»ին համաձայն: Արդ, եկեղեցւոյ համար անհատ մարդու գիտակից քրիստոնէացումը՝ իր հաւատքի ճշմարտութիւններուն եւ հոգեւոր ու բարոյական կեանքի սկզբունքներուն ամբողջական իւրացումով եղած է ու կը մնայ առաջնահերթ մտահոգութիւն:

Ներկայ ժամանակներուն, կրօնական դաստիարակութիւնը աւելի՛ շեշտակի կարեւորութիւն ստացած է եկեղեցիներու համար: Արդարեւ, համաշխարհայնացումի յառաջացուցած լուրջ վտանգները սկսած են սպառնալ քրիստոնէութեան ինքնութիւնը ու Հիմքը կազմող Հիմնական հաւատալիքներուն: Ներկայ աշխարհի մարդակեդրոն չափանիշները ու մարդանպաստակ մօտեցում-

ները սկսած են հարցականի տակ առնել Քրիստոսի Հիմնած հոգեւոր թագաւորութեան սկզբունքները: Արդ, ներկայ աշխարհին մէջ երբ հոգեւոր թագաւորութիւնը Քրիստոսին ու նիւթեղէն թագաւորութիւնը մարդուն մնայուն բախումի մէջ են, Աւետարանի յաւիտենական ճշմարտութիւններով ու արժէքներով քրիստոնէայ մարդուն զինումը անյետաձգելի պարտաւորութիւնն է եկեղեցւոյ: Այս գիտակցութենէն մղուած ու նախաձեռնող դրոյթներէն թելադրուած, բոլոր եկեղեցիները հսկայ մարդու ու գումար կը տրամադրեն կրօնական դաստիարակութեան, մէկ կողմէն՝ պաշտպանելու իրենց հաւատացեալները մարդկային կեանքէն Աստուծոյ ներկայութիւնը հեռացնող վտանգներու դէմ, եւ միւս կողմէն՝ քրիստոնէական արժէքներով ու սկզբունքներով թրծելու նոր սերունդները:

Գ.

Հայ եկեղեցւոյ համար քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը հրամայական անհրաժեշտութիւն է

Հին դարերէն սկսեալ Հայ եկեղեցին յատուկ ուշադրութիւն ընծայած է դաստիարակութեան: Արդարեւ, Սուրբ Գրիգոր Լուսաւորչի ճառերէն սկսեալ մինչեւ Թարգմանչաց սերունդի հոգեմտաւոր ստեղծագործութիւնները ու ապա Արծաթեայ Դարու մեր եկեղեցւոյ հայրերուն հոգեւոր գրականութիւնը, Հայ եկեղեցւոյ հոգեւոր, բարոյական ու ընկերային ուսուցումներէն ու կանոններէն սկսեալ մինչեւ իր մարդասիրական, աւետարանչական ու դաստիարակչական լայնածաւալ գործունէութիւնը Հայաստանի, Կիլիկիոյ ու Սփիւռքի մէջ, պերճախօս կերպով կը վկայեն Հայ մարդու հոգեւոր ու բարոյական դաստիարակութեան նկատմամբ մեր եկեղեցւոյ ցուցաբերած խոր մտահոգութեան ու բարձրագոյն աստիճանի հոգածութեան մասին:

Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը Հայ եկեղեցւոյ համար կը մնայ ու պէ՛տք է մնայ առաջնահերթութիւն՝ իր հաւատքի առաքելութեան ծիրէն ներս: Այս ուղղութեամբ կարեւոր կը նկատենք ընդգծել կարգ մը Հինական կէտեր, որոնք իւրայատկութիւնը կը կազմեն Հայ եկեղեցւոյ կեանքէն ներս կատարուող քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան.-

ա) Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը պէտք է ըմբռնել ինքնակեդրոն ու ինքնանպաստակ հայեցակէտով. անհրաժեշտ է զայն դիտել հայութիւնը քրիստոնէութիւն փոխարարեցրութեան շրջագծէն ներս եւ պատմական հարուստ փորձառութեան լոյսին տակ: Ծանօթ իրողութիւն է, որ Հայ ժողովուրդին դարձը քրիստոնէութեան

սովորական դէպք մը չէր: Քրիստոնէական հաւատքը ներթափանցեց հայ կեանքէն ներս, շաղուեցաւ հայ կեանքին հետ, նոյնացաւ հայ կեանքի ներքին դրուածքին, տազնապնդուն ու ձգտումներուն հետ: Հայութեան ու քրիստոնէութեան այս ամբողջական ու անքակտելի միացումը պէտք է շեշտակիօրէն արտայայտուի քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան մէջ: Արդարեւ, Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան ու հայեցի դաստիարակութեան միջեւ բաժանման գիծեր գոյութիւն չեն կրնար ունենայ. անոնք պէտք է զիրար ամբողջացնեն, զօրացնեն ու հարստացնեն:

բ) Հայ ըլլալ մեզի համար կը նշանակէ քրիստոնեայ ըլլալ: Քրիստոնէութիւնը մարդակերտումի ու հայակերտումի առանցքը ու հէնքը կը կազմէ: Հայեցի դաստիարակութիւնը պէտք է կատարուի քրիստոնէական կրօնի իւրայատուկ ոգիին ու հաւատքին, մտածողութեան ու կեանքին, ոճին ու որակին ամբողջական ու գիտակից ընկալումով: Արդ, քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը կոչուած է առաջնորդը դառնալու հայեցի դաստիարակութեան: Վաւերական հայու կեանքին մէջ արեւու լոյսին նման պէտք է ճառագայթեն քրիստոնէական արժէքները ու ճշմարտութիւնները:

գ) Մեր եկեղեցւոյ համար կրօնական դաստիարակութիւնը չէ եղած ու պէտք չէ դառնայ երբե՛ք սոսկ Աստուածաշունչի ուսուցում: Աստուածաշունչը քրիստոնէական առաքելութեան, ուսուցումներուն, ծէսին ու ընդհանրապէս քրիստոնէական կեանքին կեդրոնն է, անկասկած: Աստուածաշունչին հոգեւոր ու բարոյական սկզբունքները բոլոր ժամանակներուն ու բոլոր քրիստոնեայ ժողովուրդներուն համար, հիմնաքարը կը նկատուին քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան: Սակայն, Աստուածաշունչը իր ճշգրիտ, հարազատ ու լիիրաւ իմաստը ու արժէքը կը գտնէ եկեղեցւոյ համայնական կեանքէն ներս: Արդ, Սուրբ Գրային պատմութեան ու մեկնաբանութեան հարկ է միացնել դարերու վրայ տարածուած մեր եկեղեցւոյ հոգեմտաւոր ստեղծագործութիւնը, հաւատքի վկայութիւնը, եւ քրիստոնէական հաւատքի կենսագործման ու տարածման համար գործած ու ստեղծագործած եւ իրենց արիւնը թափած մեր հայրապետներուն, մեր սուրբերուն ու նահատակներուն վարքն ու գործը: Այլ խօսքով, քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան անհրաժեշտ է մօտենալ համապարփակ հայեցակէտով:

Դ.

Ինչպէ՞ս կատարել քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը

Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը, որ սերտօրէն առնչուած է քրիստոնեայ անհատի ֆիզիքական, հոգեւոր, մտային ու բարոյական աճման ու կազմաւորման հետ, պէտք է կատարուի այնպիսի մօտեցումով ու եղանակով, որ քրիստոնէական հաւատքը կը վերածէ գոյութեանական իրականութեան եւ ո՛չ թէ տեսական յղացքի: Այս հեռանկարով անհրաժեշտ կը նկատենք հետեւեալ յիշեցումները կատարել.-

ա) Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը եկեղեցւոյ առաքելութեան հիմքը կը կազմէ, եւ հետեւաբար, անոր գերագոյն պատասխանատուն եկեղեցին է: Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան հետ ազերս ունեցող ոեւէ գործունէութիւն հարկ է որ տեղի ունենայ եկեղեցւոյ հովանիին ներքեւ: Եկեղեցիէն դուրս, եկեղեցւոյ իշխանութեան սահմաններէն անդին քրիստոնէական հաւատքի ուսուցման ոեւէ փորձ ընդունելի չէ: Երբեմն անհատներու կողմէ, անձնակեդրոն մօտեցումներով ու գրաւիչ ձեւերով կատարուող նման նախաձեռնութիւններ կրնան հաւատացեալները ու մանաւանդ երիտասարդները առաջնորդել սխալ ուղղութեան: Հարկ է ըլլալ զգոյշ նման երեւոյթներու դիմաց:

բ) Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան նպատակը մարդու հոգեմտաւոր կազմաւորումը ըլլալով, անհրաժեշտ է որ կարեւորութեամբ նկատի առնուի մարդը չըրջապատող ներկայ ժամանակներու մտահոգութիւններն ու մարտահրաւէրները: Նո՛յնը կատարեց Քրիստոս: Իր տուած օրինակներուն ու պատմած առակներուն մէջ տիրական ներկայութիւն էին իր ժամանակի երեւոյթները ու հարցերը: Չենք կրնար անտեսել ներկայ աշխարհը: Քրիստոնէութիւնը ընկերութենէն հեռու, ինքնակեդրոն իրականութիւն մը չէ: Աստուծոյ Որդին աշխարհ եկաւ մարդկային կեանքը յեղաշրջելու ու վերանորոգելու: Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը պէտք է կատարուի նո՛յն մօտեցումով՝ պատրաստելու համար այնպիսի քրիստոնեաներ, որոնք ամբողջական ճանաչումը ունենալով ներկայ աշխարհի չարիքներուն ու տազնապնդուն, կարենան յանձնառու դառնալ ընկերութեան մարդակեդրոն արժէքներուն համակարգը շրջելու՝ համաձայն քրիստոնէական հաւատքի ճշմարտութիւններուն ու հրամայականներուն:

գ) Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը պէտք է կատարուի հայ եկեղեցւոյ աւանդութիւններուն ու մեր կեանքին ներքին դրուածքին համաձայն: Մեր մշակոյթը ու լեզուն, մեր եկեղեցւոյ ծէսը ու կառոյցը, մեր ազգային

ըմբռնումներն ու համոզումները անհրաժեշտ է որ իրենց տեղը ունենան կրօնական դաստիարակութեան առնչուած աշխատանքներուն մէջ: Այս բոլորին կողքին, չենք կրնար անտեսել մեր անմիջական շրջապատը: Ցանկապատեր ու սահմաններ փաստօրէն գոյութիւն չունին այլեւս մեր շուրջ: Այս կացութիւնը մեզ կը մղէ մէկ կողմէ՝ ամբօրէն կառչած մնալու մեր իւրայատուկ տեսակէտներուն ու ասանդական մօտեցումներուն, եւ միւս կողմէ՝ զգուշաւոր կերպով բացուելու մեր շրջապատին, անհրաժեշտութեան պարագային որդեգրելով այնպիսի ձեւեր ու միջոցներ, որոնք չեն վտանգեր Հայ եկեղեցւոյ ինքնութիւնը եւ իր կողմէ կատարուող քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան իւրայատուկութիւնը: Բնականաբար դիւրին գործելակերպ մը չէ այս. սակայն ներկայ աշխարհի պարտադրանքին դիմաց հարկ է ցուցաբերել ճկուն ու հաւասարակչուած մօտեցում, յատկապէս արեւմտեան երկիրներուն մէջ:

դ) Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը անհրաժեշտօրէն կարիքը ունի այնպիսի միջոցներու, որոնք քրիստոնէական արժէքներու փոխանցումը կը դարձնեն հետաքրքրական, հեզասառ ու ազդու: Կարելի չէ անտեսել մարդուն անփոխարինելի դերը այս գործընթացին մէջ: Առաքելութիւն մը կ'իրագործուի հաւատք, յանձնառութիւն ու տեսիլք ունեցող մարդոց կողմէ: Մանաւանդ կրօնական դաստիարակութեան նման վեհ աշխատանք մը պէտք է կատարուի այնպիսի անձերու կողմէ, որոնք իրենց կեանքով ու գործով կենդանի օրինակ կը դառնան իրենց քարոզած ճշմարտութիւններուն: Դաստիարակին առընթեր, իւրաքանչիւր ժամանակ ունի դաստիարակութեան յատուկ իր միջոցները. եւ եկեղեցին յաջողած է լայնօրէն օգտագործել իր ժամանակաշրջանին ու միջավայրին ընձեռած կարելիութիւնները: Համաշխարհայնացած ներկայ աշխարհին մէջ լսողատեսողական միջոցներու ամբողջական ու ճիշդ օգտագործումը վստահաբար մեծապէս արդիւնաւէտ պիտի դարձնէ քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան գործը: Արդարեւ, արհեստագիտական միջոցներու գործածութիւնը դարձած է այլեւս բնական ու հրամայական ո՛չ միայն նոր սերունդին, այլ ընդհանրապէս բոլոր տարիքի մէջ գրտնուող մեր եկեղեցւոյ զաւակներուն համար:

ե) Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը մնայուն ընթացք մըն է, որ պէտք է կատարուի ծրագրուած ու հետեւողական կերպով եւ հանգրուանային զարգացումով: Այս գործընթացին մէջ եկեղեցւոյ կողքին կարեւոր դեր ունին ընտանիքը ու դպրոցը: Հայ մանուկը իր աչքերը աշխարհին կը բանայ Հայ ընտանիքէն ներս, ուր իր ֆիզիքական աճման կ'ընկերանայ իր հոգեւոր աճումը: Հետեւաբար, որքա՞ն վճռական է ծնողքին դերը քրիստո-

նէական դաստիարակութեան մէջ: Ահա թէ ինչու ընտանիքը նկատուած է «փոքր եկեղեցի»: Իսկ Հայ դպրոցը քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը պէտք է նկատէ անբաժան ու անբաժանելի մասը մարդակերտումի ու Հայակերտումի իր առաքելութեան: Մեր կրթական կառոյցներէն ներս, քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը պէտք չէ տրուի միայն կրօնի ուսուցումով, այլ նաեւ բարոյախօսութեան յատուկ պահերու ճամբով եւ այլ յարմար առիթներու օգտագործումով: Արդ, եկեղեցի, ընտանիք եւ դպրոց սերտ գործակցութիւնը կը նկատենք հրամայական:

Ե.

Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան վերածրագրում

Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութիւնը քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը կը նկատէ իր առաքելութեան ամենէն էական բնագաւառներէն մէկը: Այս յանձնառութենէն մեկնած, մեր Սուրբ Աթոռը անցնող տարիներուն ո՛չ միայն անհրաժեշտ մարդուժ եւ նիւթական ու գործնական լայն կարելիութիւններ տրամադրած է այս յոյժ կարեւոր գործին, այլ նաեւ՝ հրատարակութիւններու, դասախօսութիւններու ու համագումարներու ճամբով լայն ծաւալ ու նոր մղում տուած է քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան աշխատանքներուն: Չմոռնանք, որ Կիրակնօրեայ վարժարաններուն հիմքը դրուեցաւ Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան կողմէ, 1930 թուին, եւ շնորհիւ Մեր նախորդ Հայրապետներուն հետեւողական ճիգին, Կիրակնօրեայ վարժարաններու լայն ցանց մը ստեղծուեցաւ Սիւրբ Գաղութներէն ներս: Խոր գոհունակութեամբ կ'ուզենք հաստատել, որ ընդառաջելով Մեր թելադրութիւններուն, եւ նկատի ունենալով մեր ժողովուրդի զաւակներուն տակաւ աճող հոգեւոր սնունդի կարիքը, Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան բոլոր թեմերէն ներս, Ազգային Առաջնորդարաններու կառոյցներու շարքին քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան յատուկ բաժանմունքներ հաստատուեցան, որոնք աշխոյժ կերպով լծուած են աշխատանքի:

Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը թէ՛ մեր Սուրբ Աթոռին կողմէ՝ համազգային մակարդակով եւ թէ՛ մեր թեմերուն կողմէ՝ թեմական սահմաններէն ներս, անհրաժեշտ է որ շարունակուի վերանորոգ թափով ու միշտ նկատի ունենալով մեզ շրջապատող պայմանները ու ներկայ աշխարհի մարտահրաւէրները: Դիւրին չէ դաստիարակչական աշխատանքը. մանաւանդ դիւրին չէ քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը մեր նոր սերունդին, որ ամէ՛ն վայրկեան ու ամէ՛ն տեղ շրջապատուած է մարդուն մէջ հոգեւոր ու բարոյական արժէքները

փճացնող երեւոյթներով: Այս մտահոգիչ կացութեան դիմաց մեր աշխատանքը պէտք է դառնայ աւելի՛ կազմակերպ, մեր կամքը՝ աւելի՛ զօրեղ, մեր նուիրումը՝ աւելի՛ ամբողջական: Ահա այս ակնկալութեամբ հետեւեալ գործնական թելադրութիւնները կ'ուզենք կատարել: -

ա) Մեր ընտանիքներէն ներս աւելի լուրջ կարեւորութիւն պէտք է ընծայուի քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան: Շեշտեցինք ընտանիքի վերապահուած կեդրոնական դերը այս ուղղութեամբ: Սակայն, ինչպէ՞ս մանուկը հոգեւոր ու բարոյական առողջ կազմաւորում կրնայ ստանալ, երբ հայ ընտանիքներէն սկսած են հեռանալ մեր կրօնական արժէքները, հոգեւոր ապրումները ու եկեղեցական աւանդութիւնները. երբ խառն ամուսնութիւններ ու ամուսնալուծումներ սկսած են իրենց ներկայութիւնը զգալի դարձնել հայ ընտանիքներէն ներս: Հայ ծնողքը հայ մանուկին հոգեկերտումի ու հայակերտումի առաջին ու մնայուն դաստիարակն է: Հետեւաբար, հայ մանուկին քրիստոնէական կազմաւորումը անհրաժեշտօրէն կ'ենթադրէ նաեւ հայ ընտանիքի՛ն քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը:

բ) Կարեւորութեամբ ընդձեցինք թէ՛ հայեցի առողջ դաստիարակութեան հիմքը քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնն է: Անհրաժեշտ է հետեւաբար, որ այս խոր համոզումով քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան մօտենան մեր դպրոցները, ուր կրօնի ուսուցումը պէտք է դառնայ պարտադիր: Աստուածաշնչական դէպքերու ու դէմքերու կողքին, մեր եկեղեցւոյ պատմութեան դասաւանդումը, ինչպէս նաեւ մեր բարոյական արժէքներու փոխանցումը հայ աշակերտին կը նկատենք խիստ հրամայական: Այս գծով մեր թեմակալ Առաջնորդներն ու Ազգային Իշխանութիւնները պէտք է դառնան խստապահանջ:

գ) Բարձր գնահատելով հանդերձ մեր թեմերուն կողմէ կատարուող եռուն գործունէութիւնը քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան մարզէն ներս, կը սպասենք որ այդ դառնայ աւելի՛ ծրագրուած ու մեր ժողովուրդի կեանքէն ներս թափանցող: Սուրբ Գրոց սերտողութիւնները եւ հոգեւոր դասախօսութիւնները բնականաբար իրենց կարեւոր դերը ունին: Անհրաժեշտ է միաժամանակ այնպիսի գործնական քայլերու դիմել, որով կարելի ըլլայ ժողովուրդի հաւաքական կեանքէն ներս մեր կրօնական արժէքները ու աւանդութիւնները կենդանի ներկայութիւն դարձնել, եւ յատկապէս նոր սերունդը ներգրաւել՝ անոր հոգեւոր կարիքներուն գոհացում տալով, հարցադրումներուն ու սպասումներուն պատասխաններ գտնելով, եւ երկխօսութեան ճամբով հայ եկեղեցւոյ կեանքին ու առաքելութեան հաղորդ դարձնելով:

դ) Քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան մէջ յա-

տուկ տեղ կը գրաւէ մեր եկեղեցւոյ ծէսը, որ անհրաժեշտօրէն կարիքը ունի բարեկարգութեան՝ ապահովելու համար ժողովուրդին աւելի լայն մասնակցութիւնը: Այս ծիրէն ներս յատկապէս քարոզախօսութիւնը կը նկատենք կարեւոր: Քարոզին նպատակը պէտք է միայն Աստուածաշունչին մեկնաբանութիւնը ըլլայ, այլ՝ Քրիստոսի պատգամին փոխանցումը ժողովուրդին, ներկայ ժամանակներու մտահոգութիւններուն, հրամայականներուն ու մարտահրաւէրներուն լոյսին տակ: Այս մօտեցումով տրուած քարոզ մը ու հոգեպարար արարողութիւն մը ո՛չ միայն հոգեպէս պիտի ներշնչեն մեր հաւատացեալները, այլ նաեւ մեծապէս պիտի նպաստեն անոնց հոգեւոր աճման ու դաստիարակութեան:

ե) Կիրակնօրեայ վարժարաններու ներկայ ցանցը անհրաժեշտօրէն կարիքը ունի վերաշխուժացման: Այս մարզէն ներս աշակերտութեան թիւի նուազում եւ ընդհանուր հետաքրքրութեան պակաս մը կը նշմարենք: Կիրակնօրեայ վարժարանին դերը անփոխարինելի է, որպէս ամբողջացուցիչ ընտանիքի ու դպրոցի կողմէ ջամբուող կրօնական դաստիարակութեան: Մեր սպասումն է, որ մեր թեմերը վերակազմակերպումի ենթարկեն եկեղեցիներու ու դպրոցներու կողքին գործող Կիրակնօրեայ վարժարանները: Մեր հայրական ջերմ թելադրանքն է, որ մեր ծնողները իրենց զաւակները եւ դպրոցները իրենց աշակերտները առաջնորդեն Կիրակնօրեայ վարժարան:

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Միրելի՛ զաւակներ հայ եկեղեցւոյ,

Հայ մարդու քրիստոնէայ կերտումը նո՛յնքան անհրաժեշտ է որքան՝ հայակերտումը, ազգակերտումը, հայրենակերտումը: Արդարեւ, ժամանակներու ժանգիւն ու փոշիին եթէ դիմացանք՝ պահելով մեր ազգային ինքնութիւնը ու միութիւնը, մեր դաւանած ու ապրած քրիստոնէական արժէքները ու ճշմարտութիւնները իրենց ճշգրտօրէն դերը ունեցան: Խորապէս կը հաւատանք, որ Բեթղեհէմի ճամբով աշխարհին յայտնուած ու Սուրբ Թադէոս ու Սուրբ Բարթողիմէոս առաքեալներու ճամբով հայ կեանքէն ներս մուտք գործած, եւ մեր հայրապետներու ու սուրբերու կողմէ քարոզուած, պահպանուած ու պաշտպանուած քրիստոնէական հոգեւոր ու բարոյական արժէքները ու յաւիտենական ճշմարտութիւններն են, որոնք դարձեալ մեզ պիտի պահեն առողջ ու զօրեղ ներկայ աշխարհի ապաքրիստոնէացնող ու ապահայացնող հոսանքներուն դիմաց:

Ա՛յս գերազանցօրէն սրբազան նպատակին է լծուած

Հայ եկեղեցին քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան ճամբով: Այս խոր գիտակցութեամբ ու նախանձախընդրութեամբ մեր թեմակալ Առաջնորդները ու Ազգային Իշխանութիւնները, մեր ընտանիքներն ու կրթական պատասխանատուները եւ ընդհանրապէս մեր կեանքէն ներս գործող կառույցները պէտք է մօտենան քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան:

Հետեւաբար, կոչ կ'ուղղենք Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան բոլոր թեմերուն, բարձրագոյն աստիճանի կարեւորութիւն ընծայելու քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան՝

1) Վերակազմակերպելով քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը իր բոլոր երեսներով ու մարզերով:

2) Դպրոցներէն ներս կարեւոր տեղ տալով կրօնի ուսուցման ու բարոյախօսութեան:

3) Նիւթական անհրաժեշտ կարելիութիւնները յատկացնելով ու մարդու տրամադրելով քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան կապուած ծրագիրներուն:

4) Ժողովրդային ու երիտասարդական դասախօսութիւններու, հաւաքներու ու հրատարակութիւններու ճամբով, Հայ եկեղեցւոյ տեսակէտներուն հաղորդ դարձնելով մեր ժողովուրդի գաւակները՝ ներկայ ընկերութիւնը յուզող կրօնական, ընկերային ու բարոյական խնդիրներու շուրջ:

5) Թեւազրելով քահանայ հայրերուն, յաճախակի ծխային այցելութիւններով հոգեւոր սնունդ մատակարարելու մեր ընտանիքներուն, տարեցներուն, հիւանդներուն ու բանտարկեալներուն:

Մեր խոր համոզումն է, որ հաւատքով ու նուիրումով կատարուած քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը մեծապէս պիտի նպաստէ մեր ժողովուրդի սիրելի գաւակներուն քրիստոնէական հաւատքի զօրացման, հոգեւոր աճման ու հոգեմտաւոր կազմաւորման:

Կ'աղօթենք առ Բարձրեալն Աստուած, որ Իր երկնային շնորհքներով զօրացնէ քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութեան նուիրական առաքելութեան լծուած մեր թեմակալ Առաջնորդները, մեր հոգեւոր դասը ու ուսուցիչները, ինչպէս նաեւ այս սրբազան նպատակի իրագործման նպաստող մեր թեմական իշխանութիւնները, մեր բարերարներն ու կառույցները:

Հայրական ջերմ սիրով ու օրհնութեամբ,
Աղօթարար՝

ԱՐԱՄ Ա. ԿԱԹՈՂԻԿՈՍ
ՄԵԾԻ ՏԱՆՆ ԿԻԼԻԿԻՈՅ

1 Յունուար, 2008

Անթիլիաս, Լիբանան

The Torch Lit at Gladzor

by Khachig Tololyan

[Editor's note: During this 30th anniversary year we will reprint articles that appeared in Outreach years ago. This article by Professor Tololyan was published in the September 1984 issue (Volume 7, No. 5). The majority of this issue was devoted to Gladzor on the occasion of its 700th anniversary which was being celebrated worldwide. A frequent contributor to Outreach, Professor Tololyan's articles were immensely enjoyed and appreciated by readers, and always prompted thoughtful and positive responses. Professor Tololyan works in the field of modern fiction and contemporary critical theory. In addition, he edits the journal DIASPORA and publishes on the topics of Nationalism, Transnationalism, Ethnicity, Diaspora and International Terrorism.]

In the vast holdings of the British Museum there is an Armenian manuscript whose colophon, roughly translated, reads thus: "This was copied in the Armenian year [1321 AD], in bitter times that lacked all goodness, when the nation of the archers [the Mongols—KT] held the Armenian and Georgian peoples in tyranny, in the reign of the Georgian king Kourken and our king Levon, during the Catholicosate of our lord father Constantine, when [...] was general of the armies and [...] was lord of this province, and when the holy and felicitous rhetoricians Tavit and Yesayi directed and taught at this renowned, holy monastery and university of Gladzor ... [written by] the sin-steeped and unworldly Geryon, servant of the Word."

This is the first reference in our manuscript tradition to the university at Gladzor (or Klatzor), which had opened its doors sometime between 1280 and 1284 AD. During 1984 we celebrate the seven hundredth anniversary of this major Armenian institution of higher learning.

To commemorate the founding of Gladzor is, of course, more than just a gesture of remembrance towards a once-great, now-defunct institution of higher learning, no matter how important its contributions were to Armenia's intellectual life—though they were very great indeed. To give just one example, the reason that we have available to us today Yeznig Goghpatzi's *Yeghdz Aghantotz*, the crowning text of *krapar* prose, is that at Gladzor the copyist Looser made the only manuscript of it still extant. But to celebrate Gladzor is also to pay tribute to the spirit of dedication to learning and education that flickers on through the darkest nights of Armenian history—of which there have been all too many.

To appreciate the full achievement of Gladzor it is useful to recall the development of teaching and education in the ancient world. The first learning relationships were those of the apprentice and the master, the student and the tutor. Philosophy was personally taught by the likes of Socrates. His student, Plato, instructed via dialogue and informal lecture to

continued on page 67

His Holiness Aram I Designates 2008 Year of Christian Education

[His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, designated 2008 as the Year of Christian Education. The Pontiff's message on this occasion is reprinted in English and Armenian — Editor.]

On the threshold of the year 2008, we greet you with pontifical blessing and warm Christian love from the center of the Armenian Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia in Antelias, wishing you a plentiful year full of divine blessings.

As you know, every year, through a pontifical message, we appeal to our people to individually and collectively reflect and focus their attention on fundamental issues and priority concerns pertaining to our life, in general.

In this regard, we had drawn your special attention to the central place and vital role of the *Bible* (2003), the *Family* (2004) and the *Armenian School* (2006) in the life of our church and nation. Indeed, in speaking about these sacred values and structures, we had emphasized the pivotal importance of Christian education in the spiritual and intellectual formation and enrichment of the Armenian people and, generally speaking, the strengthening of their Christian faith.

Based on this undeniable fact and considering the serious concerns arising from the conditions and challenges of today's world, we decided to proclaim the year 2008 as the

“YEAR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION”

Let us first attempt to briefly understand the meaning of Christian education, its purpose and importance. Then, in light of the realities surrounding us, let us identify the most effective means of providing sound religious education to our people.

A.

What do we understand by Christian education?

Taking a general approach, religious education means instilling individuals or communities with the truths and principles, values and traditions of the religion to which they adhere. All these must be integrated into the *modus vivendi*, *modus operandi* and thinking of those individuals or communities. In other words, the purpose of religious education is to make religion, with its beliefs and teachings, its history and mission, a total, permanent and living presence in the life of an individual or community following it, through a process of spiritual and intellectual development and formation.

The purpose of Christian education is also the same, generally speaking. With more specific emphasis, Christian education means –

a) Molding the individual, who is called upon to become, or has already become, a member of the church of Christ, with biblical truths and values, so that he or she can follow Christ with conscious faith and total devotion.

b) Along with biblical teachings and moral principles, the purpose of religious education is to transmit to the Christian individual or community the history of the Christian religion, in general, and the tenets and theological approaches of the church he or she belongs to, as well as basic information about the lives and works of the fathers, saints and martyrs of that church.

c) Christianity is not a totality of teachings; nor is it a system of spiritual values. Christianity is life. Christ said, “I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. (John 10:10). The “abundant life” is such a unique way of understanding, evaluating and living human life, in which Christ radiates with his divine truths and eternal messages. The purpose of Christian education is to show the road leading to the “abundant life.”

d) Being a true Christian requires a total identification with one's essence and existence, because it means consciously following Christ (Matthew 16:24) and putting on Christ, as characterized by the Apostle Paul (Romans 13:14). Therefore, Christian education is not just a transmission of knowledge; rather, it is the spiritual and intellectual making of an individual or a community, having Christ as “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14: 6). This is why Christian education must be realized essentially as participation in the mission of faith of the mystical body of Christ, the church.

B.

Christian education is the heart of the life and mission of the church

Based on its purpose and considering its singular importance, Christian education has been considered the heart of the church's mission by all churches, starting in the early centuries. Evangelism, preaching, social service and other initiatives connected with the church's mission are, undoubtedly, mandatory for the spread of the Christian faith. However, among all these, the spiritual and moral formation of the Christian man or woman is an absolute necessity, as a precondition for the spiritual building of the church. The church, as a community of faith, is comprised of individuals. The church becomes strong and viable in the spiritual and

moral sense, when its members have been molded through wholesome religion. Indeed, the human being has value insofar as the Christian religion is concerned. During his earthly mission, Christ approached the sick and the poor, the rich and the deprived, because he had come to rehumanize man according to his "divine image." Thus, the process of consciously transforming the individual human being into a Christian, through the total assimilation of the truths of his or her faith and the principles of spiritual and moral life, has been and remains the primary concern of the church.

These days, religious education has assumed a more pronounced importance for churches. Indeed, the serious dangers brought about by globalization have begun to threaten the basic beliefs constituting the essence and foundation of Christianity. The man-centered standards and man-serving approaches of the world have begun to call in question the principles of the spiritual kingdom established by Christ. In today's world, when the spiritual kingdom of Christ and the material kingdom of man are in constant conflict, it is the urgent obligation of the church to arm Christians with the eternal truths and values of the Gospel. Driven by this awareness and inspired by zeal, all churches are devoting a great deal of manpower and expending huge sums for religious education, to protect their faithful against the dangers driving God's presence out of human life, on the one hand, and imbuing the young generations with Christian values and principles, on the other hand.

C.

Christian education is a compelling necessity for the Armenian Church

Starting from the early centuries, the Armenian Church has paid special attention to education. Indeed, beginning with the discourses of St. Gregory the Illuminator and continuing with the spiritual and intellectual work of the Holy Translators, and then the spiritual literature created by our church fathers during the Silver Age; beginning with the spiritual, moral and social teachings and canons of the Armenian Church and ending with its extensive humanitarian, evangelical and educational activity in Armenia, Cilicia and the Diaspora, there is eloquent proof of the deep concern and care tangibly displayed by our church with regard to the spiritual and moral education of the Armenian people.

Christian education remains and must remain a priority within the scope of the Armenian Church's mission of faith. In this regard, we consider it important to underscore certain basic points, which constitute the special nature of Christian education being carried out within the life of the Armenian Church.

a) Christian education must not be understood from a self-centered and self-serving viewpoint; it is necessary to view it within the context of the interrelationship between the Armenians, as a whole, and Christianity, and in light of

a wealth of historical experience. It is a known fact that the conversion of the Armenian people to Christianity was not an ordinary event. The Christian faith penetrated Armenian life, became an integral part of Armenian life, and became identified with the internal texture, crises and aspirations thereof. This total and inseparable union of the Armenian people and Christianity must be distinctly expressed in Christian education. Indeed, lines of separation between Christian education and Armenian education cannot exist; these two components must complement, strengthen and enrich each other.

b) For us, being Armenian means being Christian. Christianity constitutes the basis and the esse of the formative process of being human and being Armenian. Armenian education must be accomplished with a total and conscious grasp of the unique spirit and faith, thinking and life, style and quality of the Christian religion. Therefore, Christian education is called upon to give direction to Armenian education. Christian values and truths must radiate like sunlight in the life of the true Armenian.

c) For our church, religious education has not been and must not ever become solely teaching of the Bible. The Bible is the center of the Christian mission, teachings, rituals and, generally speaking, the Christian life. The spiritual and moral principles of the Bible are considered the cornerstone of Christian education for all times and all Christian peoples. However, the Bible finds its precise, true and full meaning and value in the common life of the church. Thus, it is necessary to combine biblical history and interpretation with the centuries-old spiritual and intellectual creative output of our church, its witness of faith, the lives and works of our church fathers, our saints and martyrs, who have toiled and created, and who have shed their blood, for the realization and spread of the Christian faith. In other words, it is necessary to approach Christian education from a comprehensive perspective.

D.

How is Christian education to be accomplished?

Christian education, which is closely connected with the physical, spiritual, intellectual and moral growth and development of the Christian individual, must be accomplished with an approach and in a manner that renders the Christian faith into an existential reality and not a theoretical concept. With this perspective, we consider it necessary to state the following reminders:

a) Christian education constitutes the basis of the church's mission and, therefore, the church is ultimately responsible for it. Any activity related to Christian education must take place under the auspices of the church. Any attempt at teaching the Christian faith outside of the church, beyond the boundaries of the church's jurisdiction, is not acceptable. Sometimes, such initiatives, which are carried out by individuals with self-centered approaches and in enticing ways, can lead the faithful and especially the youth in the wrong direction. It is

necessary to be wary of such phenomena.

b) With human beings' spiritual and intellectual formation being the purpose of Christian education, it is necessary that present-day concerns and challenges facing humankind not be taken lightly. Christ did the same thing. The events and issues of his time were a dominant presence in the examples he gave and the parables he told. We cannot ignore the present world. Christianity is not a self-centered reality apart from society. The Son of God came into this world to revolutionize and renew life. Christian education must be accomplished with the same approach, in order to prepare the kind of Christians who, being fully cognizant of the evils and crises of the present-day world, can become committed to changing the order of human-centered values prevailing in today's society, in accordance with the truths and imperatives of the Christian faith.

c) Christian education must be accomplished according to the traditions of the Armenian Church and the internal specificities of our community life. It is necessary for our culture and language, the rites and structure of our church, our national perceptions and convictions to have their place in the efforts connected with Christian education. In addition to all these elements, we cannot ignore our immediate environment. Fences and boundaries, in effect, no longer exist around us. This situation impels us, on the one hand, to steadfastly cling to our perceptions, traditions and experiences, while, on the other hand, to cautiously become responsive and receptive to our environment, adopting, when necessary, ways and means, which don't jeopardize the identity of the Armenian Church and the particularity of Christian education being implemented by it. Naturally, this is not an easy *modus operandi*; however, it is necessary to display a flexible and balanced approach, particularly in the Western countries, in view of the challenges of the modern world.

d) Christian education has the indispensable need for the kind of means that will make the communication of Christian values interesting, smooth and effective. It is impossible to ignore the pivotal role of human beings in this process. A mission is accomplished by people who have faith, commitment and vision. A noble task like religious education, in particular, must be accomplished by those individuals, who become living examples of the truths they preach, through their life and work. Along with the educator, each era has its own means of educating, and the church has succeeded in widely utilizing the possibilities afforded by its period and environment. In the present world of globalization, the full and proper use of audiovisual aids will surely make the work of Christian education quite productive. Indeed, the use of modern technology has already become natural and imperative not only for the young generation but also all the members of our church, regardless of age.

e) Christian education is a continuous process, which must be carried out in a planned and consistent manner through incremental phases. The family and the school

have an important role to play in this process, along with the church. Armenian infants open their eyes to the world as part of Armenian families, in which their spiritual growth accompanies their physical growth. Therefore, the parents' role in Christian education is very critical. That is why the family is considered a "small church." The Armenian school too must consider Christian education an indivisible and integral part of its civic and Armenian education. Christian education must not be given in our educational institutions solely through the teaching of religion but by means of special courses on moral education, and by sharing the Christian views about ethical issues facing contemporary societies. All in all, we consider it imperative for there to be close cooperation between church, family and school.

E. Reprogramming of Christian education

The Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia considers Christian education one of the most essential aspects of its mission. Based on this commitment, our Holy See has, in recent years, not only allocated the necessary human resources as well as ample financial and practical resources to this most important work, but also widely expanded and given new impetus to the efforts involved with Christian education through publications, lectures, symposiums and other activities. Let us not forget that the foundation of Sunday schools was laid by the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia in 1930 and, owing to the persistent effort of our previous pontiffs, an extensive network of Sunday schools was created in various communities of the Diaspora. We wish to assert with deep satisfaction that special departments of Christian education were established within the overall structures of our prelaties in all the dioceses of the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia, and they are actively engaged in their work, taking into consideration the ever-growing need of our people for spiritual nourishment.

It is necessary for Christian education to be continued, both on the pan-national level by our Holy See and within the confines of the various dioceses by our prelaties, with renewed vigor and always taking into consideration the conditions surrounding us and the challenges of the present-day world. Educational work isn't easy; in particular, it isn't easy to provide Christian education to our young generation, which is surrounded at all times and everywhere by influences that are destructive to spiritual and moral values. In the face of this worrisome situation, our efforts must become more organized, our will must become stronger, and our dedication must become total. Thus, with this expectation, we wish to make the following practical suggestions:

a) More serious importance must be given to Christian education within our families. We emphasized the central role reserved for the family in this regard. However, how is it possible to ensure the wholesome spiritual and moral formation of the infant, when our religious values, spiritual

experiences and church traditions have begun to cease being part of our family life; when mixed marriages and divorces have begun to make their presence palpable within Armenian families? The Armenian parent is the first and ever-present educator when it comes to the child's formation as a Christian Armenian. Therefore, the education of the Armenian child as a Christian necessarily presupposes the Christian education of the Armenian family too.

b) We made a point of stressing that the foundation of a real Armenian education is Christian education. Therefore, it is essential that Christian education be approached with this deep conviction by our schools, where the teaching of religion must become mandatory. We consider extremely imperative the teaching of our church history, along with biblical events and figures, as well as the transmittal of our moral values, to Armenian pupils. When it comes to this point, our diocesan prelates and assemblies must set high standards.

c) While we greatly appreciate the ardent activity being carried out by our dioceses in the field of Christian education, we are waiting for it to become more planned and more effective within the life of our people. Bible studies and lectures on spiritual topics naturally have an important role to play. At the same time, it is necessary to take practical steps, whereby it will be possible to make our religious values and traditions a living presence in the life of our people, and to involve the younger generations in particular, in the life and witness of our church by meeting their spiritual needs, and finding answers to their questions and expectations.

d) Occupying a special place in Christian education is the liturgy of our church, which inevitably is in need of reform, in order to ensure wider participation by our people. In this realm, we consider preaching important, in particular. The purpose of the sermon must not only be the interpretation of the Bible but also the transmittal of Christ's message to the people, in light of present-day concerns, imperatives and challenges. A sermon given from this approach and a soul-stirring service will not only spiritually inspire our faithful but also greatly contribute to their spiritual growth and education.

e) The present network of Sunday schools inevitably needs to be revitalized. In this realm, we notice a decrease in the number of pupils and a lack of overall interest. The role of the Sunday school is indispensable, as a supplement to the religious education provided by the family and the school. It is our expectation that our dioceses will undertake the reorganization of the Sunday schools operating alongside their churches and schools. We warmly and paternally recommend that our parents take their children, and the schools take their pupils, to Sunday school.

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Dear faithful of the Armenian Church,

The Christian formation of the Armenian is just as

necessary as his or her Armenian formation, the building of the Armenian nation, and the construction of the homeland. Indeed, if we survived the rust and dust by maintaining our national identity and unity, then the Christian values and truths professed and lived by us played a crucial role. We profoundly believe that the Christian spiritual and moral values, the eternal truths, which were revealed to the world out of Bethlehem, made their entrance into Armenian life through the apostles St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew, and were preached, maintained and defended by our church fathers, martyrs and saints, are the ones that will again keep us sound and strong in the face of the de-Christianizing and de-Armenianizing trends of today's world.

The Armenian Church is pursuing this preeminently sacred goal by means of Christian education. It is with this deep consciousness and zeal that our diocesan prelates and assemblies, our families and school administrators, as well as the structures functioning within the life of our communities, must approach Christian education.

Therefore, we appeal to all the dioceses of the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia to give the highest degree of importance to Christian education:

- 1) By reorganizing Christian education in all its facets and realms.
- 2) By placing importance on the teaching of religion and ethics in the schools.
- 3) By allocating the necessary human and material resources to the programs connected with Christian education.
- 4) By making our people conversant with the viewpoints of the Armenian Church concerning religious, social and moral issues affecting present-day society, by means of lectures, programs and publications geared for both the general public and the youth.
- 5) By recommending to the clergy to provide spiritual nourishment to our families, senior citizens, and those who are hospitalized and imprisoned, by means of frequent pastoral visits.

It is our deep conviction that Christian education accomplished with profound faith and dedication will greatly contribute to the strengthening of the Christian faith of our beloved people, their spiritual growth and formation.

We pray to God Almighty, to strengthen our diocesan prelates, our clergy and teachers involved in the mission of Christian education, as well as our diocesan authorities, our benefactors and structures contributing to the accomplishment of this sacred goal, with his heavenly blessings.

With warm paternal love and blessing,

ARAM I,
CATHOLICOS OF THE GREAT HOUSE OF CILICIA

January 1, 2008
Antelias, Lebanon

(Translated by Aris G. Sevag)

A New Pew Book For You

Last month the new Pew Book prepared and published by the Eastern Prelacy was printed and distributed to our parishes. This new publication was designed to enable users to follow the *Badarak* with ease. Each two-page spread displays four columns, providing the words of the *Badarak* in *krapar* (Classical Armenian), Western Armenian translation, transliteration, and English translation.

Badarak was celebrated during the time of the apostles. Generally the gatherings took place in homes with the apostles leading the service. Mostly the gatherings related the life and ministry of Jesus and readings from the Scriptures. As Christianity grew and the number of Christians increased the gatherings began to convene in larger venues. And as the number of eyewitnesses declined, the service began to evolve. Since the earliest days, the faithful were encouraged to actively participate in the *Badarak*, and one of the purposes of this new Pew Book is to encourage the faithful to participate with understanding.

Preparation of the new liturgy book has been ongoing for more than two years and required many hours of work by the Prelate, clergy and Prelacy staff members.

Before going to press, the text went through several readings and trials to minimize any omissions or errors.

“Our primary goal for this pew book,” said Archbishop Oshagan, “was to make the *Badarak* accessible and understandable for everyone. We want everyone who desires to follow the liturgy to do so with comprehension.

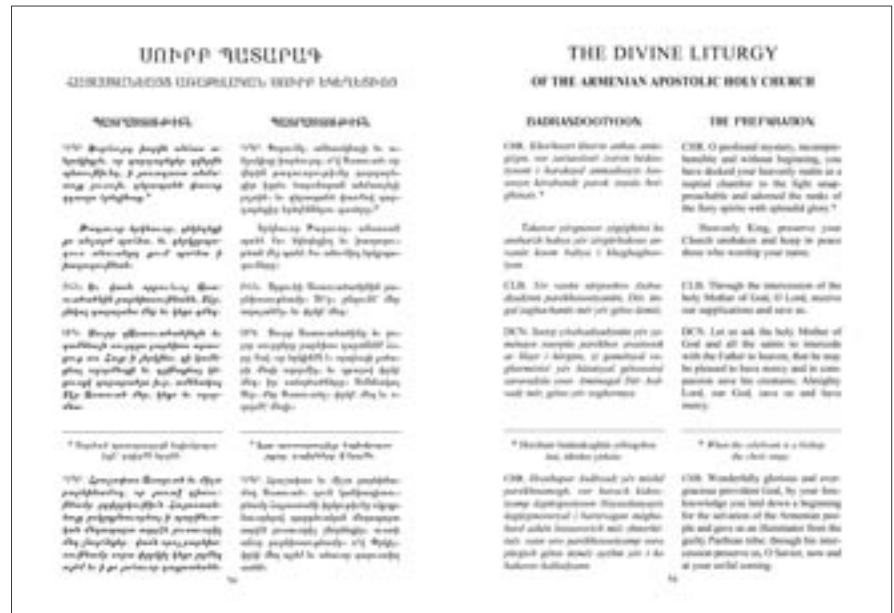
The *ashkharhapar* or vernacular translation is taken from Archbishop Zareh Aznavorian’s publication of the Divine Liturgy (*Khorhurtadadr*, Antelias, 1999), in which the translation of the Psalms is taken from the new translation published by the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia.

English translations of biblical verses (Psalms and Gospels) are taken from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

A great deal of time was spent on the English translation. Although



Archbishop Oshagan, Bishop Anoushavan, and Dn. Shant Kazanjian work on the text of the new pew book.



A two-page spread of the new pew book.

previous translations were consulted, the team worked directly from the *krapar* text rendering it into English form while trying to retain the flavor of the original.

The numbering of the Psalms in the case of the *krapar* is kept according to the text of the Septuagint, but the *ashkharhapar* and English transliterations are according to the Hebrew text.

In the hymns and deacon’s parts the letter *û* (*Á*) is intentionally placed where it is necessary to pronounce a short syllable. The pronunciation of the syllables follows the style of the singing of the liturgy of Magar Yegmalian.

The pronunciation of the English transliteration is done uniformly according to the Western Armenian pronunciation. Furthermore, the transliteration is in accordance with practical rather than scholarly considerations. Each English letter is given only one pronunciation. Homophonous pronunciations in Western Armenian are given one value, ignoring slight differences in pronunciation.

The Eastern Prelacy owes a great debt of gratitude to Mr. & Mrs. Haig and Elza Didizian, who sponsored the publication of the pew book in memory of their father, Hagop Didizian. ❖

Introduction to Understanding the Liturgy

by Deacon Shant Kazanjian

For the Armenian Church, as in all ancient churches, the Divine Liturgy (Soorp Badarak) is the central act of worship. Biblically speaking, worship is the official gathering of the community of faith in the presence of God, an assembly that is called, constituted and presided over by God. The believers encounter God and enter into communion with him through his Son, Jesus the Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Rooted in the scriptures, the mode of this encounter, for us, is through his Word and Sacraments. These are God-given signs through which God becomes present to the community of faith, the Church. Since the earliest days of the Church, the Word and the Sacrament have been the two main parts that constitute the essence of worship on Sundays: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist (the Sacrament of the Bread and the Wine).

Origins

The origin of the Badarak goes back to the Last Supper that Jesus ate with his disciples the night he was betrayed. The earliest account is found in the Letter of the Apostle St. Paul to the Corinthians, written in the middle of the first century, to the community that he had founded a few years earlier. He says:

“For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s

death until he comes” (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

St. Paul calls this service “the Lord’s Supper” (1 Corinthians 11:20). The only other name given to this ritual in the Bible is “the breaking of the bread” (Luke 24:35; Acts 2:42), which comes from one of the actions of Jesus at the Last Supper—“... he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it...” (Luke 22:19; see also Mark 14:22; Matthew 26:26). Later, Christians would refer to this service as the “Eucharist” (Greek = thanksgiving). Again, the name is taken from one of the actions at the Last Supper—“...when he had given thanks...” Other names for this service include the “Divine Liturgy,” “Mass,” and “Holy Communion.” The Armenian Apostolic Church calls this service Soorp Badarak, meaning Holy Sacrifice, underscoring the essential biblical meaning of the Lord’s Supper.

From the earliest days, the Christian assembly included the Liturgy of Bread and Wine and also the Liturgy of the Word, that is, reading and teaching from the Sacred Scriptures (Colossians 4:16, Revelation 1:3). The New Testament has many references and allusions hinting at this twofold structure (Luke 24:13-35; John 6; Acts 2:42, 20:7-12; 1 Corinthians 10-11, 14:26; Revelation 5). The Liturgy of the Word could be from the synagogue tradition of reading and teaching the Scriptures (Luke 4:16-21; Acts 13:27). Another possibility could be that it came from the ceremonial meal traditions that included a service of readings from the Scriptures.

The earliest description of a Christian worship service comes to us from St. Justin the Martyr, in the middle of the second century, Rome. St. Justin says when the community comes together, there are first readings from the Scriptures, followed by preaching and prayer. Then the gifts (the bread and a cup of wine) are brought to the celebrant; he says a long prayer of thanksgiving, and then every one partakes of the gifts. St. Justin lists baptism, true faith, and right living as conditions for

participation in the Eucharist.

This two-part structure—reading from the scriptures and the Eucharist—became the classical pattern of worship in all ancient churches, including the Armenian Church. The first part of the service is called the Liturgy of the Word, or Midday Office (*Jashoo Bashdon*) or the Liturgy of the Catechumens (*Yérakhayits Badarak*). Catechumens are those who are under instruction (catecheses) in preparation for baptism. In the early church, a non-baptized person attended only this first portion of the service. The second part is called the Liturgy of the Eucharist (*Kohapanootyoon*) or the Liturgy of the Faithful (*Havadatsélots Badarak*). To this classical two-part structure of the Liturgy, a preparatory service was added at the beginning and a dismissal service at the end (both additions were made centuries later). Therefore, today, when we say Soorp Badarak, we are referring to the service in its entirety – that is, the Preparation, the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the Dismissal.

As Christianity grew and spread, it was only natural to see the Divine Liturgy expressed in different forms and patterns, as attested in the liturgies from the 4th and 5th centuries. The Armenian Church was heir to these traditions, and our Holy Fathers translated several of these Eucharistic liturgies into Armenian. Later, they gave the liturgy its Armenian accent.

Last Supper

What is so significant about the Last Supper? This was a climactic meal in a series of many meals that Jesus had with his disciples, as well as with sinners and outcasts of society. So much so that the religious leaders criticized his practice of table fellowship, saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them” (Luke 15:2). Not merely eating food with others, shared meals in the Bible were viewed as a sign of peace, oneness, unity, friendship, acceptance, and forgiveness. In addition, meals included prayers of

This introduction to the Badarak was written for the new pew book by Deacon Shant Kazanjian, director of the Prelacy’s Armenian Religious Education Council.

blessing and thanksgiving. Thus, those sharing the table fellowship would not only receive the blessings of the prayers pronounced but also share in the above mentioned blessings that result from the practice of eating together.

Jesus' table fellowship with sinners and outcasts was a powerful symbolic act. Through it, Jesus was enacting the essential Gospel message; that is, he was extending God's grace and mercy, love and compassion, forgiveness and salvation to all humanity. This was God's plan from the beginning and it was thwarted by human sinfulness. Jesus blasted open the walls of separation and exclusivity that characterized the mentality of the religious leaders of that time. And, at last, God was implementing his plan in and through his unique servant, the suffering servant, his only Son, Jesus the Messiah (Isaiah 53). The Bible used an everyday human experience—table fellowship with all its symbolism—to communicate and enfold God's love and grace. This is essentially a sacramental act.

At the Last Supper, the meal connected to the Passover, Jesus explained his table fellowship practice and gave a new meaning to the meal. The Passover meal celebrated the Exodus events—commemorating God's deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, the sacrificial lamb, God nourishing his people in the wilderness with manna from heaven, as well as the covenant and the giving of the Law. Presiding at such a religious meal (where every aspect of the meal was specified, from the menu to who said what, when, why), Jesus, as the head of the family, offered the blessing and thanksgiving, as he always did, but added a new interpretation. "While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins'" (Matthew 26:26-28; see also Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20).

Jesus identified the bread with his body and the wine with his blood which was going to be shed. In the Scriptures, the separation of "flesh" (body) and "blood" has a sacrificial

connotation. In the context of the Passover celebrations, Jesus was pointing to himself, to his passion and death, as the new sacrifice, instead of the Passover Lamb. Through it, Jesus was inaugurating a new covenant. His death is both vicarious and salvific—"poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." St. Paul says, "Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed" (1 Corinthians 5:7). Similarly, in St. John's Gospel, Jesus is "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

In the Gospel according to St. John, Jesus uses another image from the Passover celebration and relates it to the meaning of his death—namely, manna or bread from heaven, and he invites his followers to partake of it in order to have life. He says, "I am the bread of life...the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh" and continues, saying, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you" (John 6:51, 53).

What are we doing when we go to Badarak?

Jesus commanded his disciples, and us by extension, to receive the bread and the cup—"Take, eat...take, drink." By partaking of the table of the Lord, we remember Jesus who gave his life as ransom for the sins of mankind and said "Do this in remembrance of me." Through communion in the body and blood of Christ, we share in the blessings and the benefits of his redemptive death on the cross. He is saying, take, in my sacrificial death you will find forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, life here and now, and the hope of eternal life.

Forgiveness of sins, sacrificial Lamb, deliverance, manna from heaven—these themes are brought together in our hymns and prayers. At the beginning of the Badarak, the celebrant prays quietly the following prayer from St. Gregory of Nareg: "...accept our supplications and prepare us to be an honorable dwelling place to partake in all readiness of the heavenly Lamb, and to receive without condemnation this immortalizing manna of life, the new deliverance."

Later into the service, we sing the

following hymn addressed to Christ: "Son of God, who was sacrificed for reconciliation with the Father, bread of life distributed among us; we beseech you, through the shedding of your holy blood, have mercy upon the flock redeemed by your blood."

Finally, all this is encapsulated in the invitation to communion. The celebrant, turning to the people while holding high the chalice and the body, says: "In holiness let us partake of the most holy and precious body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who descending from heaven, is distributed among us. This is life, hope, resurrection, expiation, and forgiveness of sins..."

After receiving communion, we sing: "We thank you, O Lord, for having fed us from your immortal table, by distributing your body and your blood for the salvation of the world and for life of our souls."

In summary, the Soorp Badarak is a celebration of faith, the salvation that God has wrought for us in the faithfulness of his Son, Jesus the Messiah, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, in total gratitude and thanksgiving. We celebrate this salvation through prayer and worship, ritual and symbols, reading and preaching the sacred Scriptures, proclamation and commemoration, and in hymns and chants. In doing so, we partake of the fruits of Christ's salvific work for us. And thus we, the Church, become totally renewed and anchored in Jesus the Lord.

* * *

The Structure of Soorp Badarak

As indicated earlier, the classical two-part structure of the Soorp Badarak consists of the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Later, the Preparatory service and the Dismissal service were added.

1. Preparatory Service (*Badrasdootyoon*)

The Preparatory service includes the preparation of the celebrant, the congregation and the elements. The celebrant prepares himself first by putting on his vestments accompanied by special prayers, in the vestry. After making the entrance into the chancel, he washes his hands at the bema as a

symbolic act of purification and confesses his sins before God and the faithful, asking God for forgiveness. Then, the celebrant and the altar servers go up to the altar chanting Psalms antiphonally; behind the closed curtain, the celebrant prepares the bread and wine for communion. Then follows the procession around the Church, and the Liturgy of the Word begins.

2. Liturgy of the Word (*Jashoo Bashdon*)

This part of the service focuses on the Word of God. Its goal is to teach and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The main element here is the reading from the sacred Scriptures. Usually, three readings are selected—one from the prophets, one from the apostolic letters, and the final and climactic reading is always from one of the four Gospels and is sung from the altar.

One of the earliest descriptions of the Liturgy of the Word in the Armenian tradition is given by Catholicos Hovhannes Otsnetsi (650-728). Since then, for the most part, this portion of the service has remained the same (except for some minor additions from the 12th century). Our service today includes: introductory doxology, introit, the Trisagion Hymn, the *Jashoo* Chant, followed by readings from the Bible, and concludes with the singing of the Nicene Creed. In the past, the sermon was usually given here but now it comes right before the Lord's Prayer. In his description of the Liturgy of the Word, Otsnetsi says that reading from the scriptures is like being nourished by the bread that came down from heaven. Identifying the "bread from heaven" with God's revelation and teaching comes from the Bible. In John's Gospel, Jesus is the bread that came down from heaven, the embodiment of the revelation of God, the incarnate Word of God. Partaking from the table of the Word must precede partaking from the table of bread and wine. At the beginning of Badarak, the Gospel book is enthroned at the center of the altar. After the scriptural readings, the Gospel book is enthroned to the right side of the altar to make room for the chalice, for the service of the bread and wine.

Conditions for participation in the Badarak

Looking at the service, one will notice that there are a number of explicit and implicit conditions for participation in the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Faithful.

1. We have to be baptized Christians. Through baptism, a sheer gift, we are adopted as children of God into his family, the Church. As such, we enter into a covenantal relationship with God, with its blessings and obligations. In ancient times the non-baptized (the catechumens, *yérakha*) were dismissed prior to the Liturgy of the Faithful. This idea is still present in our service today. The Liturgy of the Faithful begins with these words: "Let none of the catechumens...draw near unto this divine mystery" ("*Mi vok hérakhayits... mért-sétsi hasdvadzayin khorhoorts*").

2. Love for God and love for the neighbor is the quintessential condition for partaking from the table of the Lord. In our Badarak, this condition is expressed through the ritual of the "kiss of peace" accompanied by the hymn "*Krisdos i méch mér haydnétsav*."

As a covenant making and renewing event, the Lord's Supper obliges the believers to hear and do the Word of God (Matthew 7:24-27). In other words, believers must abide by the will of God as expressed in the sacred Scriptures. Jesus summarizes this in two commandments: "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:37-40). Love is the barometer of our life in Christ.

In the Bible, to love Jesus or to love God is to obey and do his word and his instructions (John 14:15, 21, 23, 24). And to love one's neighbor must be patterned after Christ's love for us. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love

than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:12-13). Jesus showed his love for us by his sacrificial and voluntary death on the cross. "[Jesus] ... loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood..." (Revelation 1:5). The Badarak is the commemoration and celebration of the death of Christ, through which he expressed the act of love that gives life to others. Therefore, what we proclaim and celebrate at the service must correspond to how we live.

3. This leads to the next condition: St. Paul says, "Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup" (1 Corinthians 11:28). We have to check if we are indeed loving God, i.e., obeying his commandments, and loving others as Christ loved us. If not, we need to correct our ways and resolve to change. That is to say, self examination should culminate with confession of sins and absolution, prior to receiving communion, lest we eat and drink judgment upon ourselves (1 Corinthians 11:29). "So that this may be for all of us who approach it, not unto judgment, but for expiation and for forgiveness of sins" (Soorp Badarak). St. Paul also warns the Corinthians, and hence us, that certain immoral behaviors, incompatible with the teachings of the scriptures, prevent one from approaching the table of the Lord (1 Corinthians 5: 9-13; 10:1-24).

4. In the early church if someone had committed a grave sin (adultery, murder, apostasy), penance was imposed on him, and during this period, he was not allowed to approach the table. Our Badarak forbids the penitents from receiving communion: "...and let none of the penitents ... draw near unto this divine mystery" ("*...yév mi vok habash-kharoghats ...mért-sétsi hasdvadzayin khorhoorts*").

5. Finally, the Badarak stipulates that we profess the orthodox faith of the Armenian Church, the Nicene Creed, which is a summary statement of the biblical faith. ☩

3. The Liturgy of the Faithful (*Havadatsélots Badarak*)

The basic outline of this service is as follows: the gifts (bread and wine) are taken to the altar in a solemn procession. The celebrant offers a long prayer of blessing and thanksgiving, known as the Eucharistic Prayer. This prayer is attributed to St. Athanasius of Alexandria (293-373). The Eucharistic prayer begins with the following blessing from the celebrant: "The grace, the love and the divine sanctifying power of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you." It ends with "And the mercy of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ be with you all." Most of this prayer is said silently by the celebrant, except for a few lines here and there, while the choir sings hymns. But not all is lost; the hymns pick up the essential elements of the Eucharistic prayer. Through this prayer, the church commemorates God's marvelous deeds from creation to consummation, and at the heart of it is the sacrificial death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, the celebrant begs God the Father to send his life-giving Spirit upon the gathered believers and upon the gifts on the holy table "to make them truly the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Finally, there follows a general intercession for the living and for the dead and for all things. Here we commemorate those saints who bore witness to the Gospel and the Christian faith. In particular, we commemorate our holy fathers and chief pastors, including our first illuminators, the holy apostles Thaddaeus and Bartholomew, St. Gregory the Illuminator, Sts. Sahag and Mesrob, St. Gregory of Nareg, St. Nerses the Graceful. With the Lord's Prayer, following the sermon, the final phase of the liturgical process begins, namely, preparation for and invitation to communion. After communion, two thanksgiving hymns are sung.

The earliest textual evidence for the structure of the Liturgy of the Faithful comes to us from Bishop Khosrov Antsevatsi's commentary on the Soorp

Badarak (10th century). In subsequent centuries minor additions were made, for instance, the three hymns after the words of the institution ("Take, eat;... Drink..."): Heavenly Father, "*Hayr Yérgnavor*," Son of God, "*Vorti Asdoodzo*," Spirit of God, "*Hoki Asdoodzo*." One of the last additions to Badarak was "*Dér voghormya*" (Lord, have mercy), authored by Catholicos Simeon Yerevantsi (1710-1780). "*Dér voghormya*" was not originally composed for liturgical use. However, because it was so well received by the faithful, it gradually became part of the Church services and Badarak.

4. Dismissal Service (*Artsagoomn*)

After the two thanksgiving hymns, Soorp Badarak comes to a close with the prayer, "O Lord, you bless those who bless you..." ("*Vor orhnés zaynosig...*"), followed by the final Gospel reading, and a dismissal blessing ... "Be blessed by the grace of the Holy Spirit; depart in peace and may the Lord be with you all. Amen." ✠

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The Lord's Prayer (*Hayr Mer*) in the Armenian Church

by Father Krikor Maksudian

[*The Lord's Prayer (Hayr Mer)* plays a central and important part in the Armenian Divine Liturgy as well as in other services of the church. It is sung in the middle of the Armenian Divine Liturgy; it is the only time the entire congregation is encouraged to sing along with the choir and altar servers. The arrangement most often used is by Makar Ekmalian. Terrullian described the *Lord's Prayer* as "the epitome of the whole gospel." St. Augustine described it as "the source of all prayers." The *Lord's Prayer* is used in nearly every Christian tradition. The short article that follows about the *Hayr Mer* and the Armenian Church was written by Father Krikor Maksudian for the program notes published for the Eastern Prelacy's concert, "Light from the Cross" in 2002. —Editor].

Not much is known about the history of the music for *Hayr Mer*. The text is from the Gospel of Matthew (6:9-13). [A shorter reference also appears in Luke 11:2-4—Editor]. According to the Gospel, Christ bids his followers to "pray then like this," and cites the text. This indicates that *Hayr Mer* was initially a prayer and not a song.

Hayr Mer is recited as a prayer in almost all situations, which include the beginnings and endings of all the offices or hours. There is, however, an exception to this rule: Armenians sing *Hayr Mer* in the middle of the Divine Liturgy. Under the influence of this tradition, *Hayr Mer* is also sung occasionally at the end of certain sacraments and services, such as the Marriage Rite and the Rite of Burial. This practice is obviously not a requirement, since the prayer can also be recited by the priest.

It is extremely difficult to trace the tradition to the point of uncovering the origin of a particular musical part in the Liturgy. It does appear, however, that *Hayr Mer* was set to music dur-

ing the Middle Ages or earlier. Certain *zhamagirks* (Books of Hours) that contain the Liturgy, present *Hayr Mer* with neumes (musical notation) above the words. Since the Armenian neumes, as we have them today, date back to the 12th and 13th centuries, we can safely assume that *Hayr Mer* was sung during the Cilician period (11th to 14th centuries). The earliest manuscripts of the present version of the Liturgy date from the 14th to 15th centuries. Rubrics in these manuscripts indicate that *Hayr Mer* should be sung by the congregation.



A more specific reference to the singing aspect may be discernible. In the present text of the Liturgy, the celebrant's words immediately before the chanting of *Hayr Mer* are as follows: "And grant us to open our mouths with a cry of bold voice, to call upon thee, O heavenly Father, to sing and say." In his Commentary on the Divine Liturgy, the 10th century scholar Bishop Khosrov Andzewatsi quotes the same text without the words "to sing." We see the words "to sing" for the first time in Archbishop Nerses Lambronsatsi's version of the Liturgy, a version from the second half of the 12th century. On the

basis of this evidence, we may assume that Armenians began to sing *Hayr Mer* sometime after Khosrov Andzewatsi but before—or at the time of—Nerses of Lambron. The only solid conclusion we may draw from the above is that the words "to sing" were introduced after Khosrov, since, for all we know, *Hayr Mer* could have been chanted since the 5th century, a fact for which there is some evidence.

The present-day Liturgy is an amplified version of the Liturgies of Khosrov and Nerses and the core of these three versions contains the one and the same Liturgy. By the 5th century, Armenians had translated several Liturgies. Some of these translations are extant, although they fell out of use during the early Middle Ages. One of them, attributed to St. Gregory the Illuminator, does have the words "to sing." This probably indicates that *Hayr Mer* was changed in 5th century Armenia and that the practice continued long after the Church abandoned the Liturgy attributed to St. Gregory. In the 12th century, Nerses of Lambron (or a contemporary) introduced the words "to sing" into the current version—presumably on the basis of the prevailing church practice of singing *Hayr Mer*.

Now, what about this music itself? Makar Ekmalian, who presents a longer and a shorter version of *Hayr Mer*, basically harmonized the melody he heard in the churches in Tbilisi, Georgia, and Etchmiadzin, Armenia. Komitas Vartabed (born Solomon Solomonian, 1869-1935), the great Armenian musicologist, based his arrangement on ethnographical research. Komitas' sources were often priests from remote villages. It also appears that he used certain liturgical music published by A. Apcar, who was from New Julfa, Iran. The Ekmalian arrangement represents the melody used most commonly in larger metropolitan centers since the second half of the 19th century. ❧

Language and Liturgy: What Languages Should the Armenian Church Speak?

By Michael Papazian

“Most people do not understand the language of the liturgy. That is one of the main reasons why a lot of people, particularly young people, do not go to church. They sit there for hours, like dullards, and do not understand a word.”

One can easily imagine these words being said about the Armenian Church. In fact, they were spoken by a Greek Orthodox bishop, Apostolos, the primate of the diocese of Kilkision in northern Greece, about his own flock, according to the Greek newspaper *Ekathimerini*. Bishop Apostolos had translated and celebrated the liturgy of the Greek Orthodox Church in modern Greek rather than the traditional koine Greek that was spoken two-thousand years ago and is the language of the New Testament. His hope was that the change would promote greater participation by the people in the liturgy. Although he had the support of some other bishops, in 2002 the majority of the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church in Greece rejected his proposal to modernize the language of worship. The members of the Holy Synod argued that the ancient koine contributed to the mystery of the liturgy, and some of that mystery would be lost with a change to modern or demotic Greek. Subsequently, as a compromise in 2004, the Church of Greece approved the reading in some churches of the New Testament in demotic after the reading in koine.

Disputes over language are not the sole province of the Eastern Churches. Following the conclusions of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), the Catholic Church introduced, along with other liturgical reforms, the use of the vernacular or local spoken languages rather than the traditional Latin mass. The change to the vernacular was controversial, but most Catholics have accepted and even prefer the reforms, especially as with time, fewer Catholics remember the old Tridentine mass that has been displaced by the current mass. But the acceptance of the vernacular mass has not brought to an end disputes over language. The Vatican has criticized the English translation in use and has called for an English translation that is more faithful to the Latin. Just recently, when the bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States agreed to change the English wording of several parts of the mass, several American priests and laypeople criticized the changes for being “awkward” and too distant from ordinary colloquial English.

So the Armenian Church is not alone in confronting concerns among the faithful about the language of worship. These concerns are a natural result of the central role of language and symbolism in Christian worship. The specific issues may

take different forms, but the basic question is the same—how should we speak with God? The liturgy is a form of communication—God speaks to us in words, through Scripture, and we speak to God, through our prayers. And while ultimately the communication with God, as embodied and presented in the Eucharist, transcends language, the words of the liturgy remain an important part of our encounter with God.

My plan in this essay is to provide the proper context for understanding the question of the language of the liturgy. I will then make a proposal that attempts to reconcile the validity of two apparently opposing positions: that the Armenian liturgy continue to be conducted in classical Armenian and that accommodation must be made for those who do not understand the language of the liturgy. I will begin with some brief remarks about classical Armenian.

The Armenian Church is not alone in confronting concerns among the faithful about the language of worship. These concerns are a natural result of the central role of language and symbolism in Christian worship. The specific issues may take different forms, but the basic question is the same—how should we speak with God?

The Divine Liturgy (in Armenian, the *Sourb Patarag*, or Holy Sacrifice) and all of the sacraments and services of the Armenian Church are celebrated in classical Armenian (*grabar*). There are a couple of foreign terms that have been retained in transliterated form, such as *orthi*, which means ‘Stand up!’ in Greek, and *proskhoume*, ‘let us be attentive’, from the Greek *proskhōmen*). But otherwise, all of the words spoken, chanted, or sung, are in classical Armenian. Classical Armenian is the first written form of Armenian. It was the Armenian language of the fifth century that was used to translate the Bible and to compose the first original literary works in Armenian. Classical Armenian continued to be used widely as a written language until the nineteenth century. Since languages change dramatically over time, modern forms of Armenian are notably different from the classical version. Even those fluent in modern Armenian will have difficulty in fully understanding much of the liturgy unless they have studied classical Armenian. The situation is very similar to that of the Greeks, whose modern language has drifted appreciably from the classical in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Similarly, other Eastern Churches have

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maintained a liturgical language distinct from the vernacular of their faithful. For the Syrian Orthodox Church, the liturgical language is Syriac, a dialect of Aramaic, the language of Jesus, though today there are only very small communities of Syriac speakers. The Coptic Orthodox use Coptic, the ancient language of Egypt, though Coptic ceased to be anyone's native language by the fifteenth century. And so, these churches face many of the same questions confronting the Armenian Church with respect to language.

In reflecting on such questions, it is necessary to separate two matters that are often confused. There is the broader question of whether the liturgy should remain in classical Armenian rather than a vernacular language with which the people are familiar. If we answer that question in favor of the vernacular, then there is a second question concerning whether to use the local non-Armenian languages in the liturgy in recognition of the fact that many non-Armenians attend Armenian churches, and also that many Armenians do not speak Armenian. This is an important distinction because I believe that while many Armenians are comfortable with modern Armenian or *ashkharhabar* in the liturgy (and it is now common practice in many churches for the lections and Gospel reading to be in *ashkharhabar*), the use of English or other non-Armenian languages would seem to be a much more contentious matter, as it calls into question the Armenian character of the Armenian Church. Actually, the use of modern Armenian itself is somewhat complicated by the fact that there are two main branches of modern Armenian—the Eastern Armenian spoken in Armenia, Iran, and in those regions of the diaspora settled by Armenians from these countries, and Western Armenian, spoken by Armenians from Turkey. The branches are significantly different in pronunciation, grammar, and to an extent in vocabulary, and most communities in the United States today are no longer exclusively Eastern or Western. However, proficient speakers of either branch can generally understand speakers of the other branch.

I will first focus on the broader question of classical Armenian and the vernacular more generally, regardless of whether the vernacular is modern Armenian, English, Russian, or any other language that is the everyday language of the church members. Then I will turn to the special question of the use of non-Armenian languages. In addressing matters of reform or change in the Church, my method is always to return to the sources of our tradition. This method is not the product of an unreflective and reactionary conservatism, but is based on the truth that our early church fathers are models of learned piety and faithful devotion to God and the church. By adhering to their example and teachings we are less inclined to be tempted by modern tendencies and fashions that are often contrary to the Christian faith. When we read the history of the early Armenian Church, we notice that the fifth-century movement that led to the creation of the Armenian alphabet and the translation of the Bible into Armenian was driven by the desire to make the Christian faith more accessible to the people. Armenian was not a written language until the fifth century. The educated studied Greek and Syriac, and the only Bibles and liturgical books available were written in these languages. Armenian priests celebrated the liturgy in either Greek or Syriac depending upon whether the region in question was under Byzantine or Persian domination, since

Armenia had been partitioned by the two great empires. Greek, of course, was used in the Byzantine sector, while Syriac was the language of the church in the Persian Empire. The fifth-century historian Ghazar Parpetsi described the situation in Persian Armenia, noting that the services and lections were done in Syriac and that the people “were not able to understand and benefit from this.” To remedy the situation, priests would translate the scriptural readings into Armenian and present their sermons on them in Armenian. But this was only a partial remedy. What was needed was an alphabet so that Armenian could be written and a standard liturgy could be formed for all Armenians. This was the task that St. Sahak (catholicos from 387 until his death in 439) and his associate St. Mesrop Mashtots (d. 440) undertook, giving the Armenian people a Bible and a liturgy in their own language.

Now since one of the motivations of St. Sahak and St. Mesrop and their students was to make the Christian faith understandable, we, following the same lead, should also seek to make the faith more understandable in our world. For most Armenians today, Classical Armenian might as well be Greek or Syriac. To be faithful to the spirit of Sahak and Mesrop and the Holy Translators, we need to translate the liturgy into the language of the people today, be it modern Armenian or English or whatever other language the people speak.

If the liturgy is translated into Western Armenian, Eastern Armenians will feel excluded, as would Western Armenians, if Eastern Armenian is used. But classical Armenian belongs to all Armenians. It is the mother language of all the forms of Armenian in use today. Instead of excluding anyone, it embraces all Armenians alive today, since it has shaped all contemporary forms of Armenian.

But this conclusion by itself is too simple. For as with any other great historical movement, the translation movement in the fifth century did not have just one single motivation or guiding principle. Rather, St. Sahak and St. Mesrop were responding to complex political and cultural circumstances, and their translation activity was not simply a means to communicate the Gospel to the Armenian people in their own language. It was also a response to Armenia's political division and its detrimental effect on national unity. The partition made Armenia vulnerable because it divided Armenians into two different religious and cultural spheres. Unless there was some unifying force, the two Armenias would drift apart. The unifying force that brought the Armenian people was the Armenian language, and the church was the patron of that language, ensuring that wherever they may live, Armenians

would hear the same words in their churches.

This second motivation of the translation movement was to preserve the unity and freedom of the Armenian people. From this motive we may infer a second lesson according to which it seems imperative that the Church speak one language everywhere as a sign of the unity of the Armenian Church and people. If we understand the spirit of St. Sahak and St. Mesrop in this way, we should exclude the use of either modern Armenian or any other modern language in the liturgy. First, as I noted, there is no one modern Armenian branch spoken by all Armenians. If the liturgy is translated into Western Armenian, Eastern Armenians will feel excluded, as would Western Armenians, if Eastern Armenian is used. But classical Armenian belongs to all Armenians. It is the mother language of all the forms of Armenian in use today. Instead of excluding anyone, it embraces all Armenians alive today, since it has shaped all contemporary forms of Armenian.

Just as importantly, classical Armenian does not exclude those who have gone before us. There is a very important and beautiful idea in Christian theology known as the “communion of saints.” This is the belief that there is a fellowship and unity among all the members of the church, both those who are alive and those who have died. By presenting the liturgy in the unchanging formulas of an ancient language rather than in the evanescent expressions that characterize modern tongues, we are reminded that the Church unites not just those of us living in the first part of the twenty-first century but that it also connects us to all the ages past and to come. The classical language symbolizes that the church does not belong to the present moment but transcends both time and place.

There is another argument for preserving classical Armenian, an argument based on matters of dignity and formality. Because modern languages are used for routine discourse and intercourse, they are idioms of commerce and entertainment, gossip and trivia. In sum, the vernacular is a language of this world (a point made clear by the Armenian word for vernacular, *ashkharhabar*, derived from *ashkharh*, “world”), and as such it has been colored by the trends and fashions of the modern world. Classical Armenian, by contrast, has been protected from such contact with the mundane. The Church has protected it so that it remains resplendent and pure, undefiled by the need to communicate the ephemeral concerns of the present age. Just as most people do not go to church dressed in their daily work clothes, so too the language of the Church ought to be more elevated and dignified than the language of the marketplace. Classical Armenian possesses the dignity appropriate to the celebration of the Eucharist.

So I think a compelling case can be made that classical Armenian remain the language of the Armenian Church, a case that is based on our traditions and theology. Nevertheless, a case likewise drawn from our tradition can be made that the liturgy should be understandable. Is there an answer that responds to the modern needs of the Church and remains faithful to the tradition and teachings of the church? I think that there is, but it involves a recognition that the Divine Liturgy itself has discrete parts. The essence of the liturgy is of course, the Holy Sacrifice, which is the sacrament of the Eucharist. But before that, there is the Liturgy of the Catechumens (which is actually the *Jashou Zham*, one of the

seven daily offices or services of the Armenian liturgy of the hours). This is the instructional part of the service, intended especially for the catechumens, the unbaptized who are receiving instruction in preparation for baptism. The scripture readings and the recitation of the Nicene Creed take place in the Liturgy of the Catechumens. Since the purpose of this part of the liturgy is instruction in the faith, it would make sense for it to be presented in a language that the congregation can understand. This would be the appropriate time for the use of the vernacular. But at the end of this liturgy, a special liturgy begins, the Holy Sacrifice or Eucharist. As the celebrant removes his priestly crown and his slippers, the deacon says:

Let none of the catechumens, none with doubtful faith, and none of the penitents or any unclean person draw near to this Divine Mystery (*khouroud*).

In the early Church the unbaptized and those not prepared to receive communion were required to leave at this point before the celebration of the Eucharist. What begins now is a Divine Mystery, or Sacrament, since *khouroud* has both meanings in Armenian. And a mystery by definition is something that we cannot understand. So now it becomes appropriate for the liturgy to be performed in classical Armenian, underscoring the fact that this is a divine mystery that is beyond our understanding. The change in language will more dramatically highlight the movement from the Liturgy of the Catechumens to the Liturgy of the Eucharist, a transition whose significance many of the faithful probably fail to appreciate.

So far, I have only proposed that the vernacular language be used during the Liturgy of the Catechumens. That might mean that only modern Armenian should be used. But turning now to the more specific question of which vernacular should be used, I would also like to defend the use of non-Armenian languages in addition to modern Armenian. I will again base my argument on our sacred tradition and theology. There was a time when the Armenian Church was a missionary church, eagerly following the command of the Lord to baptize all nations even to the point of martyrdom. Missionaries were sent to evangelize the neighboring nations of the Caucasus, and no doubt, our missionaries spoke in the languages of these foreign people. Due to the Islamic conquests, the Armenian Church is now a minority church forcibly constrained to ministering only its own people, without an opportunity to reach out to other nations. But today, in many parts of the diaspora, mostly in the West, we enjoy the freedom to recover the evangelical dimension of our church. Today we find ourselves among many non-Armenians who are drawn to our church. Perhaps they are married to Armenians and wish to join the church of their spouse. Or they are attracted to the rich theology and ritual of our church, which many people find lacking in other churches. The church needs to speak to such people in their language during the Liturgy of the Catechumens, if only as a gesture that the church is not only for Armenians, but also has a universal mission and calling to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all. ✠

Faith and Music

by Florence Avakian

Playing the organ in the Armenian Church has been a passion with me throughout my life. Currently I am, and have been the organist of St. Vartan Cathedral in New York for the past 16 years. The journey along the way has been memorable.

My love affair started with a prophetic incident that took place when I was eight years old. My mother had taken me to an Armenian banquet in one of New York's hotels. The main speaker was the Primate of the Armenian Diocese, Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan of blessed memory. In the eyes of a child, he appeared as a knight in shining armor, handsome, dressed in a beautiful robe, and with a powerful bass voice that outdid all others.

And when he started to speak, the words were magical, even though little was understood by me at the time. I asked my mother if I could join the junior choir at St. Gregory the Illuminator Church on 35th Street in New York, so that I could see the Archbishop each week. To my dismay, she informed me that the Primate did not come regularly to the church, that he had many parishes to visit.

I joined the choir anyway, and grew to love the soulful music of the Divine Liturgy. Several years later, my sister and I were asked by the church pastor to play the organ. Thrilled, I practiced diligently.

When I was five, my mother, inspiring and charismatic in every way, had secured a used piano from a Protestant church for fifty dollars. It was a carved mahogany upright with ivory keys, and became the seventh member of the family, after my parents, maternal aunt, sister, and our cat.

The transition from playing the piano to that of the organ was not difficult, except for the lack of connecting pedals on the organ. Therefore, the keys had to be connected without lifting the fingers. I soon discovered that the organ's range, unlike that of the piano, could vary from the most pianissimo sounds to the fortissimos of a full orchestra, by employing a multitude of stops.

My career began at age sixteen at St. Gregory. With my sister, Katherine, who was a year younger, we alternated, playing the organ each week. The choir director, Baron Kapriel Madjarian, whom we respectfully called "Baron," was a deeply spiritual disciplinarian with a gruff exterior, but with a warm, caring heart. His rendering of the chants always had the reminder of his birthplace, Bolis. Since I had recently lost my father, and never knew my grandfather, he became both to me.

All he had to do was glare without words if anyone was late or talked during the service. If the person still did not understand, he admonished strongly, his face turning red. At Christmas, he gifted the members, all thirty-five of us, with a crisp one-dollar bill, and large Hershey chocolate bars which he purchased with his own funds.

The choir members who faithfully came each week, and sang with no compensation, viewed each other as an extended family, and to this day, stay in touch with each other. It was this first introduction to the church services that has left an indelible mark on me.

A few years later, my sister and I were asked to alternately play the organ in Holy Cross Church in Washington Heights. The two-hour bus ride to and from the church was a wonderful opportunity to go through the vibrant streets of

Harlem and see its proud inhabitants all dressed up, taking their children by the hand and going to church. This area with its age-old sculpted townhouses had once been the place to live for the high and mighty of New York.

The choirmaster at Holy Cross was the legendary singer Mardiros Keosheian, affectionately known as "Uncle Marty" to my sister and me. He had been nurtured by his mother, a Genocide survivor, and one of the beloved *mayrigrs* of St. Gregory Church. His lush, warm tenor voice which graced many recordings was always sought after by the New York Armenian community gatherings.

Playing the organ under his direction was a privilege and an opportunity to fully appreciate the soulful sounds of the Holy Badarak. Quiet, laid back, he always encouraged and respected his musicians. His love of the church music, the full interpretation of the music's lovely nuances, and his deep faith were inspiring to all.

And the *Chants of the Armenian Church*, published by the Holy Cross Church Choir, contained some of the most magnificent music, composed by such luminaries as Gomidas Vartabed, and Nersess Nersessian, the long time director of the Holy Cross Choir.

Currently, I play the organ at St. Vartan Cathedral under the direction of Khoren Mekanejian who previous to his coming to the United States 15 years ago, was the choirmaster of the Etchmiadzin Cathedral in Armenia.

Recently, for his 70th birthday celebration at the Diocese of the Armenian Church, the St. Vartan choir members sang and I played on the organ his own composition entitled the "Khorenian Badarak," a notable new entry in the exclusive club of composers of the Divine Liturgy.

The choir has also benefited from several pieces of music arranged by him that were previously unknown to us. His knowledge of music, especially church sharagans is impressive.

Once a year, the Gomidas Choir under the direction of Kris Kalfayan sings at St. Vartan Cathedral which is a rare opportunity for me to play probably the most soulful of Badaraks, the Gomidas Divine Liturgy, with its spare but elegant and spiritual melodies and harmonies.

I have also been privileged to play the organ for a Badarak service in Holy Etchmiadzin when I visited Armenia as a student, and have also played for several Badarak and wedding services in Armenian churches in America.

Who is not deeply moved when Gomidas' heartfelt *Der Voghormia* and majestic *Hayrabadagan Maghtank* are played and sung. Yegmalian's Badarak, which is the most often heard, is lush with beautiful harmonies. Chilingirian's lyrical *Amen Yev Unt Hokvooyt Koom* reflects the spiritual message, and Alexandere Haroutunian's solemn *Kuta Der* powerfully stirs the emotions. Equally moving is the soulful Lenten music, heartfelt and unforgettable with lovely solo and choir melodies.

This musical passion has not only been a peace-filled oasis from the hectic turbulent world we live in, but more importantly, a strengthening and love of my faith. I have also been privileged to play the organ for services in several Armenian churches on the east coast.

Yes, it has been an eventful journey, and one that is thankfully continuing. ❖

Florence Avakian is a journalist whose reports appear regularly in many publications, including Outreach. Her passion for music—especially Armenian Church music—began at an early age and has continued unabated. We asked her to share some of her thoughts about her years of service to the Armenian Church.

“Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord....”

by Florence Mardirosian

When St. Gregory the Illuminator brought Christianity to Armenia, we assume that he was aware of the awesomeness of his own sacred mission. We also assume that he knew of the overwhelming effect his conversion would have on a nation. But we wonder if he knew that through his action, his introduction of Christ’s message, he would set a nation singing.

What a medium of worship is song! It evokes all within one to pray and adore. Cognizant of this stirring psychological power of music, the early church fathers developed a musical liturgy that should be used in conjunction with the traditional spoken prayers of the Church.

Fundamentally, the Armenian chant, the form of music closest to spoken prayer, is similar to St. Gregory’s plainsong of the 8th century. Here the analogy ends, for the geographical influence on the Armenian nation induced her musicians to leave the “western” chant to Rome and to adapt and evolve parallel to the rest of the “eastern” world. The florid melody lines, nasal intonations, and ostensible “off pitch” singing due to the use of quarter tones are in fact strictly eastern inventions and are used even by the non-Christian Indians, Chinese and Japanese.

What, then, makes the Armenian liturgical chant a truly singular entity in Eastern Christianity? Most all Eastern rites have florid melody lines, odd intervals, and nasal intonation. The answer may lie in the use of moderation and a sense of proportion in manipulating the intrinsic elements of the chant. An excess of florid tunes renders the music unpalatable as the Turkish “wail.” An excess of quarter tones yields only cacophony while excess nasality causes distress to the listener.

The form of worship in song was principally the Mass (Badarak), the commemoration of the Lord’s last supper, and the Hymns for the Hours. These hymns played an important role in the religious life of the Armenians. The Hymnal contained 1,166 *sharagans*, compiled and adapted from various sources until the advent of St. Nerses Shnorhali. Nerses (1102-1173) was educated by his uncle, Catholicos Gregory the Second. Ordained by his older brother, Catholicos Gregory III, Nerses became the fourth Gregory to become Catholicos. Among his great works, all oriented to Christian ecumenism, one is struck with his exceptional adroitness with the Armenian language. It has been said of him that he was the most famous writer of the 12th century Armenian renaissance, both in prose and poetry. Through his efforts—this was a time of national revival and the rise of a new kingdom in Cilicia under the Rubenian Dynasty—the Hymnal was enlarged by one-fifth.

Subsequent to the reign of Nerses, final additions to the Hymnal were made until the 14th century. Further organizational work was done during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Thus, for all intents and purposes, work with the evolution of the Armenian liturgical plainsong was completed. Today, although geographically and human influences have brought an eroding effect on the purity of these chants, their

essential form and melody is unaltered as are the hymns which are commonly used in conjunction with the Badarak and the other services which are sung.

Those familiar with the Western church will note that despite the basis for all European music being the Gregorian chant, today the music is not all chant. Composed music has all but replaced the once perfect vehicle for prayer. This, too, is the case in the Armenian Church. The sung Badarak today is not chanted using the ancient modes—the parts of priests and deacons are the original tunes—but is presented according to one of many composed settings. Admittedly, the simplest and most popular is the Badarak of Magar Ekmalian who, as a protégé of Catholicos Kevork IV, rewrote, arranged, transcribed, and adapted the existing Armenian music for part-singing according to European traditions. After his period of study under Anton Rubinstein and Peter Tchaikovsky, he set about composing his Badarak based on the original Armenian plainchants.

At the turn of the century his work came to the attention of Catholicos Khrimian Hairig who issued an encyclical permitting the popular use of the Ekmalian Mass.

The outstanding contributor to Armenian church music was the beloved Komitas Vartabed. Born on September 26, 1869, in Gudina (Keotahia), he was a devout and musical youngster. First introduced to the traditional chants by the monks with whom he studied in Etchmiadzin, he later pursued his interests as a student of Ekmalian in Tiflis. Given his first classical instruction in European music, he journeyed to Berlin and received instruction in harmony, theory, and history of music. After completing his musical education at the Frederik Wilhelm Imperial University, he returned to Etchmiadzin as a true musician in the European context. His countless contributions include thousands of manuscripts of his own arrangements of Armenian music and his own Mass which is used today.

Armenia has an ancient tradition of church music spanning the centuries since her conversion as the first Christian nation. The Church recognized the need for song as a vehicle for prayer and never interfered with its evolution as is the case with the Puritans and some Protestants, but in fact encouraged the young of the Armenian nation to learn the chants of the church and to propagate their faith through song. The Armenian Church verily makes “a joyful noise unto the Lord.” ❧

This article was written by Florence Mardirosian, noted musicologist, teacher, chorale conductor and pianist. She was director of the famed Cosmopolitan Chorale, and also served as choirmaster at St. Illuminator’s Cathedral in New York and Sts. Vartanantz Church in New Jersey. This article first appeared in Giligia, a quarterly journal published by the Prelacy in the 1960s and 70s. The title, “Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord,” is from Psalm 100.

Seventy-two Students Attend St. Gregory of Datev Institute

By Taleen Kupelian

Seventy-two students (mostly ages 13-18) from ten parishes, and seven clergymen gathered at the St. Mary of Providence Center in Elverson, Pennsylvania, on Sunday, June 29th for the 22nd annual weeklong St. Gregory of Datev Institute Armenian Christian Studies Program. This year's program overjoyed over forty eager participants with an optional weekend retreat that began on Friday, June 27th.

Sponsored by the Eastern Prelacy's Armenian Religious Education Council (AREC), the Institute offers a unique opportunity for youth to enrich their Armenian Christian faith in a wholesome and nurturing environment while keeping Datev's three-fold objectives in mind: Christian education, worship, and fellowship. "... this is what Datev is all about: making personal, intellectual, and spiritual changes, which lead to forming a better relationship with God, yourself, and others. It is truly a life-altering experience," said Dalita Getzoyan, a 2008 graduate of the Institute.

This highly anticipated program under the directorship of His Grace Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, the Vicar General of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church, and the supervision of AREC Director Dn. Shant Kazanjian, has now become a major summer attraction for young Armenians. "All year long I look forward to Datev," said second year student Sophia Yedigarian, "I'm already excited for Datev '09!" This sort of comment expresses the sentiment of many Datevatsies.

Every day the program began with Morning Service from 7:20am-7:50am. Four classes were held from 8:30am to 12:20pm, and then two more in the evening from 7:30pm to 9:30pm. The evening classes consisted of a general lecture from 7:30 to 8:20, followed by three concurrent Bible Studies from 8:30-9:30 for different age groups. In the afternoons, the students enjoyed recreational activities, such as volleyball, soccer, basketball, swimming and various board games in addition to an ever popular off-site canoeing trip to French



His Grace Bishop Anoushavan, Vicar General of the Eastern Prelacy, flanked by the clergy, instructors and the participants of the St. Gregory of Datev Institute.



Class of 2008 – (Top: L to R): Aram Panosian, Shaunt Basmajian, Mesak Sarkissian, Masis Sarkissian (bottom: L to R): Lorraine Damerau, Dalita Getzoyan, Arpi Shetilian, Talin Baghdadian, Nevair Oranjian, Annie Dairbi, Talene Taraksian.

Creek on Wednesday. Each day came to a close with the Compline Service

(Husgoom) from 9:45-10:30pm. Even though each day followed the same



His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church, presenting a token of appreciation to Mrs. Asdghig Kazanjian, who sponsors the annual Datev picnic.



Datevatsies participating in an evening service.



Datevatsies at various recreational and sports activities – soccer, canoeing, dancing.



Scenes from the 4th of July picnic.



schedule, the week was anything but predictable! Post-graduate student Raffi Charkhutian said “there has been something new to learn and experience every day for the five years I have been coming to Datev. I am never bored as we learn about the Armenian heritage and culture... Overall, Datev is the best week of fun and learning all summer.”

On Friday July 4th, the Institute held its annual Independence Day picnic, sponsored and hosted by Mrs. Asdghig Kazanjian, owner of “Armenian Delight” in Philadelphia. During the picnic, the participants were graced with the presence of His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan, the Prelate, who took time out of his busy schedule to be with the Datevatsies. Also on Friday evening, our annual talent show was held under the guidance of our very own Ms. Jeanette Nazarian, during which many students showcased their talents through Armenian song, dance, music and acting.

The 2008 Datev Institute program concluded on Sunday, July 6th with a celebration of the Divine Liturgy (Soorp Badarak) by Rev. Fr. Stephan Baljian at St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Church in Philadelphia. His Grace Bishop



Rev. Fr. Paul Tarazi, Ph.D., Professor of Biblical Studies at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, a popular guest instructor, speaking to the upper level datevatsies.



Guest speaker Dn. Dr. Vahan Kouyoumdjian speaking to the Datevatsies about ways to cope with the challenges they face today.



Guest speaker Tom Samuelian, Ph.D., introducing the participants to Armenian Church educational resources and materials online.



Rev. Kenneth E. Bailey, Th.D., Canon Theologian of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, delivering one of the four sessions that he taught to the post graduates.

Anoushavan delivered the sermon. After the Soorp Badarak, the Philadelphia Artemis Chapter of the Armenian Relief Society (ARS) hosted a luncheon for the Datevatsies.

The instructors of the Institute this year were: His Grace Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Rev. Fr. Khoren Habeshian, Rev. Fr. Antranig Baljian, Rev. Fr. Nerses Manoogian, Rev. Fr. Sarkis Aktavoukian, Rev. Fr. Stephan Baljian, Dn. Shant Kazanjian, Ms. Nayiri Baljian, Mrs. Denise Borekjian and Ms. Jeanette Nazarian.

Additionally, this year the Institute was privileged to have four guest speakers: Rev. Fr. Paul Tarazi, Th.D., Rev. Kenneth E. Bailey, Th.D., Dn. Dr. Vahan Kouyoumdjian, and Tom Samuelian, Ph.D.

Words of Appreciation

A program of this scope is possible only through the collaborative efforts of AREC and parishes, parents, volunteer workers, and a number of organizations and individuals. The Institute thanks the instructors for their labor of love and the parents for entrusting their children to the Institute for a week of spiritual formation. The Institute expresses its gratitude to the following for their invaluable services as supervisors and counselors: Dn. Bedros Kalajian, Yn. Alice Baljian, Nayiri Baljian, Denise Borekjian, James Haddad, Arek Hamalian, Taleen Kupelian, Arousiag Markarian, Ari Nalbandian, Jeanette Nazarian, Ani Yaghmourian and Jasmine Yedigarian.

The Institute extends its appreciation to those parishes that subsidized a portion of the expenses by providing scholarships, to the Pashalian Family Education Fund and to the following for their generous support and donations: The Prelacy Ladies Guild (PLG) and the National Association of Ladies' Guilds (NALG), Artemis Chapter of the Armenian Relief Society (PA), Mr. and Mrs. Hagop Baghdadian, Mr. and Mrs. Antranig Bedrossian, Mrs. Asdghig Kazanjian, Mr. and Mrs. Noubar Megerian, Dr. and Mrs. Michael Nalbandian. Thanks also to the following donors: Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Jehanian, Mrs. Takouhi Mengouchian, Mrs. Takouhi Oranjian, Mr. and Mrs. Zaven Oranjian, Arsine Oshagan, and Jeannette Ounjian. A special thanks to the pastor and board of trustees of St. Gregory the Illuminator Church of Philadelphia for their hospitality. ✘

Dialogue with the Youth, No.11: How to Interact with Globalization

by His Holiness Aram I

Consider my sharing of perspectives and concerns with our youth on special occasions and in respect to important and timely issues to be a vital dimension of my pontifical ministry. I believe that we must engage our youth in responsible dialogue with our church, with our community and the world-at-large. It is my deep conviction that our youth must not only listen but also talk, not only take but also give, not only wait but also act, not only follow but also lead in all spheres and at all levels of our common life.

In my opening remarks to the International Conference on "Culture of Cilician Armenia," I said that "critical openness and creative interaction have been significant features of Armenian culture in Cilicia." What do we mean by culture?

1) Culture is the totality of a community's life in its various aspects, dimensions and expressions. Through forms and actions, colors and perceptions, culture articulates the values and traditions, inner world and aspirations of a community. Culture is a source of identity; it ensures unity. Without a common culture, a community may sooner or later disintegrate losing its identity.

2) Interrelation and interaction are conditioned by culture. In fact, culture both safeguards the integrity of a community and plays an instrumental role in promoting and enhancing relations between communities, religions and civilizations. Through culture manifold features of communities enter in dynamic interaction. Mutual impacting is integral to this process.

3) Culture is the self-expression of a person or community in time and space, and it is essential for human survival. Preserving culture means preserving community, and preserving community means preserving culture. Culture cannot live without people and people cannot perpetuate without having a distinct culture. History is full of concrete cases.

4) Culture is a force which can be used in contradictory ways. It can become a source of prosperity and creativity. It can also lead to self-contained existence and marginalization. It can become a decisive factor for unity and survival. It can also generate discrimination and violence. Although this ambiguity is inherent in culture, it is largely due to misuse and abuse of culture. Hence, the inner renewal of culture is crucial.

5) Culture must respond to the challenges and changing conditions of its environment and time. To remain relevant, reliable and credible, culture must reflect the realities of its time and place. When a culture becomes a museum of ancient heritage, it loses its responsiveness. When a culture stagnates, it loses its creativity. Culture is renewed when it is in a dynamic process of realistic self-assessment, critical dialogue with its milieu, and creative openness to new horizons.

Indeed, this is how we perceived our culture and its role in Armenian Cilicia (11th to 14th centuries) which became the first Armenian organized diaspora. Our experience in Cilicia is a model and a point of reference in the context of the global Armenian diaspora.

In a globalized world, which destroys all cultural norms and patterns and promotes a mono-culture, its own culture, we as Armenians must stick firmly to our centuries-old cultural values and traditions, paradigms and norms. But how? In fact, being directly exposed to the forces and values of the culture of globalization, on the one hand, and affirming our own culture, on the other hand, is not easy. Indeed, a globalized Armenianness is arising with globalization. Armenian diaspora is a global reality; it has also its contextual expressions. How to engage in creative dialogue these two dimensions which affect the way we perceive and articulate our identity? This requires strategy and vision. Let me share with you my perspectives.

a) We cannot stop the steady penetration of globalization into our life. We must be realistic. All aspects of our individual and community life are strongly impacted by globalization. The repercussions of radical changes and developments taking place in almost all areas of society will continue to affect our life. But we must not blindly appropriate the changes and values offered by globalization. We must know how to dialogue critically and responsibly with this new culture.

b) Dialoguing with globalization is risky; it is both enriching and distorting. If dialogical interaction with globalization takes place with a profound self-awareness of who we are as Armenians, then it makes our culture more creative and dynamic. If openness towards the culture of globalization is not underpinned by a firm conviction of the crucial importance of our cultural and spiritual heritage for the survival of our people, then it becomes a source of alienation.

c) We must dialogue with globalization in order to keep our culture from becoming parochial. We cannot live in isolation; isolation generates loss of identity. Opening our traditions and values to globalization will give to Armenian culture broader perspectives and new insights. It will also strengthen the inner resistance of our culture. Our experience in Armenian Cilicia is a concrete example.

d) Dialoguing with globalization will not only promote interactive approaches; it will also challenge our culture to renew itself. By renewal I do not simply mean change. Renewal will make Armenian culture more perceptive and receptive, more relevant and meaningful to modern Armenian man and woman. I consider this an absolute necessity and an urgent priority.

e) Dialoguing generates tolerance. In fact, tolerance has been a characteristic feature of Armenian culture. This inherent character of our culture, which acquired tangible expression in the Cilician period of our history, needs to be emphasized and given concrete manifestation. Indeed, preserving the ethos and identity of our culture is the cardinal task of each Armenian. Yet, we must accept and respect other cultures, and the dignity and freedom of others.

Reactive cultures will sooner or later die.

Exclusivism will make culture a source of enslavement.

Parochialism will not protect culture; it will make it more vulnerable. Faithfulness will lose its true meaning, if it is not translated into critical and creative openness.

If a culture does not undergo a continuous process of evolution and renewal, it will become history. Likewise, if a nation does not remain faithful to its culture, it will disappear from the arena of history. Therefore, it is through faithfulness and openness that the Armenian youth will be able to preserve our cultural heritage, the source of our identity, becoming at the same time an integral part of broader society. ✱

Deacon Nishan Baljian Ordained to the Holy Order of Priesthood at St. Stephen's Church in Watertown

Given Priestly Name Stephan by Archbishop Oshagan

The New England community witnessed the centuries-old and inspiring ceremony of ordination to the holy order of priesthood. St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church, Watertown, Massachusetts, was filled with the faithful from near and far to witness and celebrate this unique ceremony on the weekend of February 16 and 17. The two-day ritual, which attracted overflow attendance, was celebrated under the auspices of His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, who officiated the Service of Calling on Saturday evening, and the Divine Liturgy and Ordination on Sunday. The sponsoring priest was His Grace Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar of the Prelacy; the Godfather of the ordination was Col. George Rustigian, USAF (Ret).

The site of the ordination, St. Stephen's Church, is the parish Deacon Nishan attended and served for many years, and the parish where his father, Archpriest Rev. Fr. Antranig Baljian, has served as the pastor since 1994.

Service of Calling

The process of ordination began Saturday evening with Vespers and the Order of Calling to the Priesthood, with the candidate walking on his knees down the main aisle of the church as a sign of his humility and readiness to serve God. Through a series of questions Archbishop Oshagan confirmed the worthiness of the candidate and his willingness and ability to serve as a priest in the Armenian Church. The candidate then recited the orthodox faith of the Armenian Apostolic Church. This creed, attributed to St. Gregory of Datev, is more elaborate than the Nicene Creed recited during the Divine Liturgy. Making the sign of the cross over the candidate's head, the Prelate prayed that the Lord would protect, bless, and illuminate him.

At the end of the evening service, the Barsoumian and Iskenderian fami-



Deacon Nishan is led to the altar by his spiritual sponsor, Bishop Anoushavan.



Archbishop Oshagan begins the ordination ceremony.

lies hosted a reception in the church hall prepared by the St. Stephen's Ladies' Guild.

Ordination and Consecration

The next morning, Sunday, Febru-

ary 17, St. Stephen's Church was again filled beyond capacity. In the Armenian Church the ordination service is intertwined with the Divine Liturgy, as this is the liturgical context in which the priest will serve most visibly. The

Divine Liturgy began with the Episcopal procession and continued until the scriptural readings, at which time the Prelate took his place on the Episcopal throne and Deacon Nishan, walking on his knees, and escorted by Bishop Anoushavan, was brought before the Archbishop. The Prelate placed his hands on the candidate's head and prayed that he would be "worthy to keep the priestly rank spotless, and that he would be a worker who has no need to be ashamed, and that the Lord would grant him apostolic grace to heal, to preach, and to call upon the

Holy Spirit to accomplish the Holy Sacraments."

At the conclusion of this powerful prayer, Archbishop Oshagan, taking the deacon's stole from the candidate's left shoulder, placed it around his neck, saying, "Take the yoke of our Lord Jesus Christ, for His yoke is sweet and His burden is light." The Liturgy resumed with scriptural readings and continued until the Kiss of Peace when once again the candidate was brought before the Prelate.

Deacon Nishan was then given the vestments of his office, one piece at a

time. While he was being vested, the choir sang *Khorhoort Khoreen* (O Mystery Profound). Fully vested, the candidate was now ready to be anointed and receive his ordained name: "Blessed and anointed and cleansed be the forehead of the priest Der Stephan..." With these words, Archbishop Oshagan consecrated the new priest and handed the Holy Chalice to him as a sign of authority to offer the Holy Sacrifice, and invited him to give his blessing to the congregation.

In his sermon Archbishop Oshagan offered guidance to the new priest telling him, "The people must see Jesus in you, not Fr. Stephan." The Prelate's message focused on the words of St. Paul in his first letter to Timothy. "These are the things you must insist on and teach. Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I arrive, give attention to the public reading of scripture, to exhorting, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders. Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers." (1 Timothy 4:11-16)

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, hundreds of the faithful came forth to greet Fr. Stephan by kissing his hands and forehead, which had been anointed with holy oil during the service.

Archbishop Oshagan chose the name Stephan both as a crowning honor of the parish's year-long 50th anniversary celebration and also in recognition of the candidate's 12 years of service as a deacon in the Armenian Church and his ongoing commitment to deacons' training. Saint Stephen is recognized as the universal church's first deacon. After Christ's Ascension, the apostles went about spreading the Word, and realized the need for more people to serve. A selection of seven worthy individuals was made, and called deacons. The most noteworthy of the seven was Saint Stephen, "A man full of faith and the Holy Spirit." (Acts 6:5).

Celebratory Banquet

The ordination was followed by a banquet in honor of the newly ordained



Photos top and bottom: Archbishop Oshagan anoints the vested priest.



The faithful come forth to congratulate the newly ordained Der Stephan.

priest with more than 325 people in attendance at the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center.

In a stirring address Archbishop Oshagan encouraged the new priest, whom he called “one of the most learned young priests in our Prelacy,” to continue his education at the “university of the people.” Fr. Stephan holds a Bachelor of Music from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, a Certificate of Study from the Theological Seminary of the Great House of Cilicia in Antelias, Lebanon, and a joint Master of Divinity degree from St. Nersess Armenian Seminary and St. Vladimir’s Seminary, both in New York. As Archbishop Oshagan emphasized, entry into the priesthood marks a dedication to life-long continuing education in the area of loving and serving the Armenian people. The Archbishop noted, “I have served the people for forty years, but I still must serve many, many years before they give me a diploma.”

Archbishop Oshagan also encouraged the people to remember an important component of the weekend’s message: “This church loves Jesus.” He emphasized that in the tradition of Saint Stephen, no other church has had as many witnesses and martyrs as the Armenian Church precisely because of the Church’s love for Jesus. Picking up on keynote speaker Dn. Shant Kazanjian’s explanation of the “royal priesthood,” of which all believers are a

part (1 Peter 2:9), it is not just the priest who is called to love and dedication but the entire community.

During his comments, Fr. Stephan reflected on the meaning of the Greek word *stephanos* (crown), from which the name Stephen (or Stepan, as it is typically transliterated from the Armenian) derives. “The biblical character of Saint Stephen,” he explained, “earned a crown of glory and also reflected the glory of Christ through his own martyrdom, spilling his blood in witness to Christ’s death. Although an Armenian priest is not called, per se, to physically lose his life as Saint Stephen did, he is called to dedicate himself to serving God and the Church and to reflect Christ in his daily interactions.” Fr. Stephan asked everyone present at the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center to pray for him and his wife, Alice, as they dedicate their lives to serving God in ministry to the Armenian people.

In a moving presentation, Rev. Archpriest Torkom Hagopian, pastor emeritus of St. Stephen’s Church, gave Fr. Stephan a hand cross that he had received more than 50 years ago. Rev. Hagopian asked Fr. Stephan to bless him with this cross, an act that brought tears to the eyes of many. The organizing committee, on behalf of the St. Stephen’s community and Board of Trustees, presented Fr. Stephan with a second set of vestments and a recently published series of books on Armenian

patristics. The Ordination Committee consisted of Rev. Archpriest Antranig Baljian, Pastor, Joshua Tevekelian, Chairman, Alice Baljian, Nayiri Baljian Bell, Albert Barsoumian, Ara Barsoumian, Gerard Barsoumian, Sabine Chouljian, Arek Hamalian, and Jirair Iskenderian.

Fr. Stephan’s religious sponsor, Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, has known Fr. Stephan since childhood and witnessed his growth in the church. Fr. Stephan’s ordination godfather, Col. George Rustigian, was also his baptismal godfather and is the first cousin of Fr. Stephan’s father, Rev. Archpriest Antranig Baljian. Der Stephan is married to the former Alice Tchobanian of Belmont, a registered nurse, a graduate of both the Armenian and Sunday schools of St. Stephen’s Church and a member of the church choir.

At the end of the ordination service Yeretzhin Alice received a special blessing from Archbishop Oshagan to strengthen her in her support of her own and her husband’s ministry.

This landmark event will be remembered and revered by those who were honored to witness the emotive ceremonies. Missak Ourfalian, writing on behalf of the Boston Homenetmen chapter, called it an “historic moment.” Ordination committee chairman and St. Stephen’s Board of Trustees Vice Chairman Joshua Tevekelian described the ordination as “a rare opportunity to remember the past and celebrate the future of the Armenian Church and the Armenian people.”

Forty Day Seclusion

In accordance with the tradition of the Armenian Church, Der Stephan retreated for forty days at Sts. Vartanantz Church, Providence, Rhode Island, where he was under the supervision of his sponsoring priest, Bishop Anoushavan, and Rev. Fr. Gomidas Baghsarian, pastor of Sts. Vartanantz Church.

Following the forty-day seclusion, Der Stephan celebrated his first Divine Liturgy on Palm Sunday, March 16, at St. Stephen Church in Watertown, with Archbishop Oshagan presiding over the liturgy.

Der Stephan began his service as pastor of St. Gregory Church in Granite City, Illinois, in July. ❖

National Representative Assembly Convenes in Watertown

The 2008 National Representative Assembly (NRA) of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America convened in Watertown, Massachusetts, May 7 to 10, under the presidency of His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate. The host parish, St. Stephen's Church, extended a warm and caring welcome to delegates and guests. Meetings took place at the Armenian Culture and Education Center (ACEC).

Words of welcome were offered by the parish priest, Archpriest Fr. Antranig Baljian, and John Daghljan, chairman of the Board of Trustees as well as chairman of the organizing committee.

The keynote address was given by Archbishop Oshagan, who focused his message on the 50th anniversary of the Prelacy's affiliation with the Great House of Cilicia. A video message from His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, concentrated on the Catholicosate's Year of Christian education. [Archbishop Oshagan's keynote address and Catholicos Aram's pontifical message on Christian education are published in both Armenian and English elsewhere in this issue of Outreach—Editor].

Separate panel discussions examined religious education, Armenian education, financial development programs, Board of Trustees workshop, and Audit and Budget.

Special words of thanks are extended to the pastor of St. Stephen's, Archpriest Antranig Baljian, and the entire St. Stephen family for their warm hospitality.

Mr. John Amboian faithfully attended the sessions on behalf of H. E. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern). Mr. Amboian extended warm greetings on behalf of Archbishop Khajag and thanked H.E. Archbishop Oshagan for the invitation to observe the 2008 NRA.

Concurrent with the NRA were the 25th assembly of the National Association of Ladies Guilds (NALG) and the second conference of Yeretsgins. [See separate coverage on page 00].

Elections

Elections took place on the final day of the NRA. Elected to serve on the auditing committee were: Asbed Marashian, Avedis Movsesian and Stepan Stepanian.

Re-elected to serve on the Religious Council was Rev. Fr. Nareg Terterian.



An exhibit about the history and accomplishments of the Prelacy was on display throughout the NRA. The exhibit is traveling to various parishes and will be on exhibit during the Prelacy's 50th anniversary banquet on October 25.

Elected to serve on the Executive Council were Hagop Khatchadourian (reelected), Karen Jehanian, Raffi Ourlian, and Zohrab Tazian. They join the incumbents: Jack Mardoian, Noubar Megerian, and Bedros Givelekian.

Elected to serve as delegates to the World General Assembly are: Dr. Carlo Bayrakdarian, Antranig Boudakian, Sossy Jeknavorian.

2009 NRA

Prior to adjournment Jack Mardoian announced that the 2009 National Representative Assembly will be hosted by All Saints Church, Glenview, Illinois.

In his remarks prior to the closing prayer, Archbishop Oshagan emphasized the importance of commitment, participation and service and once again expressed his personal gratitude to the clergy, delegates, guests, executive council, Prelacy staff, the NRA Tivan, and the pastor and faithful members of St. Stephen's Church.

Pictorial Highlights

See the next four pages for pictorial highlights of the 2008 NRA. There is more coverage on the Prelacy's web page (www.armenianprelacy.org). ❖

Raffle Drawing

Chairing the raffle campaign for the 9th straight year was Mr. Antranig Boudakian of Forest Hills, New Jersey. Funds raised through the raffle are allocated to the Prelacy's religious and language programs.

The drawing of the 2008 raffle took place at the conclusion of the banquet, with the following results.

First place (\$5,000): Richard & Nora Sarajian, New Jersey.

Second place (\$2,000): Aram Tarpinian, New Jersey.

Third place (\$1,000): Hovig & Nayiri Apkarian, Maryland.

Fourth place (\$1,000): Dottie Elanjian, Massachusetts.

Fifth place (\$1,000): Martin L. Tellalian, Illinois.

The Prelate and Executive Council congratulate the winners and express gratitude to Mr. Boudakian for his pivotal role in the success of the raffle campaign during the past nine years.

2008 National Representative Assembly



Delegates to the 2008 National Representative Assembly hosted by St. Stephen's Church, Watertown, Massachusetts.



The clergy attending the National Representative Assembly.

2008 National Representative Assembly



Co-chairmen Jack Papazian and Artin Dermenjian.



Morning prayers.



Outgoing Executive Council members Dr. Dertad Manguikian (left) and Stephen Hagopian are honored. Michael Hagopian, also an outgoing council member was not present.



Board of Trustees panel.



Peter Bedigian during panel discussion.



Jack Mardoian addressing one of the panels.

2008 National Representative Assembly



Above & above right: Delegates tour the facilities of St. Stephen Elementary School.



Alice Tutunjian receives Certificate of Merit.



Audrey Guzelian receives Certificate of Merit.



Garbis Zerdelian, Certificate of Merit honoree, surrounded by family and friends.



Rouben Surenian receives Certificate of Merit.

2008 National Representative Assembly



Youth Leadership Award to Samuel Chakmajian.



Youth Leadership Award to Serena Hajar.



Youth Leadership Award to Sosse Beojekian.



Archbishop Oshagan with Yn. Lucy Daghlilian who was honored by the National Association of Ladies Guilds.



Man of the Year, Dr. Dertad Manguikian, and Mrs. Seta Manguikian.



Eagle of the Prelacy awarded to Tom Vartabedian.

25th Anniversary of the National Association of Ladies Guilds Celebrated During NALG Conference in Watertown

Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan opened the 25th meeting of the National Association of Ladies Guilds (NALG), on Friday, May 9, 2008, held in conjunction with the National Representative Assembly.

Congratulating the NALG on its 25th anniversary, His Eminence reaffirmed the admiration and high regard the Prelacy attaches to all of the Ladies Guilds. He praised the commitment the members of the Guilds demonstrate in supporting church doctrine and facilitating the exploration of faith through fellowship. His words were punctuated with high regard for all of the women who serve the church in a variety of ways that are inclusive and instructional. "Each generation of women," he said, "passes on the legacy of church life to the next and we become stronger as we grow."

Archbishop Oshagan attended the highlight of the 25th anniversary celebration, as the NALG honored a woman whose life has been an example of Christ-like behavior—Yeretsgin Lucy Daghlian. Yn. Daghlian has been a role model for younger Yeretsgins. Her peaceful countenance, her passion to teach, and her ability to forgive are life lessons for everyone. Perhaps, the greatest testament to her humility was her complete surprise that she would be selected as an honoree. Present to witness this touching moment were her children and some of her grandchildren.

Also honored were the past NALG chairladies, which included Grace Baghdasarian, Nartoochi Selverian, Yn. Arpine Shirkian, Rita Tatevossian, Agnes Bianco, and Mary Derderian. The venue for this festive occasion was a Boston Tea Party hosted by the NALG Executive Board. Attendees

were treated to a variety of teas, pastries and fresh fruit.

Presiding over the opening of the NALG was the chairlady, Mary Derderian, who noted that attendance was very encouraging with many guilds represented. Elected to serve as the chairlady of the NALG conference was Mrs. Rita Tatevossian and Mrs. Yerchanig Callan as secretary. During the conference, the NALG reaffirmed its ardent support of Christian education by directing funds to the St. Gregory of Datev Institute. In addition, the NALG devoted a great deal of time to the exchange of ideas to promote Guild involvement amongst young women. Recognizing the realities of two income families and the demands on time, the Guild explored avenues of involvement for younger women in untraditional ways.

The NALG was honored to have the participation of the *yeretsgins* in some of the NALG meetings. With the conclusion of the business meetings the combined group was given a private tour of the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) in Watertown.

The winners of the raffle were: 1st prize, Seta Andrikan; 2nd prize John & Michael Kulegian; 3rd prize, Nora and Alex Markarian. The first prize winner graciously donated one-half of her winnings back to the NALG.

Members of the 2008-2009 NALG executive body are: Mary Derderian, chairlady; Rose Gerjekian, vice chairlady; Yn. Margaret Stepanian, recording secretary; Yerchanig Callan, corresponding secretary; Victoria Jamjyan, treasurer; Agnes Bianco, advisor; Rita Tatevossian, historian. ❖

Second Conference of *Yeretsgins*

The *Yeretsgins* (wife of a clergyman) met during the National Representative Assembly, in what became the second highly successful conference for these dedicated women who serve many causes.

The conference began with words of welcome from the local St. Stephen's parish leadership, and a heartfelt message from the Prelate, Archbishop Oshagan, who praised the gathering, and expressed his gratitude and appreciation of the roles the *yeretsgins* take on with great dedication.

Past First Ladies of the United States have often commented that there is no job description for their unpaid positions, yet so much is expected of them. Without doubt, the same can be said for the *yeretsgins* who have no official assigned duties, but of whom so much is expected. In the Armenian Church—as in other orthodox churches—the importance of the priest's wife is acknowledged by a special title given to her, but no direction is offered as to what she should or should not do.

As one person observed, "Today's *yeretsgins* wear many hats—they are wives, mothers, and professionals who work outside the home and still manage to provide total support to their husbands and their parishes."

The *Yeretsgins* had the opportunity to participate in two workshops, both with inspiring speakers. They also had ample time to exchange ideas and concerns with each other, as well as share periods of fellowship of togetherness.

On Wednesday, May 8, Dr. Arpi Boynerian, an ophthalmologist, wife of Rev. Avedis Boynerian, pastor of the Armenian Memorial Church in Waltham, Massachusetts, and mother of two young boys, challenged the *Yeretsgins* to pick up the torch of the past fifty years and carry it to the next generations. She spoke about the three aspects of their lives: spiritual, with God; relational, with husbands; and vocational, with parishes.

On Thursday, May 9, Mrs. Lenna Youngsma, counselor and mentor, wife and mother of four children, and foster mother to 26 babies, spoke to the *Yeretsgins* about the "Glory of God in the Scrapbag of Life." Using quilts from several generations, she showed how the experiences of our lives are unique, yet fit together, similar to the pieces of a quilt that result in a beautiful pattern, giving warmth—like the quilt—to all who come in contact with it. ❖

Mary Mardoian and Hasmig Hovnanian Honored at Prelacy Ladies Guild Mothers' Day

by Florence Avakian

The Prelacy Ladies Guild (PLG) celebrated Mothers Day in grand style at New York's elegant St. Regis Hotel, on Monday May 5. More than 150 guests attended this much-awaited yearly event which was under the auspices of Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy.

Among the honored guests attending were Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar General of the Eastern Prelacy, the two dedicated mothers who were honored at the event—Mrs. Mary Mardoian and Mrs. Hasmig Hovnanian—and Metropolitan Opera diva Lucine Amara, and noted pianist Lucy Ishkanian.

Master of Ceremonies Mrs. Iris Papazian, welcomed the “loving gathering of mothers, daughters, grandmothers, sisters, and aunts who are here in honor of motherhood.” Throughout the afternoon she expertly guided the program as she introduced each portion of the program with captivating interest.

The Prelate, after delivering the invocation, eloquently related that “on this day, we show our love, gratitude and respect to those to whom we owe our lives. They are the ones who suffer and love us, who form our characters, and nourish our souls. Mother's day is not only today, but everyday whether they are alive or in heaven. The family's holiness, wealth and everything is the mother. The outside wall of the home is the father, and the inside wall the mother. She is the head of the family.”

Award for All Mothers

The Prelate, in presenting Mrs. Mary Mardoian, from Lake Forest, Illinois, with the 2008 Mother of the Year award, revealed that she has always flown both the American and Armenian flags atop her home which over the years has been visited by many prominent Armenians. “She has passed on to her family, her love for the Armenian church and nation,” the Prelate noted.

Mrs. Mardoian who was born in Waukegan, Illinois, and has three children and four grandchildren, has devotedly served the Armenian community in many capacities, including as a church organist, an Armenian school teacher, and in the American National Committee for Homeless Armenians, the parish Ladies' Guild, the Armenian Relief Society, and as an advisor to the Armenian Youth Federation.

Flame will never go out

Mrs. Mardoian in graciously expressing her appre-



Archbishop Oshagan presents Mother of the Year award to Mrs. Mary Mardoian.



Archbishop Oshagan presents the Queen Zabel brooch to Mrs. Hasmig Hovnanian.



Archbishop Oshagan with Vahak and Hasmig Hovnanian and their daughter Nina and son-in-law Artur and their twin daughters Gayane and Katya.

ciation, said she accepted the award “for my mother and all mothers, especially those who suffered in 1915, who survived as orphans, came here, and went on to form families. We all accepted the will that the flame would never go out from our hearts. Our future is rosy. Our faith will guide us and all future generations,” she said.

Presenting the Queen Zabel pin and award to Mrs. Hasmig Hovnanian, Archbishop Choloyan noted that she was asked by then Prelate Archbishop Karekin Sarkissian to help in forming the Prelacy Ladies Guild which had its first meeting in 1974. “And she did it with a spirit of humility. The Ladies Guild has always served the Prelacy with dedication, style and love,” he stated.

Founding Mother of PLG

“As the founding mother of the Prelacy Ladies Guild, Hasmig Hovnanian planted the seeds of success,” the Prelate continued, and revealed that Queen Zabel who ruled from 1210 to 1252, was an outspoken activist for the people, initiating education and health care programs.

This is only the second time that the Queen Zabel award has been presented by the Prelacy. Besides her phenomenal work for the Prelacy Ladies Guild, Mrs. Hovnanian, born in Jerusalem, has also served with dedication for the Hovnanian School, in New Milford, New Jersey, the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust and Genocide Studies, and the New York Academy of Arts, among others.

Expressing her appreciation both to the Prelate, the Prelacy Ladies Guild, and her husband Vahakn who was present, Mrs. Hovnanian pledged “to work for the Armenians and the Armenian church till the end of my life.”

A delightful interlude of Broadway favorites was sung by mezzo-soprano Solange Merdinian and tenor Patrick Cook, accompanied on the piano by Shelby Rhoades. But it was Ganatchian’s beloved lullaby, “Oror,” dedicated to a mother’s love for her child, that brought on lengthy applause.

The memorable event concluded with the ever popular raffle of beautiful donated gifts announced by Mrs. Lucille



Mrs. Mary Mardoian surrounded by family members.



Mrs. Hasmig Hovnanian, the founding mother of the Prelacy Ladies Guild, surrounded by members of the PLG and Archbishop Oshagan.

Sahagian, and the benediction by the Prelate.

Members of the Prelacy Ladies Guild include: Seda Andrikian, Sima Artinoff, Marion Boudakian, Linda Chirinian, Lillian Hairabedian, Gemma Melik Vartanian, Lillian Merdinian, Diana Minassian, Seta Nalbandian, Annie Pampanini, Anna Piliguian, Lucille Sahagian, Anna Semerdjian, Silvia Setrakian, Ovsanna Tatarian, Rita Tatevossian, Silva Zadourian. ❖



Archbishop Oshagan addresses the gathering at the St. Regis.



Entertainment was provided by Solange Merdinian and Patrick Cook.

MILESTONE:

50th Anniversary of St. Stephen Church, Watertown

September 23, 2007, was a special day for the Watertown, Massachusetts community and the St. Stephen's Church. On that day, the Prelate, Archbishop Oshagan, officiated mass on the occasion of the church's 50th anniversary.

Hundreds of believers were in the church to listen to the Prelate's sermon and to celebrate the anniversary. In his sermon, the Prelate underlined the importance and value of the Armenian Church, as a means to communicate with God and to preserve the Armenian legacy. "The church, for us, is not just a building. It is a shrine we use to communicate with God collectively. Our ancestors understood this fact and even with their limited resources, built the church, transforming our peoples' dreams into reality," said Archbishop Oshagan.

After the service, a special celebration took place at the Armenian Cultural and Education Center (ACEC) dedicated to the 50th anniversary of St. Stephen's. In his opening comments, the MC and member of the 50th anniversary committee, Ara Barsoumian, thanked the church's priest, Archpriest Fr. Antranig Baljian, who "was the driving force today, and for other commemorations of this anniversary." He also expressed thanks to the Prelate for his presence and support.

Fifty Years of Progress

"In the 1,700-year history of the Armenian Church, 50 years is but a blink of an eye," said Rouben Surenian, chairman of the Board of Trustees. "But it is evident that the opening of the St. Stephen's Church 50 years ago and its prosperity since then is important accomplishments for the Armenian community in the United States and especially on the East Coast. A generation that was massacred, that was just coming back to life, that had finally ensured its physical survival but was starving spiritually, built this fortress of faith, which, under its roof, united its children who had been scattered and lost. And now, 50 years after that day on October 20, 1957, when Arch-



St. Stephen's Church, Watertown.

bishop Khoren Paroyan, as a special emissary of H.H. Catholicos Zareh I, consecrated the church, St. Stephen's remains not only as a religious establishment, but also as a center, a fortress, where a community can go to involve itself in national, cultural, educational, athletic, and political and party-related activities. And today, we are proud to be a community that has its functioning Sunday school, a Saturday school from K to 12, a daily school, and educational and cultural center, as well as many cultural, humanitarian, athletic and political institutions."

The Building Generation

Of the generation that built the St. Stephen Church, only a few remain. One of them is Haigaz Megerdichian, who was awarded a special certificate by the Prelate. Archpriest Fr. Torkom Hagopian, who was pastor of St. Stephen's for many years and is now retired, represented that generation. In his remarks he spoke about the role the church played in the Armenian community of Boston, thanks to the great dedication of its past and present leaders. "Today we collectively thank God for the past, and more importantly, on the threshold of the next half-century of the church's existence, we renew our dedication," he said.

Keynote Address

The keynote address was delivered by St. Stephen's current pastor, Archpriest Fr. Antranig Baljian, who emphasized the bond between the church and community. He described the condition of the community in those early days. "Don't forget," he said, "that most of the men and women, at that time in their 40s, 50s and 60s, who founded St. Stephen's were members of that generation and were born in towns and villages of Western Armenia that were destroyed and emptied of Armenians.... Those Armenians who made it to the United States and settled in the Greater Boston area worked hard to put their past behind them and recreate a better world for themselves and their families. Among these were the founders of St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church—hard working, patriotic and God-fearing men and women of good character, and deep faith. They believed in their ethnic heritage; they believed in God and, despite all that had happened to them and their people, they believed in their future."

Prelate Speaks

Before delivering his remarks, Archbishop Oshagan presented St. Stephen's with an encyclical from His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the

Great House of Cilicia, congratulating the church community on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

The Prelate described the founding of St. Stephen's as being special and described the Boston community as being pivotal to the Prelacy. "We have built many churches, and will build many more under different circumstances. But we built this particular church because here was an obvious spiritual and national need for it. Communism was threatening the Armenian identity. It was a time when our church's future was dark-

ening, our people were divided into two, our children were not baptized, and our fathers were not buried properly. In those times, who was going to build the churches? The founding of this church was special in that it proved that the Armenian Church is loyal to its mission regardless of the circumstances."

Archbishop Oshagan emphasized the importance of our people's determination to keep the church prosperous. "There were times when people thought that America was a country that would destroy national

identity. There was a time when some people thought we would not find anyone praying in our churches. Thank God, those assessments have not come true. We thank God for keeping our faith alive. And it will remain alive as long as there are people like you who are loyal to their father, their principles and their future."

Speaking to the youth the Prelate said: "You are the future. One day you will be standing here and will address the crowds, and we will be proud of you." ❖

MILESTONE:

40th Anniversary of Philadelphia's St. Gregory Church

"The current church community has a commitment to help continue the work of their parents and grandparents who built the church to continue the life of the church," Archbishop Oshagan told the Philadelphia community gathered on May 6, 2007, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of St. Gregory Church on Ridge Avenue.

Archbishop Oshagan celebrated the Divine Liturgy during which Garabed Sarkessian was elevated from Stole bearer to sub-deacon. The Prelate also recognized the 40-year service of Archdeacon Nazareth Nazarian. The Prelate was assisted on the altar by the parish priest, Rev. Fr. Nerses Manoogian.

In opening the celebratory program following church services, MC Glenn Papazian noted, as he pointed to a photograph of the original St. Gregory's Church in center city Philly, "I ask that you take a moment and look at the picture of the church at 16th and Oxford. I remember 40 years ago standing here at the age of 16, and at that time I had no idea that I would be standing here today."

Welcoming words were given by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Bill Arthin, who reflected on those 40 years. "We have come a long way," he said, "and looking back at the 40 years, seeing all the members that are still with us from 1967 is amazing and the fact our church during this 40-year period had only two priests, shows how peaceful our parish has been."

Four parishioners were honored on this occasion with awards from the Prelacy. Jack Papazian started the award presentation by speaking of the many contributions of Noubar Megerian to the St. Gregory parish. Ashken Setrakian introduced the next recipient, Ani Semerjian, a dynamic leader of the Ladies Guild. Der Nerses then introduced Deacon Haroutune Kazandjian, thanking him for 25 plus years of service on the altar. The fourth award recipient was the chairman of the Board of Trustees, Bill Arthin, who was introduced by Jack Papazian. Bill was recognized as an individual who has been serving the church in many ways for more than twenty years. Archbishop Choloyan presented each recipient with a Certificate of Merit.

Steven Selverian provided an update about the



St. Gregory the Illuminator Church, Philadelphia.

fundraising for the church expansion project. To date more than \$907,000 has been pledged of which \$571,000 has been collected.

In his remarks, Der Nerses spoke of the significance of the day. "At this important milestone of our church, I salute everyone who rendered a particular service to our parish and to God. Those who have served in a special way as well as those who have participated to the best of their ability. I pray that we may draw closer to Christ and be his witnesses in the world. And I pray that we spare nothing in our service to our church and culture. Today we are truly blessed having our Prelate, who is also celebrating his 40th anniversary of ordination. I think this is a very unique phenomenon. How many times do you see a parish and Prelate celebrate the same milestone? Forty years ago when our church was being consecrated, a young man, Deacon Manoog, was being consecrated a celibate priest. Forty years later he is our Prelate and we are a matured flock under his care."

In his closing remarks, Archbishop Oshagan spoke about his motto, *With each other and for each other*. "Together we can overcome any challenge. The Armenian Church is what gives us our real identity as Armenians. The Church created our identity in art, architecture, and literature. Forty years is a long time if we look at it individually, but it is a short time in the 3,000 years of Armenian history," the Prelate said. ❖

MILESTONE:

40th Anniversary of Ordination of Archpriest Fr. Arshag Daghlian

by Tom Vartabedian

It is said that greatness lies in humbleness.

For 40 years, Archpriest Fr. Arshag Daghlian served his flock like a good and humble servant, mindful of his allegiance to God and the church.

More than 200 turned out on March 29 at St. Stephen's Church to honor the revered clergyman. As ceremonious as it was, Der Arshag would have preferred something a bit more sedate—like another *Badarak* in another church, in continuation of his role as an outreach priest.

"Whatever I have given to this vocation, it has rewarded me a hundred-fold," he told his audience. "I never regretted a moment of it."

At a time in his life when retirement was certainly an option, off he went from his home in North Andover, Massachusetts, to various parishes throughout the country in need of a priest.

If it wasn't Hartford one week, it was Cleveland the next. Over the last 19 years, he wound up visiting just as many churches as far south as Florida and as far west as Illinois and Wisconsin.

Paying no heed to age, he would embark from Boston's Logan Airport every Saturday toward a new destination and return the next day after performing his duty. If there was an event after the service, he would postpone his flight to Monday.

Over that time, he maintained an impeccable record toward consistency. Blizzards. Hurricane warnings. Delays of every magnitude. Excruciating inspection lines and lingering layovers.

"The only Sunday he ever missed was when he came down with pneumonia and we wouldn't let him travel," said daughter Sonia, a registered nurse at Lawrence General Hospital.

"Someone had to do it and I would get the call," said Der Arshag. "I did not want to see any congregation go without *Badarak*."

The 86-year-old can now sit back and reflect upon the memories. But not

exactly. You'll still find him Sundays at St. Stephen's Church in Watertown performing Confessional Service and doing what comes naturally while his son, John Hovhanness, serves as a deacon and chairs the Board of Trustees.

"He's been my dad, my mentor, my best friend and my inspiration in life," said John, who served as toastmaster at the testimonial. "Dad is my hero. He had a devoted woman by his side every step of the way."

Yerezgin Lucy remained the shining star in his constellation. Often, she would accompany him on his junkets, especially in New England when auto travel was more compatible than a flight.

"Wherever he has gone, he has brought the vision of Christ with him," lauded the Prelate, His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan, who presented him with a special letter of blessing from His Holiness Catholicos Aram I. "Der Arshag has been genuine in every regard, sincere in his mission. The caring side was always evident with all the elements of goodness and mercy. I've also respected the deep-rooted family structure," said the Prelate.

A video depicted various stages of Der Arshag's life, from his childhood years through his wedding, the birth of five children and seven grandchildren, his ordination in Whitinsville and pastorship at St. Paul's Church in Waukegan, Illinois, and a new parish at St. Gregory Church in North Andover, where he served 15 years before his role as an outreach clergyman.

At St. Gregory's, he worked with trustees and various organizations to pay off the mortgage, helped to renovate the church hall, expanded the Sunday school, taught Armenian language to adults, and participated in ecumenical services with sister churches in Merrimack Valley.

"His grasp on world affairs is truly remarkable, whether it's politics, sports, religion or gardening," said his daughter Houry. "Put a tool in his hands and he will fix an engine. He's



Archpriest Fr. Arshag and Yn. Lucy Daghlian.

played soccer and the accordion, even rode a motorcycle and worked as a librarian—a genuine Renaissance man. But above all, his family, his God and his heritage always took precedence."

His son-in-law, attorney Richard Sarajian, recalled his marriage to Nora and how difficult it was to plan the nuptials.

"We had to find a week when he wasn't flying somewhere. The years of sacrifice and dedication always manifested themselves, from the time he left Antelias as a married man with children for Waukegan. He had his own road show and his destination led to God."

Other children in attendance were Nora and Sonia. A daughter Aida Chareth, died in 2000. All five siblings graduated from Merrimack College in North Andover, not far from the Daghlian home, where Der Arshag also took theological classes.

Archpriest Fr. Antranig Baljian revealed how serendipity played a recent hand by witnessing the ordination of his son recently and now a 40th anniversary celebration of a man who traveled the marathon road with him.

continued on page 55

MILESTONE:

Rev. Fr. Nerses Manoogian is honored for 20 years of Service; Receives Title of Archpriest

by Melissa Selverian

"There are some who rise to the duties of the priestly vocation, and others who raise the vocation itself." These were the memorable words of admiration and respect delivered by Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar General of the Eastern Prelacy, in praise of Rev. Fr. Nerses Manoogian, during a celebration of the 20th anniversary of his ordination.

"Fr. Nerses has raised the vocation," continued Bishop Tanielian, during a celebration on Sunday, October 21, 2007, where the pastor of St. Gregory the Illuminator Church in Philadelphia was elevated to the rank of *avak kahana*, or archpriest.

At a luncheon in the church's Terhanian Hall, following the Divine Liturgy, the Prelate, Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, echoed Bishop Tanielian's sentiments, recalling fondly how all three clerics had studied together at the seminary in their youth.

The parishioners of St. Gregory, who have their own warm memories of a 17-year-long relationship with their pastor, honored Der Nerses with warm sentiments that paid tribute to his longstanding devotion to the youth. The program was ably guided by the Mistress of Ceremonies, Silva Santerian.

Fr. Nerses was showered with dozens of heartwarming Sunday school cards and drawings, teen musical and poetic performances, a toast in salute to his much-loved "children's sermons," and special letters of affection from his own children, Sally and Sevag.

The event also featured a slide show with parishioners of all ages, as well as clergymen, family and friends from the many churches and communities Fr. Nerses had served as deacon, archdeacon, and priest in the United States and abroad.

Holding firmly to a dollar bill presented to him in a card from Sunday school student Mardo Yeremian, with a request it be used for charity, an emotion-filled Fr. Nerses spoke of his love for the Philadelphia Armenian community and his humble appreciation for its outpouring of love to him. He acknowledged numerous parishioners of St. Gregory and of its sister churches for their support throughout the years.

Der Nerses spoke most highly of his "other half," Yerezgin Nektar, who he said has been his greatest supporter throughout his priesthood and his best friend.

The cultural program featured "Yerevan Erebuni" performed on the piano by teen Lia Arkelian; Aram Khachaturian's "Waltz" from the Masquerade Suite performed on the piano by church organist Karina Garabedian Adriano; Vahan Tekeyan's "Yegeghetsin Haygagan" performed by soloist and St. Gregory Church choir director, Maroush Paneyan Nigon; and an Armenian poem recited by youths Kristen Santerian and Aram Frounjian.



Der Nerses is a familiar presence every year at the St. Gregory of Dadev Summer Institute where he lectures and helps the popular teen program in many different ways.

Former board member, Richard Selverian, toasted the clergyman for his unique efforts to reach out to the youth, as parishioner Brian Tavakalian presented a sentimental photographic capsule of the pastor's life. Board of Trustees chair Bill Arthin extended the board's sincere gratitude for the pastor's service.

Special congratulatory messages from clergy, parishioners, and friends throughout the world were announced. Perhaps the overall sentiments of the day were best stated by the message of the Board of Trustees in the comprehensive booklet that was produced for this occasion: "We as a church community are fortunate to be blessed with a leader who serves everyone, is accessible to his parish, supports the families of the church, and strives to maintain a link with the youth. Der Nerses, we ask that God continues to bless you and your family and that through your leadership, we as a community may continue to grow spiritually." ❖

Trio of Celebrations at St. Gregory Church, North Andover: 37th Anniversary of Church; 15th Anniversary of Der Vartan and Ordination of Altar Server

by Tom Vartabedian

God-willing, Nishan Dagley may one day exchange his elementary school teaching career for a life in the church.

The 55-year-old was ordained an acolyte and stole bearer on November 11, 2007, by Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian in what may well be the first step toward the priesthood.

The ordination highlighted the 37th anniversary of St. Gregory Church of Merrimack Valley, North Andover, Massachusetts, and the commemoration of the 15th anniversary of the ordination of the parish's priest, Rev. Fr. Vartan Kassabian.

A packed congregation witnessed the ceremony, marked by family, friends, and parishioners, which spilled over to an anniversary dinner inside the recently renovated Jaffarian Hall.

"It's an honor to serve God this way," beamed Dagley. "My only regret was not having my parents here to share this moment. They would have been proud."

So would have his late brother, Rev. Fr. Haroutiun Dagley, a Diocesan priest who lost his life to illness at age 46, leaving behind two young children and his wife of 13 years.

Nishan Dagley has waited for this moment since 2005, when he joined the church and began serving on the altar. He has the support of his wife Carolyn and three children, Stephen, Kristen, and Johanna.

Nishan's next goal is to achieve the rank of deacon, then senior deacon, and, God willing, leading to priesthood. "My wife is okay with my decision to become a priest and finish the work my brother started," He said. "The church has given me a place to serve and a better understanding of my language and faith."

Nishan is Armenian on his mother's side (Berberian) and was raised in both the Armenian Apostolic and American Baptist churches. He later taught Sunday school at Holy Trin-



Newly-ordained Nishan Dagley with Bishop Anoushavan and Der Vartan.



Nishan Dagley is ordained acolyte/stole bearer by Bishop Ahoushavan Tanielian.

ity Armenian Church in Cambridge. He teaches school in Lexington and makes his home in the rural section of

Bradford, a community he has grown to love.

"We all share in the blessing and



Saragas and Maroun families are honored for their generosity to St. Gregory Church of North Andover.

elevation of Nishan Dagley,” said Bishop Anoushavan. “Nishan serves as an inspiration for others to follow. These are very humble orders that open a door to the church. Whether we are ordained or not, we remain a holy nation called upon to serve as ambassadors of God.”

15th Anniversary of Der Vartan

Although much of the early attention focused on Nishan Dagley, the dinner portion regaled Der Vartan Kassabian’s tenure of service. Several took to the podium to honor Der Hayr “for a job well done.”

“We are very fortunate to have such a devoted church leader at a time when our parish is going through such a transition with its expansion,” said board chairman John Kulungian.

Students from the Sunday and Armenian schools joined together in presenting the pastor with a large anniversary card and showered him with affection. As a gift, the board presented him with new vestments designed and made by choir soloist Seta Ohannessian.

Images of Der Vartan’s grandchildren filled the screen with deep emotion, followed by stirring family messages from Yeretgin Pauline and



Rev. Fr. Vartan Kassabian surrounded by Sunday and Armenian school students, celebrates the 15th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

son Mgerditch (Mgo), who is an altar server.

“You can be the best Der Hayr in the world, but the unsung hero is my wife,” said Der Vartan. “It’s not about me but my family—the people who stood behind me when I needed them. Being a priest is not a job, but a way of

life and I wish I could do it for a million years. My heart is an open door.”

Honored with Certificates of Merit for their generosity were members of the Saragas and Maroun families of Greater North Andover. ❖

Archpriest Arshag Daghlian

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“His presence has uplifted me morally and spiritually,” he said. “Der Arshag put aside his personal comforts so others could benefit. We owe him a debt of allegiance.”

Other messages of gratitude were tendered by Der Vartan Kassabian, Der Aram Stepanian, and Der Torkom Hagopian, devout colleagues cut from the same cloth.

Tugging at the heartstrings was 8-year-old Ani Chareth, who gallantly approached the microphone to express her love for “grandpa.”

Musical interludes were provided by Yeretgin Marine Shetilian (piano) and Arpie Shetilian (violin). Both were richly received with their Armenian selections. ❖



Family members and clergy with Der Arshag and Yeretgin.

PROFILES IN GIVING

The Death of a Sponsor; The Education of an Orphan

The Prelacy's Orphan Sponsorship Program—one of the most successful charitable endeavors the Prelacy has undertaken—brings many emotional moments ranging from great happiness to deep sadness. We are pleased to share this story with you, which was both happy and sad.

More than a year ago one of our long-time sponsors, Albert Donigian, went to Armenia and he was able to connect with the child he had been sponsoring for many years. He had a wonderful visit with her and her family.

In July of 2007, Mr. Donigian died suddenly, and his family sent the following letter to his sponsored child in Armenia:

Dear Maro:

We are writing this note with a heavy heart, and regret to tell you that our beloved brother Albert Donigian passed away suddenly on July 8, 2007.

In his memory we are continuing to fund your education for the next year and a half, as we know he would want us to do.

We are enclosing pictures that he took while he was in Armenia. He was so happy to meet you, your mother and grandmother, that he would tell everyone about his trip and meeting you and your family. We wish you well and a successful future.

*Sincerely,
The family of
Albert Donigian*

P.S. He did receive your letter.

Mr. Donigian's family has continued to sponsor Maro, who will soon reach age 18—the cut-off age of the Prelacy's Orphan Sponsorship program. ❖

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE
INFORMATION ABOUT OUR
PROGRAMS IN ARMENIA
CONTACT THE PRELACY OFFICE,
212-689-7810



Albert Donigian with his sponsored child, Maro, in Armenia.



Mr. Donigian with Maro and her grandmother.



News from the Catholicosate

Blessing of Holy Muron



The faithful filled the courtyard in front of the Cathedral of St. Gregory the Illuminator in Armenia to witness the inspiring ceremony.

The blessing of Holy Muron is an occasion of great significance for the Armenian Church. Thus, June 7, 2008, was a historic day for the Catholicosate of Cilicia, which was filled with the faithful who had come to witness this event.

The blessing of the Holy Muron was performed by His Holiness Aram I on the special platform built especially for this purpose in front of the Cathedral of St. Gregory the Illuminator. Representatives from all of the dioceses of the Cilician Catholicosate were present. Archbishop Norvan Zakarian, Primate of the Diocese of France, Bishop Yezras Nersisian, Primate of the Diocese of Russia, represented the Catholicosate of All Armenians, Etchmiadzin. The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem was represented by the Grand Sac-

ristan of the Saint Hagop Cathedral, Archbishop Nourhan Manougian; Patriarchal Vicar Archbishop Shahan Sevadjian attended on behalf of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. He headed a delegation that included Rev. Fr. Tatoul Anoushian and Father Vagharshag Serovpian. Participating in the service, alongside the Catholicos were the prelates of the Cilician See.

Thousands of pilgrims, who had flocked to Antelias from all over the world, filled the Catholicosate to witness this ceremony that occurs only once every seven years. Also sharing this majestic occasion were representatives of various Christian communities in Lebanon—Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Syrian Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Coptic Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox, Armenian Catholic, Chaldean Protestant, and Armenian Protestant. The Nuncio Apostolic in Lebanon and government officials were also present. His Holiness also received many messages from the heads of churches and ecumenical organizations.



Catholicos Aram I blesses the Holy Oil.



Representatives of Christian churches attend the Muron blessing.



Catholicos Aram raises the right hand of St. Gregory the Illuminator.



His Holiness with Bishops and Prelates from around the world.

As the Cathedral's Shnorhali Choir sang the appropriate hymns, members of the Cilician Brotherhood brought out the historic cauldron of the Holy Muron from the Cathedral on their shoulders and placed it carefully on the platform. The Godfather of the service was Mr. Vrej Armoyian, from the Prelacy of Canada.

As the lid of the cauldron was lifted, it seemed that the doors to the souls of the faithful were also opened. Reciting prayers, the Catholicos added to the cauldron the main ingredient of the Muron, the balsam, and the old Muron, which according to tradition contains remnants of the oil that the Apostles used to cure patients. Saint Thaddeus

is said to have brought a part of this oil to Armenia. Amid great excitement and anticipation, the Catholicos also mixed in a portion of the Holy Muron blessed in Holy Etchmiadzin as a symbol of the unity of the Armenian Church. During the service, the representative of the Catholicos of All Armenians read His Holiness Karekin II's message on this occasion. His Holiness welcomed the blessing of Muron in Antelias and expressed his brotherly affection.

At the most sacred moment of the service, Catholicos Aram stirred the new Muron with the Holy Right Hand of Saint Gregory the Illuminator sanctifying the new Muron with the blessings of the patron saint of the Armenian Church.

The Catholicos's message centralized on four major points, namely, the Muron as a guarantor of the Armenian Church's continuity; the Muron as a holy bind for the indivisible unity of the Armenian Church; the Holy Muron as an invitation to participate in the life of the Armenian Church; and the Holy Muron as a source of spiritual renewal.

His Holiness dedicated the new Muron to the new generation, and said: "We express gratitude and satisfaction to God that this is the third blessing of the Muron that we perform. We dedicate the blessing of this Holy Muron to our new generation, the generation that is called upon to build the future of the church. In the globalized world, faced with new lifestyles, new viewpoints questioning our Christian faith, our spiritual truths and moral values, it is not easy to be true Christians. It is also not easy to stay Armenian in a context of a culture of globalization, which destroys nation and culture, identity and tradition. Therefore, stay alert. Let the winds blowing around you not push you away from your roots. Be proud of your spiritual and national values, for the preservation of which your ancestors shed blood. You have the Armenian Muron on your forehead. Keep your faith strong, the Armenian Muron pure, and in front of the current world's storms transform your life into one stamped with spiritual and national values." ❖

C R S S R O A D S

A Review of Prelacy and Parish Activities

[For more information and photographs on most of the items listed please visit the Prelacy's web site, www.armenianprelacy.org].

Prelates and Chairmen Meet in Montreal



The Prelates and Chairmen of the Eastern, Western and Canadian Prelacies.

The three Prelates of the Eastern, Western, and Canadian Prelacies, together with the chairmen of the respective Executive Councils, met in Montreal on June 23 and 24 to discuss issues of mutual concern such as Christian education, youth programs, religious publications, training of altar servers, inter-Prelacy collaboration, and the 50th anniversary of the Prelacy under the jurisdiction of the Holy See of Cilicia.

Participating were the three prelates, H.E. Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Eastern United States; H.E. Archbishop Khajag Hagopian, Prelate of Canada; H.E. Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, Prelate of the Western Prelacy. The chairmen attending included Jack Mardoian, Esq. (Eastern Prelacy), Dr. Garo Agopian (Western Prelacy), and Dr. John Arakelian (Canada Prelacy). Also participating were Executive Council members of Canada, Dr. Garbis Harboyan, Mr. Simon Poladian, and Mrs. Osig Mkhsi-Artinian.

Prelate Hosts Reception for United Nations Delegation

Archbishop Oshagan hosted a reception welcoming the UN-Armenia delegation, on Tuesday, July 22, at the Prelacy offices in New York City. Heading the three-member delegation was Ms. Consuelo Vidal, United Nations Resident Coordinator, UN Development Program Resident Representative in Armenia. Joining her were two other members of the delegation, Mr. Armen Baibourtian, Senior Advisor to the UN Resident Coordinator, and Ms. Nadine Sahakyan, Assistant Resident Representative. His Excellency Ambassador Armen Mardirossian, Armenia's representative to the United Nations was also an honored guest.

The evening began with introductory words by Archbishop Oshagan, who welcomed the guests to the Prelacy and

offered his perspectives on the important work being done in Armenia by the United Nations and the need for Diaspora cooperation. Mr. Mardirossian offered Armenia's perspective and desire for increased endeavors in Armenia. Mr. Baibourtian spoke about the work of the UN with developing countries and introduced the resident coordinator, Ms. Vidal, who spoke passionately about her work in Armenia and presented a PowerPoint presentation outlining the projects in Armenia.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the United Nation's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. The UNDP is currently working in 166 countries helping them with their own solutions to global and national development challenges. To implement its development goals in Armenia, the UNDP works with the Armenian government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, as well as a broad spectrum of development partners including international organizations and the Armenian Diaspora.

Prior to the reception, to which a select number of community leaders were invited, the UNDP guests met privately with Archbishop Oshagan. Ms. Vidal presented the Prelate with a gift—a work of art by an Armenian artist that expresses the UN's global reach.



Consuelo Vidal presents gift to Archbishop Oshagan.

Conference on Armenian Education Takes Place in Lebanon

The second pan-diaspora education conference, under the auspices of the Catholicosate of Cilicia, took place in July. In his concluding remarks to the conference, His Holiness stressed the important role of the Armenian teacher in Armenian schools, particularly in contemporary times when the number of teachers specializing in Armenological topics

is declining. "The Armenian school is in a crisis, which should not however be presented in a negative way. The highpoints of our nation's history, our most important achievements have been the results of crises. We should have the courage to see the crises, make the correct diagnosis and look for solutions to the problems," the Catholicos said.

Acknowledging the differences that exist between Armenian schools in communities around the world, His Holiness said, "Our differences are not a reason for us to not become one whole. Despite being in different conditions, we can be of use to one another through systematic work and good organization." Highlighting the true nature of the Armenian school, the Pontiff said, "The Armenian school is not only a collection of classrooms and textbooks, it is the teacher that breathes life into the school. Today there is a lack of Armenian teachers everywhere. It is not only the number of students that is decreasing; the same is true for the number of teachers." His Holiness called on all educational bodies to support Armenian teachers and improve their living standards.

Mrs. Houri Ghougassian attended the conference on behalf of the Eastern Prelacy. Mrs. Ghougassian serves as part-time librarian at the Prelacy's Hovsep and Suzanne Hagopian Library, and is a full-time teacher of Armenian at Holy Martyrs Day School in Bayside, New York.



Participants at the Armenian education conference.

Armenian Monasteries in Iran Added to UNESCO's World Heritage List

The Armenian Monastic Ensembles in Iran were added to UNESCO's World Heritage List during the annual meeting of the World Heritage Committee which took place in Quebec City in July.

The complex consists of three monastic ensembles of the Armenian Christian faith: St. Thaddeus and St. Stepanos and the Chapel of Dzordzor. In making the announcement the World Heritage Committee noted, "These edifices, the oldest of which, St. Thaddeus, dates back to the 7th century, are examples of outstanding universal value of the Armenian architectural and decorative traditions. They bear testimony to very important interchanges with the other regional cultures, in particular the Byzantine, Orthodox and Persian. Situated on the southeastern fringe of the main zone of the Armenian



Monastery of St. Thaddeus.

cultural space, the monasteries constituted a major center for the dissemination of that culture into Azerbaijan and Persia. They are the last regional remains of this culture that are still in a satisfactory state of integrity and authenticity. Furthermore, as places of pilgrimage, the monastic ensembles are living witnesses of Armenian religious traditions through the centuries."

Four sites in Armenia were added to the list in previous years, including: Monasteries of Haghpat and Sanahin; Cathedral and Churches of Etchmiadzin; Archaeological Site of Zvartnots; Monastery of Geghart and the Upper Azat Valley.

The United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.

Rev. Fr. Bedros Shetilian Conducts Troy Orchestra in July 4th Program

Rev. Fr. Bedros Shetilian, pastor of St. Gregory Church, Indian Orchard, Massachusetts, and Holy Cross Church, Troy, New York, conducted the newly-organized Troy Orchestra in an Independence Day concert on July 3, at River Front Park, in Troy. Rev. Fr. Bedros is the music director of the new orchestra.

General Assembly of Cilician Brotherhood

A two-day General Assembly of the Brotherhood of the Catholicosate of Cilicia took place in June in Antelias, Lebanon. His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, praised the constructive participation of the Brotherhood members in the discussions that took place. He expressed thanks to those who participated in the discussions and those who delivered lectures on various important issues.

In his concluding remarks, the Catholicos shed light on some of the expressed concerns and difficulties, giving new impetus to the Brotherhood's calling to serve the church. His Holiness called upon the Brotherhood members to overcome these difficulties and face the identified challenges through dedicated service, which he considered to be one of the unique characteristics of the Cilician Brotherhood.

"Service is our glory, our strength, our reputation. However, our Brotherhood should constantly subject itself to reassessment and renewal. It is our Brotherhood that brings to life

our Holy See's mission. Therefore, our strict policy towards spiritual-intellectual formation is essential. In order to speak with the current world, we need to know the language, the problems and challenges of the current world," His Holiness emphasized.

Speaking about the Church's true character and its service, His Holiness said: "It is necessary to preserve the specific identity of our church's mission in its spiritual, social, educational and cultural aspects. Our church is not simply a national structure, but a Godly mission in our people's lives."



Members of the Cilician Brotherhood.

Trustees of Pashalian Fund Meet; 2008 Grants Announced

The trustees of the Pashalian Family Scholarship Fund met in April at the Prelacy offices in New York City to discuss the annual grants. Since its founding in 1991, the Fund has allocated more than \$75,000 to educational institutions in accordance with the parameters of the Fund.

The 2008 grants are as follows: St. Illuminator's Armenian Day School (Woodside, NY), \$2,500; St. Sarkis Suzanne and Hovsep Hagopian School (Douglaston, NY), \$1,000; St. Gregory of Datev Institute, \$1,000; Siamanto Academy, \$1,000; St. Stephen's Elementary School (Watertown, MA), \$500; Hovnanian School (New Milford, NJ), \$500.

Pashalian Fund trustees are: Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, President; Gloria Tarsy, George Dermksian, MD, and Michael Derian.

Prelate and Vicar Attend Luncheon in Honor of Maronite Patriarch

Archbishop Oshagan and Bishop Anoushavan attended a Liturgy and reception in May in honor of Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir, Patriarch of Antioch and the Whole Levant. The luncheon was hosted by the Consul General of Lebanon in New York. The liturgy took place in the Maronite Church in Brooklyn.

Vicar Attends Meeting in Armenia

Bishop Anoushavan attended the meetings of the committee for the canonizing of Armenian saints, which took place in Etchmiadzin, Armenia in April. Bishop Anoushavan

represented the Catholicosate of Cilicia.

Bishop Anoushavan's Book Presented

Archbishop Oshagan hosted a book presentation and celebration of the recently published, *Archbishop Nerses Lambronaci: Commentary on the Wisdom of Solomon*, by Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar of the Prelacy, on May 2, at St. Sarkis Church, Douglaston, New York. Professor Hratch Zadoian was the evening's MC and Professor Peter Cowe, from UCLA, spoke about the newly published books, which is based on Anoushavan Srpazan's doctoral dissertation. Bishop Anoushavan received his PhD from Columbia University in 2003 after successfully defending his doctoral dissertation and was awarded the degree with distinction at the unanimous recommendation of the examining committee.



Archbishop Oshagan with Professor Peter Cowe and Bishop Anoushavan.

Prelate Attends Dinner for Samantha Power

Archbishop Oshagan attended a dinner-reception for the author and scholar, Samantha Power, in May, at the United Nations. The event, sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation was hosted by Vartan Gregorian, in honor of Dr. Power's latest book, *Chasing the Flame: Sergio Vieira de Mello and the Fight to Save the World*, a biography of the United Nations negotiator who was tragically killed while in Iraq.

12th Century Khachkar Installed at Metropolitan Museum of Art

A 12th century *khachkar* (stone cross) was dedicated at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City on April 30. The *khachkar*, from the Lori region of Armenia, is carved out of basalt stone, and is on long-term loan from the Republic of Armenia. The dedication which was attended by many dignitaries was followed by a luncheon in the Museum's Terrace Room, hosted by Ralph Minasian of the Hagop Kevorkian Fund. This is the first Armenian *khachkar* to be exhibited in a major museum in the United States.

Archbishop Oshagan was invited to deliver the invocation. In his message the Prelate extolled the virtues of the Metropolitan Museum describing it as "one of the wonders of the world." He lamented the recent destruction of more than

10,000 khatchkars in various parts of the ancestral homeland of the Armenians. He concluded by asking the Lord to “Remember your faithful servants who glorified you with their hands and made your voice heard through stones. May their memory be ever blessed.” He then concluded with, “Let us now pray in the language of the *khatchkar*,” and recited the Lord’s Prayer in Armenian.



Archbishop Oshagan with Dr. Helen C. Evans, curator of Byzantine Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Martyrs Day Commemoration at City Hall in New York

Archbishop Oshagan delivered the invocation at the commemoration of the 93rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide which took place at City Hall Chambers, New York City, on April 25. The event was organized by the Armenian National Committee of New York and Friends of the Armenian National Committee. Attending the event were New York City Council members and New York representatives in Congress. Professor Henry Theriault of Worcester State College addressed the gathering.

In his message and prayer, Archbishop Oshagan said, “We honor the memory of our one and a half million martyrs whose faith in You transcended their earthly life. We gain strength from the survivors whose numbers dwindle each year. Nevertheless, they will continue to reinforce our resolve, determination and hope beyond the grave. We live to perpetuate their hope and dreams, their struggle and spirit. In honoring them, we honor all victims of tyranny everywhere.”

Times Square Commemoration Attracts Thousands

More than 2,000 people attended the April 24th commemoration in Times Square, New York, organized by the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, and supported by all Armenian religious groups and major Armenian organizations.

Archbishop Oshagan delivered the invocation that began an afternoon of thoughtful, dynamic and emotional speeches. Speakers included: Dr. Mary Papazian, Dr. Dennis Papazian, Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Congressman Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Congresswoman

Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Dr. Alex Hilton, Dr. Antonia Arslan, Mark Geragos, Carla Garapedian, Dr. Daniel Goldhagen, John Liu, Curtis Sliwa, and a number of representatives of various Armenian organizations.

In his invocation, Archbishop Oshagan paid tribute to the survivors—a few of whom were in attendance—by noting how they came to the United States and became faithful and participating citizens. “They came filled with the hope and promise of America, not so much for themselves, but for their children and their children’s children. Their hope resulted not only in economic rewards, but a flourishing of cultural activity. Thus, it can be said that the Armenians, having survived death, moved into the light of resurrection and have been contributing their share as a people to the cultural treasure chest of civilization.”



Archbishop Oshagan delivers message and invocation at Times Square gathering.

Prelate Participates in Capitol Hill Commemoration

Archbishop Oshagan participated in observances on Capitol Hill in Washington on April 23, on the occasion of the 93rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The observance was organized by the Congressional Caucus on Armenian issues.

The Prelate’s prayers were a message of hope handed down from the survivors of the Genocide. His Eminence recognized the role of the United States 93 years ago noting, “During those dark years, four American presidents—Wilson, Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover—took direct and bold action to help the Armenians. Furthermore, overseas the entire diplomatic corps—ambassadors, ministers, consuls—shared in the responsibility of publicizing the genocide of the Armenians and administering relief. Foremost among them was the United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, Sr. This was one of America’s finest hours, when commitment became action.”

Archbishop Oshagan Participates in Ecumenical Service for Pope

Archbishop Oshagan participated in a special Ecumenical Prayer Service at St. Joseph Parish in the Yorkville section of Manhattan on the occasion of the first visit to the United States of Pope Benedict XVI, on April 18. The service was followed by a dinner/reception.

Ordinations at St. Gregory Church in North Andover

Ara Shrestinian, a senior deacon at St. Gregory Church, North Andover, Massachusetts, watched with pride as his grandson, Nicholas Kulungian and six others, were ordained as acolytes on April 13 by Archbishop Oshagan.

The six others ordained were: Matthew Kochakian, Nicholas Kochakian, Denis Teague, John Mahlebjian, Jake Gostanian, and Timothy Kublbeck.



Archbishop Oshagan and Der Vartan with the new altar servers.

All were well-prepared for the big event through Sunday school lessons and guidance from Rev. Fr. Vartan Kassabian, pastor of the church, who also watched with admiration.

"It is a joy to visit any church and ordain acolytes," said Archbishop Oshagan in addressing the youngsters. "I know it is difficult to do all the commands I gave you. Love your God and your church. Preserve this spirit which has come before you. Continue to demonstrate it every Sunday in your service."

The boys showed remarkable patience as they sat for nearly two hours before their time arrived. They appeared regal in their blue robes. Some looked sheepish, others anxious. All appeared absorbed in the euphoria of the church. No doubt one may have looked upon the Prelate with admiration and envisioned himself as an eminent leader of the church some day, much like Spazan may have done in his youth.

They approached the altar as a full congregation looked on, including genocide survivor Mary Garavanian. His Eminence clipped a lock of hair, according to tradition, and read the rites of elevation to the seven students. He then called out their names and handed each a document.

"I congratulate you and your parents who are joyful in your ordination," he said. "It is a sign of rejuvenation—of good Christian education and fellowship. Without Christian ethics, our lives are empty. Tomorrow, I shall continue my work with renewed energy," the Prelate said.

Spazan also consecrated an oil painting of Vartan Mamikonian donated by Eliza Krikorian. The work was done by prominent artist Marlen in Armenia.

Tom Vartabedian

Groundbreaking for Founders Hall at St. Gregory, Philadelphia

Bishop Anoushavan celebrated the Divine Liturgy and presided over the groundbreaking ceremony of Founders'



Groundbreaking at St. Gregory, Philadelphia.

Hall on April 13, at St. Gregory the Illuminator Church in Philadelphia.

The event began outside with a procession of the groundbreaking dignitaries, Bishop Anoushavan, Archpriest Fr. Nerses Manoogian, Richard and Sara Stepanian, and Board Chairman Bill Arthin. They were followed by the choir, Sunday school and parishioners.

The second part took place in Terhanian Hall with champagne toasts from three generations, followed by a buffet lunch.

The expansion will provide new and larger Sunday school rooms, an up-to-date kitchen, a new general purpose room, a new larger main hall and storage space.

Prelate Blesses New Playground at St. Stephen School

Archbishop Oshagan blessed the new nursery school playground at St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School, Watertown, Massachusetts, on March 16. Present at the blessing and ribbon cutting were Mr. & Mrs. Noubar Afeyan, the



The Afeyan family cuts ribbon to new playground.

sponsors of the new playground, which they dedicated to the memory of their parents, Badrig and Anais Afeyan, participating in the festivities was Archpriest Fr. Antranik Baljian, pastor of St. Stephen's Church. The School's principal, Houri Boyamian, and assistant principal, Heather Krafian, were joined by school board members, parents, staff members, and parishioners to witness the blessing.

New England Regional Meeting

Representatives of New England parishes met at Soorp Asdvadzadzin Church in Whitinsville, Massachusetts, for the New England Regional Meeting on March 8. Members of Boards of Trustees, National Representative Assembly delegates and pastors of the New England churches gathered along with Archbishop Oshagan, Bishop Anoushavan, and several members of the Prelacy Executive Council.

The agenda included topics important to parish leaders and to the challenges facing the Prelacy and the parishes. The host parish with its pastor, Rev. Fr. Aram Stepanian, and Board of Trustees and Ladies Guild made every effort to create a comfortable atmosphere.

The regional meeting concluded with statements by Archbishop Oshagan, Jack Mardoian, chairman of the Executive Council, and Hagop Khatchadourian, Executive Council member who coordinated the meeting. ✕



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In Memoriam

Alice Sachaklian



Mrs. Alice Sachaklian

Alice Keosaian Sachaklian, a devoted benefactor of the Prelacy and a Princess of Cilicia, died on March 13, 2008, at age 88.

Archbishop Oshagan officiated over the national funeral services on March 25 at Soorp Khatch Armenian Church in Bethesda, Maryland. Interment took place the next day at Arlington National Cemetery.

In a letter of condolence, His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, said: "The entire life of Alice Sachaklian became a continuous fight: a fight for the promotion of spiritual and moral values, for the preservation of Armenian cultural heritage, and for the realization of the Armenian dream. ... The church occupied a particular place in the life of Alice Sachaklian. Not only did she frequently support various projects and activities of our church through the Prelacy, but also established endowment funds in order to make her dedication and support continuous and more effective... Therefore, in the words of the Apostle, Alice Sachaklian, having kept her faith and fought a good fight, deserves the crown of righteousness which our Lord shall give her in heaven. On this sad occasion I would like to express my

condolences to her family members, relatives and friends. May God accept her soul in His kingdom."

Mrs. Sachaklian, together with her late husband Col. Harry A Sachaklian, was an ardent and active supporter of Armenian organizations. In 2003, she enriched the Prelacy's Endowment Fund by establishing the "Colonel Harry A. and Alice K. Sachaklian Antelias Seminary Fund." The Fund provides financial support for the education of seminary students who plan to enter the priesthood. She also established an Endowment Fund for the journal, *Armenian Review*, to perpetuate its publication. She also sponsored the building of the Moughni Cultural Center near the Monastery of Sourp Gevorg that was renovated through the efforts of the late Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian. She was a founding member of the Prelacy's Pillars program and a sponsor of many orphans through the Prelacy's Orphan Sponsorship program.

Mrs. Sachaklian was born on November 9, 1920, in the Bronx, New York, the youngest of four children of Khatchadour and Sophia Keosaian. She graduated from Hunter College and continued her masters in German at Columbia University. She had a long and distinguished career in government service at the National Security Agency where she held positions in Germany and in Washington. At her retirement in 1978 she received the Department of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Award—the highest honor for a civilian.

Her 37-year marriage to Col. Harry A. Sachaklian, created a legacy of support for the advancement of the Armenian Church and culture. She continued her active support after the death of her husband in 2002. Mrs. Sachaklian was awarded the Princess of Cilicia insignia, the highest civilian award given by the Holy See of Cilicia, and in 2004, she was honored as the Prelacy's "Person of the Year."

She is survived by a sister, Mrs. Virginia Babayan, sisters-in-law, Mrs.

Anahid Keosaian and Mrs. Arpena Mesrobian; a brother-in-law, Dr. Arra Avakian, and many nieces and nephews, including Lt. Col. (USAF, Ret.) George A. Rustigian and Mrs. Barbara Rustigian; Dr. Arsine Oshagan, and Ms. Jackie Rustigian.

Dicran Hadjetian

Dicran Hadjetian, a resident of Montreal, died suddenly on March 17, while vacationing in the Dominican Republic. He was 69 years old. Mr. Hadjetian was a delegate to the World General Assembly, a delegate to the National Representative Assembly, a Prince of Cilicia, a long-time benefactor of the Armenian Church, including the Eastern Prelacy. In 2003, following the death of Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian, the Hadjetians established the Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian Publications Fund at the Catholicate of Cilicia with a \$50,000 donation and were generous supporters of the Cilician See's Seminary.



Noravank Monastery

Archbishop Oshagan attended the funeral and delivered the eulogy. Mr. Hadjetian's remains were transferred to Armenia and interment took place at the Noravank Monastery, whose exten-

sive renovation was sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Hadjetian. Noravank Monastery is considered to be one of the jewels of Armenian church architecture. It was completely reconstructed and consecrated by His Holiness Karekin I, Catholicos of All Armenians, in April of 1999. The extensive reconstruction was made possible thanks to the generous support of Dicran and Diana Hadjetian. Noravank is listed on UNESCO's World Heritage list.

Mr. Hadjetian was born in Alexandria, Egypt. He settled in Canada in 1963 and started a small business distributing tools and supplies throughout the province of Quebec, from the back of his station wagon. In 1970, he purchased an import/export company named United Tools Ltd with Mr. Jacques Kestekian and together they created the professional hand tool brands UNITOOL and VIVATOOL which they distributed throughout Canada.

He is survived by his wife, Diana and children, Nathalie (married to Sevan Istanboulian) and Aline (married to Hapet Tutunjian) and his grandchildren, Krikor and Emma.

John Baronian

John Baronian, a Knight of Cilicia, Prelacy Person of the Year in 2002, and a dedicated Pillar of the Prelacy, died on April 5, at Massachusetts General Hospital. He was 87 years old.

Funeral services took place on April 10 at St. Stephen Armenian Church, Watertown, Massachusetts, followed by interment at Oak Grove Cemetery, Medford, Massachusetts.

Bishop Anoushavan, Vicar of the Prelacy, presided over the services and offered the heartfelt condolences of Archbishop Oshagan, who was out of the country.

Mr. Baronian was a lifelong supporter of the Armenian Church and community, and was an active and passionate alumnus and advocate of Tufts University, where he served as Trustee for many years.

Through his exceptional efforts at fundraising, Tufts was able to construct the Baronian Field House. And

through his generosity and compassion, Tufts is able to award deserving students the John K. and Margaret G. Baronian Memorial Scholarship and the John Baronian Annual Outstanding Football Lineman Award.

In a letter of condolence addressed to the Prelate, His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, wrote: "John was the embodiment of that generation of Armenian Americans who kept alive the heritage of their parents and ancestors, while making significant contributions to American society. John was a dedicated Armenian and was honored by the Catholicosate with the Knight of Cilicia insignia. He was also honored by your National Representative Assembly in 2002 as the Person of the Year. As a trustee of Tufts University in Massachusetts, he was a dedicated supporter of that institution of higher learning and he was eager that the same opportunity he had as a child of survivors of the Armenian Genocide would be available to deserving students today. His untiring work for Tufts earned him an honorary doctorate as well as other honors. Please extend condolences on behalf of the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia to the Baronian and Aftandilian families, the faithful of St. Stephen's Church in Watertown, and the entire Eastern Prelacy family."

Helen Hajinian

Helen Hajinian, who for many years lived in a residence for professional women across the street from the Prelacy offices in New York City, died in April at age 100. Funeral services took place on April 11 at St. Vartan Cathedral, New York, with interment at Cedar Grove Cemetery, Flushing, New York.

She became a volunteer member of the Prelacy staff offering her services of typing and stenography and whatever else needed to be done, for more than 20 years. She was soft-spoken but had



a strong will. She was a "cracker jack" proofreader, and even into her late 80s her sharp eyes and mind managed to catch errors that others missed.

Several years prior to her death, she relocated to the Armenian Home in Flushing, New York. During the time she spent at the Home, the area clergy and Prelacy staff members kept in touch with her, visiting whenever possible.



Archbishop Oshagan presents certificate to Helen Hajinian.

In 2001, during the Prelacy Ladies Guild's Mothers Day luncheon, Archbishop Oshagan honored Helen for her years of devoted volunteer service. At the time, she expressed her genuine surprise at being honored and said, "I received so much more than I gave." ❖

*Asdvatz Irents Hokin Lousavoreh
May God Illuminate their Souls*

The Torch Lit at Gladzor

continued from page 19



An incipit page illuminated by an Evangelist Painter from the Gladzor Gospels painted in the fourteenth century at the Gladzor University in the Siunik region of Armenia. The Gospels are now part of the collection at the Charles E. Young Research Library at the University of California, Los Angeles.

small groups at his Academy in Athens, where Aristotle later formalized the academic lecture, and where the generation that followed him began to work towards the creation of a multi-disciplinary university. These developments were cut short by the upheavals that came to the Hellenic world after the death of Alexander the Great; while learning still flourished in places such as the Library of Alexandria, proto-universities did not. After Christianity became the predominant religion of both Armenia and the Roman empire, theology became a major discipline in some towns and monasteries, but to get a thorough education in all the disciplines recognized by the Christian world around the fifth century AD, it was still necessary to go to many towns and monasteries, and to study with many masters, who specialized in fields ranging from rhetoric to mathematics. To become thoroughly learned, our early church fathers and translators traveled to Edessa (Ourfa), Caesarea (Gesarya), Antioch, Alexandria, Athens and

Constantinople. It was only in and after the twelfth century that a number of universities that can claim to be such in the modern sense developed in Italy (Bologna, Padua); in Bohemia (Prague); in Spain (Salamanca); at the Sorbonnes and Oxford; and in such Armenian centers as Haghpad, Sanahin and Gladzor. All of these taught some subjects in common, those of the standardized *trivium*, while some were famous for special studies—for example, anatomy and medicine in Bologna; law in Salamanca and Haghpad; anatomy in Gladzor.

The curriculum of Gladzor is indeed impressive. Of the sciences and related subjects (as we would classify them today) the following were offered: Astronomy, Cosmology, Medicine and Medical Pharmacology of plants, Anatomy, Algebra, and Account-Keeping. Of the Humanities and Applied Arts, Gladzor offered Theology, Rhetoric, Grammar, Music, Painting and Manuscript Illumination, Manuscript Copying (which we would today call a “required” subject), History in its chronicle-variant, and textual studies.

One of the two founders of Gladzor, Yesayi Nchetzi (from Nich, in Sassoun) was a theologian and rhetorician. The other, Nerses Mshetzi of Moosh, was an expert in Greek and Latin and a skilled administrator. Together, these two men who hailed from Armenian territories to the west of Lake Van left their ancestral lands, which were ruled by contending Turcoman tribes and Arabs, and came to settle in territory controlled by vassals of the Mongols, the Georgian Kings and their Armenian knights of the Broshian princely family. Gladzor became a monastic university complex that produced some 360 graduates. It is now a very minor ruin some 40 miles southeast of Yerevan, in the district of Yegheknatzor, near the border of Nakhichevan. When it thrived, in the century after 1280, it functioned as a beacon of learning that attracted Armenian students not just from the neighboring region but from everywhere where Armenians—already becoming a Diaspora nation—dwelled. Students came from Daron and Yertzenga, from Van and Cilicia. The latter was then, of course, the only Armenian state, and its rulers maintained contacts with Gladzor, not with Echmiadzin, for the simple reason that the Catholicos of All Armenians was then in Cilicia, as he had been for a century, and where he would continue to remain until the formal administrative split of 1441 AD. For a while, Gladzor became the Echmiadzin of Armenian education and manuscript culture. It was at Gladzor that Momig, then a copyist and later a great architect, created an illuminated manuscript of particular artistic distinction at the request of Queen Geran, wife of Levon, King of Cilicia. At that time, it was the habit to give a young man who was knighted (made an *ashed*, according to a feudal custom borrowed from the Crusaders) a gift of some Holy Text; Queen Geran gave her son an illuminated Bible from Gladzor. For a century, this institution produced manuscripts that helped to perpetuate

learning, but it also produced new scholarly works, in the medieval equivalent of what we would now call research and publication. Here, for example, Hovhannes Yezengatzi wrote his monumental *Grammar*, edited by Levon Khacheryan in Soviet Armenia and published recently, following his emigration, in Los Angeles. Such is the extended reach of Gladzor.

It is useful to know something of the history and achievements one commemorates. But the larger significance of Gladzor is best seen from another perspective. Then, as now, the creation of a great school could not be the work of a solitary heroic figure; the resources needed were too great, and the cooperation of many was required. The guiding geniuses were perhaps Yesayi the scholar and the scholar-administrator Nerses. The Broshians, feudal lords, provided land and volunteered the labor of their peasant serfs, as well as some other financial support, though never very much of it. In 1314, in a colophon, the copyist Mekhitar Yezengatzi complains of the lack of paper, pen, heating wood and of the dryness of the bread.... But if the feudal lords did not provide, the Bishop of Syunik sometimes stepped in with gifts and encouragement. Equally important is the fact that Armenian families from all over sent their children, and found means to fund their journey: to travel without adequate funds, or even with them, around 1300 AD, from Cilicia or Yezenga to Gladzor would have meant risking death from starvation and disease, or enslavement by marauding Muslim bands. Yet the money was found. It was the courage and determination of monks, bishops, princes and ordinary Armenians who rallied around this educational institution that allowed it to last as long as it did, in truly terrible times. Without the support of anything resembling a modern state or government, Gladzor endured for a century, transmitting a flame of tradition and learning more precious than any lit at the Olympics. The knowledge it disseminated did triple duty, connecting Armenians to their own past and ancestral wisdom, and to the wisdom of the Judaeo-Christian West, while its 360 graduates went on to become *vartabeds*, architects, artists, copyists, and administrators skilled in keeping records and accounts. All this was accomplished in the middle of a practically permanent state of war.

Perhaps these efforts remind us of the effort to keep open the Jemaran and other schools and seminaries in Lebanon; they should. Perhaps they remind us of the possibilities for education, and for the perpetuation of Armenian tradition in this country, where conditions are immeasurably better, in some ways, than those that faced Yesayi and Nerses, the founders of Gladzor. It is their unbending will and their unblinking determination to sacrifice and prevail, as well as their undimmed vision of educational possibility in a dark world that is perhaps their and Gladzor's most precious legacy to us now. ❖

Calendar of Events

MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL MEETING of Executive Council, Boards of Trustees, and delegates to National Representative Assembly, **September 20**, 9 a.m. to 4:30 pm, hosted by St. Gregory the Illuminator Church, Philadelphia.

LINKED IN: A WEEKEND WORKSHOP for students and professionals, 18-35, **September 26-28** at Holy Virgin Mary Spiritual Vineyard in Charlton, Massachusetts.

CLERGY CONFERENCE, **September 29-30** at Holy Virgin Mary Spiritual Vineyard in Charlton, Massachusetts.

GALA CELEBRATION of the 50th anniversary of the Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America under the jurisdiction of the Great House of Cilicia and the 110th anniversary of the establishment of the Armenian Church of America by Catholicos Khrimian Hairig, on **Saturday, October 25**, at the Marriott at Glenpointe, Teaneck, New Jersey.

MUSICAL ARMENIA, **Sunday, March 8, 2009**, Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, New York City.

NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY, **May 7 to 9, 2009**, hosted by All Saints Armenian Apostolic Church, Glenview, Illinois. Clergy Conference begins May 6.

ST. GREGORY OF DATEV SUMMER INSTITUTE, **June 28 to July 5, 2009**, St. Mary of Providence Center in Elverson, Pennsylvania.

SIAMANTO ACADEMY meets every Saturday at the Armenian Center, 69-23 47th Avenue, Woodside, New York, 11 a.m. to 2:30 pm. The Academy offers Armenian language, history and Christian studies classes for high school students.

For up-to-date information about events
Visit the Prelacy website: www.armenianprelacy.org

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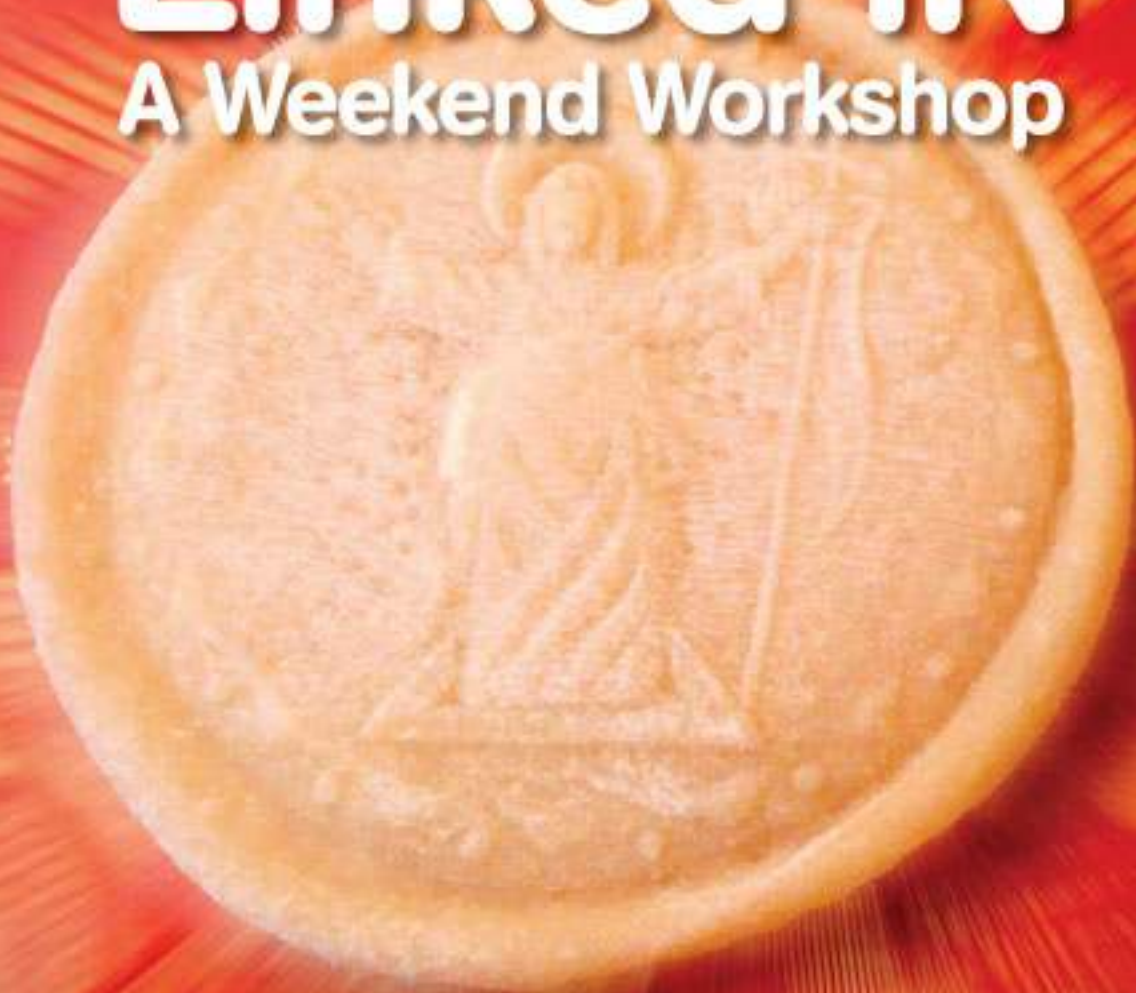
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The program will begin on Friday evening at 7:00 pm and conclude on Sunday afternoon at 1:00 pm.

Singles, married couples, and families are welcome. If there is sufficient interest, we may be able to provide on-site baby-sitting services.

Linked In is being planned under the auspices of His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan and under the leadership of His Grace Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian. The planning committee is comprised of men and women from various Eastern Prelacy parishes, primarily under the age of 35.

FOR DETAILS VISIT www.armenianprelacy.org



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