

OUTREACH

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From the Editor

As you can see the bulk of this issue is devoted to the visit of Catholicos Aram I to the Eastern Prelacy. His Holiness arrived in New York on October 19 (after successful visits to Canada and the West Coast) and remained with us until November 1. Accompanied by his staff bearer, V. Rev. Fr. Housig Mardirosian, His Holiness visited communities in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area, Washington DC, Boston, and Chicago.

The prime purpose of his visit was to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Armenian Theological Seminary. Each community he visited organized an event specifically for this purpose. The program at each site featured keynote addresses by V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar General of the Eastern Prelacy, and the Honorable Judge Sarkis Teshoian, past chairman of the Executive Council, NRA delegate, and World Assembly Delegate.

2005 was also the 1600th anniversary of the invention of the Armenian alphabet by St. Mesrob Mashtots. This too was commemorated during His Holiness's visit in various ways, but especially with the international conference that took place at Harvard University which brought together scholars from various parts of the world. His Holiness attended the Friday evening opening session that was attended to the capacity of the auditorium.

2005 was also the tenth anniversary of the election and consecration of Catholicos Aram I. Each community made note of this and honored His Holiness with appropriate festivities.

But, without doubt, the prime purpose of the visit was the Seminary. Not only to celebrate this milestone anniversary, but also to make the public aware of the great service the Seminary has given to the Armenian church and nation. The story of how the site of a Near East Relief orphanage was transformed into a theological seminary and training school for teachers through the visionary leadership of Catholicos Sahak II Khabayan, is surely one of the most inspiring stories told. As noted in one of the many articles published on this occasion, "If ever an institution has justified the privations necessary to bring it into being, it is the Armenian Theological Seminary at Antelias. The institution is a credit to all who had a hand in its birth. It lives on as a monument to the creative power of the ecumenical spirit and humanitarian impulse that prompt mankind to work for the benefit of posterity, in the image of the Creator."

This issue tries to give a small "taste" of Vehapar's visit to the Eastern Prelacy.

* * *

Three booklets were published on the occasion of Vehapar's visit and distributed at various functions: (1) A 64-page booklet, *The Antelias Seminary: Seventy-Five Years of Service and Leadership*, written in English by Archpriest Fr. Antranig Baljian, about the Seminary's history and his experiences as a Seminarian; (2) A 76-page booklet, *From Cilicia to Antelias...from Wilderness to Mission...from Orphanage to Seminary*, written in Armenian by Archbishop Khajag Hagopian, Prelate of the Canadian Prelacy; and the Commemorative Booklet, *Toward the Light of Knowledge: A Celebration of Service and Leadership*, dedicated to His Holiness and the tenth anniversary of his Pontificate.

We have a limited number of the booklets available. If you would like to receive any of the three please send me an e-mail (info@armenianprelacy.org) or write to me at 138 E. 39th Street, New York, NY 10016.

* * *

Two forthcoming issues of *Outreach* are on the "drawing board," so to speak. (Does anyone still use drawing boards?)

The next issue (March/April) will be devoted to the work of the Prelacy's Armenian Religious Education Council (AREC). The May/June issue will be devoted to the Prelacy's charitable programs in Armenia. ❖

INSIDE...

Prelate's Message	1
Catholicos's Message	3
Arrival and Hrshapar Service	9
Seminary's 75th Anniversary	12
Catholicos Meets with Congressional and Local Leaders	14
Pontifical Divine Liturgy, New York City	15
Banquet, New York City	17
Ecumenical Symposium	20
Visit to Washington DC, Boston, Chicago, International Conference at Harvard	23
List of Donors	28
Obituary: Rev. F. Sahag Vertanessian	30
Ordination: Der Mesrob Lakissian	31
News from Catholicosate	33
Crossroads	35

Front Cover:

His Holiness Aram I in Washington.

Back Cover:

His Holiness Aram I at St. Stephen's Elementary School, Watertown, Massachusetts.

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Առաջնորդ Սրբազան Հօր Խօսքը

ՎԵՀԱՓԱՌԸ ԱՅՑԵԼԵՑ, ՄԵԿՆԵՑԱԻ

ՍԱԿԱՅՆ ԿԸ ՄՆԱՅ ՄԵՐ ԹԵՄԷՆ ՆԵՐՍ

2005 տարուան Հոկտեմբերին Ամերիկայի Արեւելեան Թեմս ընդունեց շնորհաբեր այցելութիւնը Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Հայրապետ՝ Ն. Ս. Օ. Տ. Տ. Արամ Ա. Կաթողիկոսին:

Առիթը այցելութեան: Տօնախմբել Կիլիկեան Կաթողիկոսութեան Դպրեվանքի հիմնադրութեան 75-ամեակը: Եւ Վեհափառ Հայրապետին մեր մէջ ներկայութիւնը կրկնառիթ էր տեսնելու համար գինք իր հայրապետական ընտրութեան եւ օծման 10-ամեա-կին ընդմէջէն:

Ծրագրուած բոլոր յայտագիրները յաջողութեամբ տեղի ունեցան: Դպրեվանքը մեր հաւատացեալներուն հոգիին մէջ վերարթնացաւ թէ՛ հանդիսութիւններու, թէ՛ հրատարակութիւններու եւ թէ՛ անհատական հանդիպումներու միջոցաւ: Հաւատարիմ մեր ժողովուրդը ապրեցաւ Դպրեվանքին անցեալն ու ներկան, որուն հիմնադրութիւնը եւ գոյութիւնը ուրիշ գապանակ չէ ունեցած եթէ ոչ նուիրաբերում ու ծառայութիւն՝ մեր ժողովուրդին համար:

Միջ-եկեղեցական յարաբերութիւններու փորձառու եւ շրջապատէն յարգուած անձը՝ Վեհափառ Ա. Կաթողիկոսը, տիրապէս իր ներկայութիւնը պարտադրեց իր այցելութեան առիթով կազմակերպուած միջ-եկեղեցական համագումարին ընթացքին, ինչպէս նաեւ եկեղեցական առաջնորդներու հետ ունեցած իր հանդիպումներուն ժամանակ: Հարցերը քննելու, վերլուծելու եւ ներկայացնելու իր հմտութիւնը առինքնող կը դարձնէ գինք, եւ ունկնդիրը կը տեսնէ իր խորաթափանց միտքը, որ սկզբնական սնունդը ստացաւ Դպրեվանքի գրասեղաններէն եւ որ հարստացաւ Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան միջ-եկեղեցական կեանքին մէջ գործօն ու շինիչ մասնակցութեամբ:

Ս. Մեսրոպ Մաշտոցի կատարած Հայ Գիրերու գիւտի 1600-ամեակը մնաց բոլոր հանդիսութեանց մէջ ներկայ ներշնչարանը: Սուրբը իր հանձնարով ու գիւտով գեղարուեստական յայտագիրներու մէջ խօսքով ու երգով կենդանի էր, ինչպէս նաեւ գիտական աշխարհին մէջ իր հետքը ձգեց, Հարվորտ համալսարանին մէջ կազմակերպուած միջազգային համագումարով:

Վեհափառ Հայրապետի գահակալութեան տաս-

նամեակն ալ արժանաւոր կերպով նշուեցաւ, շատ յաճախ գուարթ միջնորդութիւն մէջ, վեր առնելով այն նուաճումները, որ տասը տարիներու ընթացքին Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութիւնը կատարած էր զանազան բնագաւառներէ ներս, ինչպէս նաեւ Վեհափառ Հայրապետը ինք իրագործած էր անձնապէս, գրական, յարաբերական եւ այլ մարզերէ ներս:

Բոլոր հանդիսութեանց ընթացքին — եկեղեցական, մշակութային, յորեմիական — Վեհափառ Հայրապետը հանդէս եկաւ իր յատուկ պատգամներով: Պատգամ, որ սովորական արտասանուած խօսք չէր, այլ թեմիս ու ազգային կեանքին իրապաշտ վերլուծումը եւ թերադրանք՝ հաւատացեալներուն, պատգամ՝ որ կը ներառէր տարեցն ու երիտասարդը, պատանին ու փոքրիկը, անոնց դիմաց յատկօրէն պատկերացնելով բոլոր այն մարտահրաւէրները որ ազգովին, Ամերիկայի տարածքին մեր եկեղեցական եւ ազգային կեանքին մէջ կը դիմագրաւենք: Վեհափառ Հայրապետին խօսքը արձագանգող հզօրութեամբ հնչեց ու մնաց ունկնդիրներու հոգիներէն ներս, ինչ որ հրապուրիչ դարձուց իր ներկայութիւնը, տպաւորիչ՝ իր մտերմութիւնը եւ հարստացուցիչ՝ իր ընկերակցութիւնը:

Կասկածէ վեր է որ բոլորիս հոգիներուն մէջ, ինչպէս նաեւ Վեհափառ Հայրապետին մտածումներուն մէջ կեղրոնական տեղ եւ կարեւորութիւն կը ներկայացնէ ուսումն ու դաստիարակութիւնը, որ նպատակասլաց կերպով դարձաւ նաեւ առանցքը Դպրեվանքին հիմնադրութեան, անոր առօրեայ կեանքին եւ առաքելութեան: Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան Դպրեվանքը դարձաւ սփիւռքեան մեր կեանքին մէջ այն հաստատութիւնը, որ հրաշքի համագոր նախախնամական դերակատարութիւն ունեցաւ՝ հասնելով ջարդակոտոր մեր ազգին հոգեւոր եւ մշակութեային կարիքներուն: Կազմակերպուող գաղութներուն մէջ առանցքային դեր ունեցան կուսակրօն թէ՛ ամուսնացեալ քահանաները, ուսուցիչները, դպրապետները, հասարակական գործիչները, մտաւորականներն ու մամուլի սպասարկուները: Անոնց մէջ շատեր սնան ու աճեցան Դպրեվանքին մէջ: Անոնք դարձան տարածիչները Աստուածաշունչի պատգամներուն եւ քարոզիչներն ու պահապանները մեր ազգային արժէքներուն: Եկեղեցւոյ թէ՛ դպրոցին

մէջ, մամուլի ճամբով թէ բեմերու վրայ, անոնք տարին ինչ որ ստացած էին Դպրեվանքին մէջ, լեցուցին հաւատացեալները այն արժէքներով, որոնցմով լեցուած էին Դպրեվանքին մէջ: Կարելի չէ դիտել Հայ կեանքը սփիւռքի մէջ եւ հոն չգտնել մէկը անպայման, որ Դպրեվանքէն առած է իր կարողութիւնները:

Ահա այս բոլորը կը մղեն մեզ զօրավիզ կանգնելու Դպրեվանքին, ո՛չ թէ միայն 75-ամեակին առիթով, այլ շարունակաբար, որպէսզի ղօղանջեն գանգերը մեր ազգի հոգեւոր ու մշակութային տաճարներուն, ապահովելու համար գոյատեւումը մեր ազգին:

Վեհափառ Հայրապետը եղաւ պայծառ հունչն ու շունչը անլռելի կոչնակին, որ տակաւին կը ղօղանջէ մեր թեմէն ներս:

Այո՛, Վեհափարը եկաւ, ներշնչեց ու մեկնեցաւ մայրավանք:

Սակայն մեր թեմը տակաւին կը զգայ Արամ Ա. Հայրապետի վեհական ներկայութիւնը, կը լսէ անոր պատգամները, որոնք կ'արձագանգեն մեր հոգիներուն մէջ:

Վեհափառը գնաց: Սակայն Վեհափառը կը մնայ մեր ժողովուրդին հետ եւ մէջ: ❖

Prelate's Message

Vehapar Came and Went But He Remains With Us

During the month of October 2005 the Eastern Prelacy welcomed the visit of His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia.

The purpose of his visit? To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Armenian Theological Seminary in Antelias. Vehapar's visit also presented the opportunity to celebrate the 10th anniversary of his election and consecration to the pontifical throne of the Holy See of Cilicia.

All of the series of events that had been planned took place successfully. The Seminary was rekindled in the minds and hearts of the faithful by the public events, as well as by various publications that were printed, and personal receptions and meetings. Our faithful people experienced the past and present of the Seminary, whose mission since its founding has been devotion and service to our people.

Well known in ecumenical circles and highly respected, His Holiness's visit provided the opportunity to organize ecumenical symposiums, as well as meetings with church leaders. His knowledge and ability to examine questions, find solutions and present them cogently to his audience, demonstrate the working of his analytical mind, which received its original nurturing in the Seminary classrooms and which was enriched with his participation in ecumenical life.

The 1600th anniversary of the invention of the Armenian alphabet by St. Mesrob Mashtots was present in all of the events. The genius of St. Mesrob was a part of every cultural program, be it by words or songs. St. Mesrob's imprint was also left on the scholarly world by the international symposium at Harvard University.

Vehapar's 10th anniversary was appropriately remembered with joy and acknowledgement of his accomplishments on behalf of the Cilician See during the past decade, as well as his personal accomplishments, including his writings and lectures.

During all of the events—religious, cultural, and commemorative—he delivered special and appropriate mes-

sages. His messages were not ordinary recitations, but rather messages that analyzed and provided resolution. His messages were relevant for old and young and clearly presented all of the challenges that confront our religious and national life in America. Vehapar's words resonated and remained in the essence of his audience. His presence became captivating, his sincerity impressive, and his friendship enriching.

Without doubt, knowledge and education are central and important in our minds as it is in Vehapar's. Knowledge and education were the axis for the founding of the Seminary and remain its life and mission. The Cilician See's Seminary became in our Diasporan life an institution that had a miraculous and providential role, filling the spiritual and cultural needs of our displaced and massacred nation.

In each of the communities Vehapar met with the clergy, as well as teachers, choirmasters, intellectuals and journalists. Many of them received their education at the Seminary. They became the evangelists of God's word, and the preachers and protectors of our national values. In both the church and the school, in the newspaper and on stage, they gave back what they received at the Seminary. They transmitted to the faithful the values that they themselves received at the Seminary. It is impossible to view Diasporan life and not see those who received their training and skills at the Seminary.

These are the things that prod us to remain steadfast beside the Seminary, not only on the occasion of the 75th anniversary, but always, so that the bells will ring in our spiritual and cultural chapels, ensuring the survival of our nation.

His Holiness became the brilliant sound and breath of the inexorable belfry, which still resonates in us.

Yes, Vehapar came, inspired us and returned to the mother monastery.

But we still feel his presence, still hear his words, which echo in our hearts and minds.

Vehapar left, but he remains with us. ❖

ՄԵԾԻ ՏԱՆՆ ԿԻԼԻԿԻՈՅ ԿԱԹՈՂԻԿՈՍՈՒԹԵԱՆ ՀԻՒՍԻՍԱՅԻՆ ԱՄԵՐԻԿԱՅԻ ԹԵՄԵՐՈՒ ԱՌԱՋՆՈՐԴ ՍՐԲԱԶԱՆՆԵՐՈՒՆ ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԻՇԽԱՆՈՒԹԵԱՆՑ ԵՒ ԺՈՂՈՎՈՒՐԴԻՆ

Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան Անթիլիասի Մայրավանքէն քրիստոնէական ջերմ սիրով ու հայրապետական օրհնութեամբ կ'ողջունենք ձեզ:

Անցնող շուրջ երկու ամիսներու ընթացքին յաջորդաբար ձեզի հետ եղանք Քանատայի եւ Միացեալ Նահանգներու Արեւմտեան ու Արեւելեան թեմերուն մէջ: Ձեզի հետ եղանք եկեղեցիներու ու դպրոցներու մէջ, հանդիպումներու ու ընդունելութիւններու ընթացքին, համայնքային կեդրոններու ու բարեսիրական հաստատութիւններուն մէջ: Երեք թեմերուն տուած Մեր հովուապետական այս այցելութիւնը առիթ մը եղաւ մեր ժողովուրդի զաւակներուն հետ յաճախակիօրէն ըլլալու եւ աւելի մօտէն ճանչնալու մեր թեմերը՝ իրենց ներքին դրուածքով ու կառոյցներով, իրենց իրազործումներով ու ծրագիրներով ինչպէս նաեւ իրենց դիմագրաւած մտահոգութիւններով ու մարտահրաւէրներով: Մեր այցելութիւնը նաեւ առիթ ընծայեց պետական, քաղաքական, ակադեմական ու միջ-եկեղեցական հանդիպումներ ունենալու, դասախօսութիւններ տալու համալսարաններու մէջ ու նախագահելու միջազգային համագումարներու:

Բնականաբար Դպրեվանքի 75-ամեակի նշումը կարեւոր տեղ գրաւեց Մեր այցելութեան ծրագրին մէջ: Արդարեւ, Դպրեվանքի 75 տարիներու ծառայութիւնը համասփիւռքեան մաշտապով լուսարձակի տակ բերելու այս ճիգը, վստահաբար մեր Կաթողիկոսութեան համար պիտի դառնայ Դպրեվանքեան մարդակերտումի առաքելութիւնը ներկայ կեանքի հրամայականներուն դիմաց վերակազմակերպելու ու վերանորոգելու սքանչելի առիթ մը ու հօր մարտահրաւէր մը:

Խոր գոհունակութեամբ հաստատեցինք, թէ մեր երեք թեմերու Առաջնորդ Սրբազաններու ու Ազգ. Իշխանութեանց հետեւողական, նուիրեալ ու տքնաջան աշխատանքին որպէս հետեւանք, մեր թեմերը այսօր կը գտնուին կազմակերպ ու կենսունակ ընթացքի մը մէջ: Յատուկ ուրախութեամբ նաեւ վկայեցինք, որ մեր թեմական կառոյցներուն շուրջ համախմբուած ժողովուրդ մը կայ, իր մտաւորականութեամբ ու երիտասարդութեամբ. ժողովուրդ մը, որ մասնակից է մեր հաւաքական կեանքին եւ զգայուն մեր կեանքը յուզող խնդիրներուն նկատմամբ:

Միացեալ Նահանգներու ու Քանատայի թեմերուն կատարած Մեր այցելութենէն վերադարձին, կ'ուզենք ընդհանուր գծերով, կարգ մը յիշեցումներ ու ընդգծումներ կատարել ուղղուած մեր երեք թեմերուն:



Հաւատքի վերանորոգում

Մեր պատգամներուն մէջ կարեւորութեամբ կը շեշտեցինք մեր ժողովուրդի կեանքէն ներս քրիստոնէական հաւատքի վերնորոգման հրամայական անհրաժեշտութիւնը: Առանց հաւատքի մարդկային կեանքը, իր անհատական թէ հաւաքական արտայայտութեամբ, կը կորսնցնէ իր հարազատ դիմագիծը ու ճշմարիտ նպատակը: Անորոշութեան ու տագնապի մէջ գտնուող ներկայ ընկերութիւնը իր ինքնութեան փնտռութիւն մէջ է՝ հաւատքի հօրացման ճամբով: Այս երեւոյթը այնքան ակնյայտ է ամերիկեան ընկերութեան մէջ, այսօր: Մեր ժողովուրդի զաւակներուն մօտ եւս բացայայտ ճիգ մը նշմարեցինք դէպի հոգեւոր արժէքներ:

Մեծապէս գնահատելի այս երեւոյթը սակայն պէտք է մնայ սոսկ զգացական սահմաններուն մէջ, դառնալով վաղանցուկ ու մակերեսային երեւոյթ մը միայն: Մեր կեանքը Աստուծոյ ներկայութեամբ այլակերպող եւ մեր անհատական թէ հաւաքական կեանքին յստակ ուղղութիւն տուող հաւատքի գիտակից ճիգ մը պէտք է դառնայ հոգեւոր արժէքներու մեր կապուածութիւնը: Քրիստոնէական հաւատքի վերանորոգման այս ընթացքը այնպիսի հունակորում պէտք է ստանայ, ուր օտարամուտ աւանդութիւններ ու ձեւեր պէտք է երբեք տեղ գրաւեն: Մեր ժողովուրդի զաւակներուն հաւատքի վերանորոգման ճիգը պէտք է ղեկավարուի մեր եկեղեցոյ կողմէ՝ սակայն մեր դարաւոր հոգեւոր արժէքներու ու աւանդութիւններու պատշաճեցումով մեզ շրջապատող պայմաններուն ու կեանքի նոր հրամայականներուն: Այնքան կենսական այս աշխատանքին մէջ մեր հոգեւորականները առանցքային դեր ունին կատարելիք:

Հայ եկեղեցոյ առաքելութեան կենսագործում

Մեր ժողովուրդի կեանքէն ներս քրիստոնէական հաւատքի վերագարթօնքի ու վերանորոգման աշխատանքը նախաձեռնելու ու առաջնորդելու կոչուած է մեր եկեղեցին: Սա եկեղեցոյ առաջնահերթ պարտաւորութիւնն է: Եկեղեցին ո՛չ միայն հաւատքի աղբիւր է ու սնուցիչ, այլ նաեւ հաւատքի տարածիչ: Այս նախանձախնդրութեամբ մեր եկեղեցին պէտք է դուրս գայ իր ծիսական ու վարչական կեանքի նեղ սահմաններէն եւ որպէս հաւատքի առաքելութիւն մտնէ մեր ժողովուրդի կեանքէն ներս: Եկեղեցին՝ ժողովուրդին մէջ, ժողովուրդին հետ ու ժողովուրդին համար: Սա լոզունգ չէ, այլ եկեղեցոյ հարազատ ինքնութեան ու ճշմարիտ կոչումին վաւերական արտայայտութիւնը: Այսպէ՛ս պէտք է ըլլայ Քրիստոսի եկեղեցին, ամէ՛ն տեղ ու բոլոր պայմաններուն մէջ: Ա՛յս կը սպասէ

նաեւ ժողովուրդը եկեղեցիէն: Այս ծիրէն ներս ազդու դեր կրնան ունենալ մանաւանդ մեր ծխային եկեղեցիները իրենց հոգեւոր հովիւներով ու մարմիններով:

Հայ եկեղեցին նաեւ կոչուած է ազգային ծառայութեան: Ազգային ծառայութիւն ըսելով կը հասկնանք՝ մեր ժողովուրդի կարիքներուն ընդառաջելու, անոր ցաւերուն դարման գտնելու ու անոնց կեանքը ազգային արժէքներով ու աւանդութիւններով հարստացնելու ազդու ամբողջանուէր յանձնառութիւն, որ վիճակուած է մեր եկեղեցւոյ՝ յատկապէս Սփիւռքի ապահայացնող միջավայրին մէջ: Մեր սպասումն է որ մեր ծխային եկեղեցիները, որպէս հիմք մեր թեմական կառոյցին ու կեանքին աւելի՛ կազմակերպուին իրենց ներքին կեանքով ու դառնան աւելի՛ աշխոյժ իրենց դաստիարակչական, աւետարանչական ու ծառայական առաքելութեամբ: Հետեւաբար, մեր ծխային եկեղեցիները իրենց բոլոր երեսներով ու գործունէութեամբ վերանորոգելու ու վերակենսաւորելու յանձնառութիւնը հիմնական առաջնահերթութիւն պէտք է դառնայ մեր երեք թեմերուն համար:

Կրօնական ու հայեցի դաստիարակութեան վերակազմակերպում

Յատուկ գոհունակութեամբ նշմարեցինք, որ մեր թեմերէն ներս այս ուղղութեամբ երախտաշատ աշխատանք կը շարունակուի կատարուի: Կրօնական դաստիարակութեան ծիրէն ներս կը գործեն կիրակնօրեայ վարժարաններ, կը կատարուին Սուրբ Գրոց սերտողութիւններ, տեղի կ'ունենան երիտասարդական հաւաքներ եւ հետեւողական ճիգ կը կատարուի ազգային վարժարաններէն ներս աւելի կազմակերպելու կրօնական դաստիարակութիւնը: Այս աշխատանքը պէտք է աւելի ծրագրուած ու գործնական հոռնի մէջ դնել: Հարկ է առաւելագոյն չափով օգտագործել յսոցա-տեսողական արհեստագիտութեան բոլոր միջոցները, քրիստոնէական կազմաւորման ճամբով հասնելու մեր ժողովուրդի գաւակներուն ու մասնաւորաբար նոր սերունդին:

Ինչ կը վերաբերի հայեցի դաստիարակութեան, մեր երեք թեմերը իրենց ժամանակին, պիւտճէին ու մարդուժին կարեւորագոյն բաժինը կը յատկացնեն հայ վարժարաններուն: Մեր նոր սերունդի հայեցի դաստիարակութեան նկատմամբ իրենց ունեցած նախանձախնդրութեան որպէս արտայայտութիւն, անոնք ձիգ չեն խնայեր նոր ծրագիրներ մշակելու ու յանդուգն նախաձեռնութիւններու դիմելու: Մեր հանդիպումներուն, ինչպէս նաեւ հրապարակային արտայայտութիւններուն ընթացքին կարեւորութեամբ շեշտեցինք հայեցի դաստիարակութեան նոր մղում տալու անյետաձգելի հրամայականը: Մեր կրթական կեանքը իր բոլոր երեսներով կը կարօտ համապարփակ վերաբեւոյնումի ու վերադասաւորումի: Անհրաժեշտ է կրթական իրապաշտ քաղաքականութիւն մը մշակել, ուր տեղական պայմաններուն պատշաճեցման առնթներ կարեւոր է յատուկ ուշադրութիւն ընծայել հայեցի դաստիարակութեան: Հարկ է նոր դպրոցներ հիմնել յատ-

կապէս հայահոծ շրջաններէն ներս. եւ աշխարհագրական հեռաւորութեան պատճառաւ օտար դպրոցներ յաճախող հայ աշակերտներուն համար յատուկ դասընթացներ պէտք է կազմակերպել աւելի կազմակերպ դրութեամբ: Այս բոլորը ծրագրուած ու հետեւողական աշխատանք կ'ենթադրէ, որուն պէտք է լծուին մեր երեք թեմերը աջ սօ՛ր, վաղը կրնայ ո՛ւրջ ըլլալ:

Նոր մարդուժի պատրաստութիւն

Վերոյիշեալ աշխատանքները նիւթական լայն կարելիութիւններուն կողքին նաեւ կ'ենթադրեն մարդուժ: Այնպիսի մարդուժ, որ գիտական պատրաստութիւն ունենայ, մօտէն ճանչնայ մեր ազգային կեանքը ու մեզ շրջապատող պայմանները: Մարդուժի, հոգեւորական թէ՛ աշխարհական, պատրաստութեան մէջ այս երեք ազդակներու համատեղ ու ներդաշնակ ներկայութիւնը կը նկատենք խիստ անհրաժեշտ: Այլ խօսքով, Հիւսիսային Ամերիկայի մեր գաղութներէն ներս հոգեւոր ու ազգային ծառայութեան լծող ազգայինները նախընտրաբար պէտք է ըլլան նոյն միջավայրի ծնունդ եւ իրենց շրջապատը լաւապէս ճանչցող անձեր: Մասնագիտութեան առնթներ, անոնք պէտք է մօտէն հաղորդ դարձած ըլլան մեր ազգային իրականութեան, իր բոլոր երեսներով: Նման անձեր միայն պիտի կարենան իրենց օգտաշատ ծառայութիւնը բերել մեր հաւաքական կեանքին բոլոր բնագաւառներէն ներս:

Հետեւաբար, անցած պէտք է նկատել այլեւս այն ժամանակները երբ դուրսէն մարդուժ բերելու հեւքին մէջ էին Ամերիկայի մեր գաղութները: Այսօր մարդուժի հսկայ կարելիութիւն մը գոյութիւն ունի Միացեալ Նահանգներու ու Քանադայի մէջ: Մեր այցելութեան ընթացքին, ուրախութեամբ նշմարեցինք, թէ՛ մեր կառոյցներուն շուրջ Ամերիկա ծնած ու կազմաւորուած երիտասարդներ կան, որոնք պատրաստ են ծառայելու մեր ժողովուրդին: Պէտք է նաեւ ազգային առողջ կազմաւորում տալ անոնց: Մեր եկեղեցիները, մեր կառոյցներն ու կազմակերպութիւնները իրենց գրաւչութիւնը ու կարեւորութիւնը պիտի կորսնցնեն եթէ՛ հոն գալիք սերունդները չտեսնեն պատրաստուած, գիտակից ու նուիրեալ անձեր: Եթէ՛ կ'ուզենք մեր կառոյցները վերանորոգել ու այժմէականացնել իրենց կեանքով ու գործունէութեամբ, պէտք է նախ հոն գործող մարդուժը վերանորոգենք:

Գործակցութիւն՝ ի խնդիր մեր եկեղեցւոյ ու ժողովուրդին ամբողջականութեան պահպանման

Այսպէս պատգամեցինք մեր հրապարակային ելոյթներուն թէ՛ անձնական հանդիպումներուն ընթացքին: Մեր կեանքէն ներս թեմական ու կուսակցական ներքին տարակարծութիւններ ու զգայնութիւններ գոյութիւն ունին: Այդ հարցերու հանգրուանային լուծման առաջնորդող իրապաշտ մօտեցումներու ու հաւաքական գործընթացներու ստեղծումը կը նկատենք կենսական՝ միշտ մեկնելով տեղական պայմաններէն ու գաղութներու ներքին

դրուածքներէն: Միաժամանակ սակայն, համազգային արժէքներու, սկզբունքներու ու շահերու շուրջ մեր բոլոր կառոյցներուն եւ մեր ժողովուրդի բոլոր գաւակներուն համախմբումը կը նկատենք առաջնահերթ: Յատկապէս ամերիկեան միջավայրի մէջ մեր կեանքի բոլոր մարգերէն ներս, առաւելագոյն չափով միջ-թեմական, միջ-կուսակցական ու միջ-միութենական գործակցութիւն պէտք է յառաջացնել:

Արդարեւ, գործակցութեամբ է որ մեր հոգեւոր, մշակութային, կրթական, բարեսիրական եւ այլ կառոյցները պիտի դառնան աւելի աշխոյժ ու արդիւնաշատ: Գործակցութեամբ է որ մեր ժողովուրդի գաւակները աւելիով պիտի համախմբուին մեր կառոյցներուն շուրջ եւ իրենց հայրութիւնը գործնապէս ապրին: Գործակցութեամբ է որ պիտի երաշխաւորենք մեր ժողովուրդի ամբողջականութիւնը ու ամրապնդենք մեր եկեղեցւոյ ու ազգին միասնակամութիւնը: Վերջապէս, գործակցութեամբ է որ Սփիւռքը աւելի պիտի հզօրացնենք եւ այդ ճամբով աւելի գործօն մասնակցութիւն պիտի բերենք Հայաստանի հզօրացման: Երբ մեր ժողովուրդի գաւակները ու յատկապէս նոր սերունդը չտեսնէ այդ գործակցութիւնը, հետզհետէ պիտի հեռանայ մեր եկեղեցիներէն, մեր համայնքի կեդրոններէն, մեր կազմակերպութիւններէն, այլ խօսքով՝ մեր հաւաքական կեանքէն: Պէտք է ըլլանք հեռատես:

Ազգային պահանջատիրական աշխատանքներու հզօրացում

Այլ դրական երեւոյթներու շարքին, մեծ գոհունակութեամբ նշմարեցինք հայ ժողովուրդի իրաւունքներու հետապնդման ուղղութեամբ կատարուող աշխատանքները՝ թէ՛ Քանատայի եւ թէ՛ Միացեալ Նահանգներէն ներս: Հայ դատի մարմինները ամէն տեղ աշխոյժ գործունէութեան լծուած են. անոնք մնայուն կապի մէջ են քաղաքապետներուն, պետական երեսփոխաններուն, ծերակուտականներուն ու կուսակցական պատասխանատուներուն հետ: Արդարեւ, երկար տարիներու վրայ տարածուած լուրջ աշխատանքներու հետեւանքով է որ անցեալ տարի Քանատայի խորհրդարանը ճանչցաւ հայկական ցեղասպանութիւնը, Միացեալ Նահանգներու կարգ մը նահանգային խորհրդարանները պատշօնական ճանաչում տուին հայկական ցեղասպանութեան եւ հայկական ցեղասպանութեան հարցը հասաւ Միացեալ Նահանգներու խորհրդարանը:

Հայ դատի աշխատանքներու շրջագծէն ներս, ուրախութեամբ ականատես դարձանք նաեւ քաղաքական գիտութեանց ու միջազգային օրէնքի մէջ մասնագիտացած մեր երիտասարդներուն ստեղծած աշխատանքային կապին խորհրդարանականներուն ու ծերակուտականներուն հետ: Գոհունակութեամբ հաստատեցինք նաեւ պետական-քաղաքական շրջանակներուն ունեցած յայն ծանօթութիւնը հայ դատի մասին եւ մանաւանդ անոնց պատրաստակամութիւնը ղալկից դառնալու հայկական ցեղասպանութեան ճանաչման գործընթացին: Ինչպէս

թելադրեցինք Հայ Դատի կեդրոնական Յանձնախումբին, հայ դատի գծով կատարուող աշխատանքները պէտք է շարունակուին նոր թափով ու քաղաքական ներկայ պայմաններուն համապատասխան մօտեցումով: Մեր թեմակայ առաջնորդները ու ազգային իշխանութիւնները պիտի շարունակեն բերել իրենց ամբողջական ու գործօն մասնակցութիւնը հայ ժողովուրդի արդար իրաւունքներու հետապնդման աշխատանքներուն, որովհետեւ հայ դատը նաեւ մեր եկեղեցւոյ դատն է, ան ամբողջ հայրութեան դատն է:

Վստահիլ նոր սերունդին

Հայ համայնարանականներու ու երիտասարդութեան հետ ունեցած Մեր հանդիպումներուն ու երկխօսութեան ընթացքին նկատեցինք, որ ընդհանրապէս ներկայ ընկերութիւնը ու մասնաւորաբար հայ կեանքը յուզող խնդիրներու ու երեւոյթներու գծով անորոշութիւն մը գոյութիւն ունի անոնց մօտ: Նշմարեցինք, որ նոր սերունդը կարիք ունի ուղղութեան: Նաեւ զգացինք, որ մեր նոր սերունդին մօտ ազգային կեանքի լուսանցքին վրայ պահուած ըլլալու հոգեբանական բարդոյթ մը գոյութիւն ունի: Արդ, ամէն բանէ առաջ նոր սերունդին հետ անկեղծ երկխօսութիւնը կը նկատենք կենսական: Ինչպէս Մեր պատգամներուն մէջ շեշտեցինք, երիտասարդութիւնը ապագային չի պատկանիր, այլ ներկային: Ներկան պահել այնպէս ինչպէս որ է, կը նշանակէ անցեալին մէջ ապրիլ: Հինը նորով պէտք է վերանորոգել եւ նորը հինով աւելի հզօրացնել: Նոր սերունդը պէտք է գործնապէս մասնակից դառնայ մեր այսօրուան կեանքին, նոյնիսկ ղեկավարութեան մակարդակի վրայ: Նոր սերունդը իր մասնագիտութիւնը, իր նոր մօտեցումները, յայն հորիզոններու բացուելու իր քաջութիւնը, մեր ազգային կեանքը վերանորոգելու իր յանձնառութիւնը՝ ծառայութեան ճամբով ի սպաս պէտք է դնէ մեր եկեղեցւոյ առաքելութեան առաւել կենսագործման ու գաղութներու կեանքին առաւել զարգացման:

Հետեւաբար, իրաւունք չունինք միայն ապագային համար վերապահելու նոր սերունդը: Իրաւունք չունինք սոսկ հետեւողի կրաւորական դերին մէջ տեսնելու երիտասարդութիւնը: Պէտք է վստահիլ երիտասարդութեան. պէտք է մօտենալ անոնց, երկխօսութիւն ստեղծել անոնց հետ: Անցնող տարուան ընթացքին երիտասարդութեան ուղղած Մեր երկու հայրական նամակներով արդէն իսկ երկխօսութեան սկսած ենք մեր երիտասարդներուն հետ: Մենք կը հաւատանք երիտասարդութեան ուժականութեան ու կարողականութեան: Կը հաւատանք մեր ազգային-եկեղեցական կեանքին անոր բերելիք եզակի նպաստին: Միաժամանակ Մեր արդար սպասումն է, որ ինչ-ինչ պայմաններու բերումով, մեր համայնքներու կեանքէն հեռացած երիտասարդները վերադառնան մեզի, մօտենան մեր եկեղեցիներուն ու կառոյցներուն եւ մասնակից դառնան մեր հաւաքական կեանքին:



Եզրակացնելով Մեր Հայրական խօսքը, Մեր զնահատանքին եւ ուրախութեան աւրնթեր անգամ մը եւս կ'ուզենք յիշեցնել, որ մեր ժողովուրդի գաւակները մեծ սպասումներ ունին եկեղեցիէն: Վստահ ենք որ մեր Առաջնորդ Սրբազանները ու Ազգային Իշխանութիւնները բարձրագոյն աստիճանի պատասխանատուութեամբ ու նուիրուածութեամբ պիտի շարունակեն իրենց հոգեւոր առաքելութիւնը ու ազգային ծառայութիւնը՝ իրենց թեմական գործունէութեան մէջ կարեւորութեամբ նկատի առնելով մեր յայտնած մտածումները, արտայայտած մտահոգութիւնները ու կատարած թելադրութիւնները:

Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութիւնը միշտ պատրաստ է աջակից դառնալու մեր թեմերուն կողմէ կատարուող այն բոլոր աշխատանքներուն, որոնց նպատակն է մեր ժողովուրդի կեանքէն ներս քրիստոնէական հաւատքի վերածնունդը, հոգեւոր, մշակութային ու ազգային արժէքներու տարածումը, մեր ազգին միասնականու-

թեան ամրապնդումը, ազգային պահանջատիրութեան ամրացումը եւ հայրենաշինութեան հզօրացումը:

Կ'աղօթենք առ Բարձրեայն Աստուած, որ մեր Առաջնորդ Սրբազաններուն եկեղեցանուէր ու ազգաշէն ծառայութիւնը նոր իրագործումներով հարստացնէ, մեր Ազգային Իշխանութիւններուն, մեր կազմակերպութիւններուն ու միութիւններուն գործունէութիւնը նոր յաջողութիւններով լեցնէ:

Հայրապետական սիրով ու օրհնութեամբ,

**ԱՐԱՄ Ա. ԿԱԹՈՂԻԿՈՍ
ՄԵԾԻ ՏԱՆՆ ԿԻԼԻԿԻՈՅ**

10 Նոյեմբեր 2005
Անթիլիաս

To the Prelates, National Representative Assemblies and Faithful of the North American Prelacies of the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia

Editor's Note: Upon his return to the Catholicosate in Antelias, Lebanon, His Holiness sent a message addressed to the leadership and faithful of the three prelacies he visited. The following is an English translation of the Armenian printed above.

We greet you from the Monastery of the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia in Antelias with warm Christian love and pontifical blessing.

We spent almost the past two months with you, successively visiting the Prelacy of Canada and the Western and Eastern Prelacies of the United States. We were with you in churches and schools, community centers and benevolent institutions. This pontifical visit of ours became an opportunity to frequently mingle with the people and to better understand our dioceses in terms of their internal organization and structures, their accomplishments and plans, as well as the concerns and challenges faced by them. Our visit also furnished opportunities to have meetings with government officials, political figures, academic personnel and ecumenical leaders; to give lectures in universities, and to preside over international conferences.

Naturally, the observance of the 75th anniversary of the Seminary occupied an important place in the scope of our visit. Indeed, this effort to bring the 75 years of the Seminary's service on a pan-Armenian level under the spotlight will certainly become a wonderful opportunity and a powerful challenge to reorganize and renew the Seminary's mission in the face of the imperatives of life today.

We confirmed with deep satisfaction that, as a consequence of the persistent, dedicated and diligent work of the

three Prelates and National Representative Assemblies of our three prelacies, the latter are presently in a good state of organization and on a vital course. We also witnessed with special joy that there is a body of people assembled around our prelacy structures, with its intellectuals and youth; a people, which participates in our collective life and is sensitive with regard to the issues affecting our life.

Having returned from our visit to the United States and Canada, We wish to make certain general observations and underscore certain points, which are directed toward our three prelacies.

Renewal of faith

In our messages, we stressed the importance or, better yet, the urgent necessity of the renewal of Christian faith in the life of our people. Without faith, human life, on both individual and collective levels, loses its true identity and real purpose. Present-day society, which is in a state of indecision and crisis, is searching for its identity by way of strengthening faith. This phenomenon is very evident in American society today. We also noticed a manifest effort among our people to seek spiritual values.

However, this greatly appreciable effort must not

remain confined solely to emotional manifestations, thereby becoming just a transitory and superficial phenomenon. Our connectedness to spiritual values must become a conscious effort of faith transforming our life through the presence of God and giving clear direction to both our individual and collective life. This course of renewal of Christian faith must be channeled in such a way that foreign traditions and mores must never occupy a place therein. The effort toward renewal of faith among our people must be directed by our church but, at the same time, our centuries-old spiritual values and traditions must be adapted to the conditions surrounding us and the new imperatives of our life. Our clergymen have a pivotal role to play in this extremely vital work.

The realization of the mission of the Armenian Church

Our church is called upon to undertake and lead the effort toward reawakening and renewing Christian faith in the life of our people. This is the primary obligation of the church. The church is not only the source and nourisher of faith but also its propagator. With this zeal, our church must emerge from the narrow confines of its ceremonial and administrative life, and enter the life of our people on a mission of faith. The church among the people, with the people and for the people. This is not a slogan; rather, it is the genuine expression of the church's real identity and true calling. This is how Christ's church must be, everywhere and under all conditions. This is also what the people expect of the church. Our parish churches, with their pastors and constituent organizations, can play an effective role in this realm. The Armenian Church also has the calling to perform national service. By national service, we understand an efficacious undertaking of total dedication, which befalls our church particularly in the Diasporan de-Armenizing environment -- the duty to address the needs of our people, to find a remedy for their ills and to enrich their life with national values and traditions. It is our expectation that our parish churches, as the foundation of our diocesan structure and life, become more organized in their internal life and become more active in their mission of education, evangelism and service. Therefore, the undertaking to regenerate and revive our parish churches in all aspects and in all their activities must become a basic priority for our three prelaties.

Reorganization of religious and Armenian instruction

With special satisfaction, we noticed that appreciable work in this direction continues to be carried out. In the realm of religious education, Sunday schools are operating, Bible study is being carried out, youth gatherings are taking place, and persistent effort is being made in the community schools to provide religious instruction on a more organized basis. This work must be performed with greater planning and on a more practical basis. It is necessary to utilize all the means of audiovisual technology, in order to reach our people, especially the young generation, and put them on a path of Christian formation.

As far as Armenian instruction is concerned, our three prelaties are allocating the most important share of their time, budget and human resources to the Armenian schools. As an expression of their zeal with regard to the Armenian education of our young generation, they are sparing no effort to develop new plans and adopting bold initiatives. During

our meetings, as well as our public addresses, we stressed the importance of the urgent necessity of giving impetus to Armenian instruction. All aspects of our educational life are in need of comprehensive reevaluation and rearrangement. It is mandatory to develop a realistic educational policy, in which it is important to give special attention to Armenian education, along with adapting to local conditions. It is necessary to establish new schools, particularly in areas densely populated by Armenians; in addition, special courses of study must be organized on a more consistent basis for Armenian students attending non-Armenian schools because of the distant geographical location of their residences. All of these efforts require planning and sequential follow through -- work which our three prelaties must take on today, for tomorrow may be too late.

Preparation of new human resources

Besides considerable financial expenses and material needs, the aforementioned tasks also require human resources with academic preparation and knowledge of our national life and the conditions enveloping it. We consider the conjoining and harmonious presence of these three factors as absolute prerequisites in the preparation of such resources, clergymen and laypersons alike. In other words, the Armenians choosing to engage in spiritual and national service within our North American communities should preferably be the product of said environment and eminently familiar with their environment. Along with seeking higher education in a given profession, they must have become conversant with all aspects of the realities of our community life. Only such persons will be able to provide beneficial service within all realms of our collective life.

Therefore, those times when our American communities were engaged in a frantic effort to import manpower must be considered a thing of the past. Today, a huge potential exists in the United States and Canada. During our visit, we noticed with joy that there are youths born and raised in America, who are involved in our church organizations and who are ready to serve our people. It is also necessary to give them a sound Armenian orientation. Our churches, our institutions and organizations will lose their appeal and importance, if the generations going to them don't find well-prepared, knowledgeable and dedicated individuals there. If we wish to regenerate and modernize our institutions, in terms of their life and activity, we must first renew the people working in them.

Cooperation for the sake of the preservation of the integrity of our church and people

This is the message we conveyed in the course of our public appearances and personal meetings. Internal dissensions and sentiments exist in our life. We consider vital the creation of realistic approaches and collective processes leading to the phase-by-phase solution of those matters, always based on local conditions and the internal organization of the given communities. At the same time, however, we consider of paramount importance the assemblage of all our structures and all the offspring of our people around pan-Armenian values, principles and interests. Cooperation must be developed to the greatest extent possible in all realms of our life, particularly in America.

Indeed, it is through cooperation that our ecclesiastic, cultural, educational, charitable and other organizations shall become more active and fruitful. It is through cooperation that our people shall increasingly assemble around our structures and live their Armenian identity, practically speaking. It is through cooperation that we shall guarantee the integrity of our people and strengthen the unity of our church and nation. Finally, it is through cooperation that we shall make the Diaspora more powerful and thereby have more active participation in the strengthening of Armenia. When our people, particularly the young generation, do not see that cooperation, they shall gradually distance themselves from our churches, our community centers and other organizations -- in other words, our collective life. We must be farsighted.

Strengthening of efforts to demand our rights as a nation

Among other positive developments, we noticed with great satisfaction the efforts being carried out in the pursuit of the rights of the Armenian people, both in Canada and in the United States. The organizations pursuing the Armenian Cause are engaged in ardent activity everywhere; they are in permanent contact with mayors, congressmen, senators and political party leaders. Indeed, it is as a consequence of serious efforts over many years that, last year, the Canadian Parliament recognized the Armenian Genocide, various state legislatures in the United States gave official recognition to the Armenian Genocide, and the issue of the recognition of the Armenian Genocide was brought before the U.S. Congress.

Within the context of efforts waged on behalf of the Armenian Cause, we were glad to also witness the working relationship created by our young men and women, who have specialized in the political sciences and international law, with members of the Canadian Parliament, US House of Representatives and Senate. We also confirmed, with satisfaction, the considerable acquaintance of governmental and political circles with the Armenian Cause and, particularly, their readiness to assist in the process of gaining recognition for the Armenian Genocide. As we suggested to the Armenian National Committee (Hai Tahd), the efforts being carried out in terms of the Armenian Cause must be continued with a new impetus and an approach corresponding to the present political conditions. Our prelates and national representative assemblies shall continue to bring their full and active participation to the efforts aimed at pursuing the satisfaction of the just rights of the Armenian people, because the Armenian Cause is also the cause of our church; it is the cause of the Armenian people as a whole.

Trusting in the young generation

During our meetings and dialogue with Armenian university students and youths, we noticed that a state of indecision prevails among them, when it comes to issues and events affecting the present society, in general, and Armenian life, in particular. We noticed that the young generation is in need of direction. We also sensed that a psychological complex exists among our young generation, stemming from their being kept on the margin of community life. Now, above all, we consider sincere dialogue with the

young generation vital. As we emphasized in our messages, the youth does not belong to the future, but to the present. Maintaining the present status quo means living in the past. The old must be renewed with the new, and the new must be strengthened with the old. The young generation must become a participant in the life of today, practically speaking, even at the leadership level. With its various specializations, its new approaches, its courage to embrace broad horizons, the young generation must put its initiative to renew our community life into practice, for the further vitalization of the mission of our church and the further development of the life of our various communities.

Therefore, we don't have the right to put the young generation in reserve for the future. We don't have the right to view the youth in the passive role of mere follower. We must trust in the youth, we must approach them, and create dialogue with them. By means of our two paternal letters addressed to the youth in the course of the current year, we have already begun a dialogue with our youth. We believe in the dynamism and potentiality of youth. We believe in the singular benefit that the youth can bring to our national-ecclesiastic life. At the same time, it is our rightful expectation that, given certain conditions, the youths who have distanced themselves from the life of our communities will return to us, come back within the fold of our churches and organizations, and become participants in our collective life.

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Concluding our paternal message, along with our appreciation and joy, We wish to once again say that our people have great expectations from the church. We are certain that our Prelates and Prelacies will continue their spiritual mission and national service with the utmost degree of responsibility and dedication, taking the thoughts, concerns and suggestions made by us into serious consideration.

The Great House of Cilicia is always ready to assist in all the efforts being carried out toward the rebirth of Christian faith in the life of our people, the dissemination of spiritual, cultural and national values, the strengthening of our national unity, the solidification of our resolve to gain satisfaction of our national demands, and the furtherance of the rebuilding of our homeland.

We pray to Almighty God that He will enrich the service of our Prelates dedicated to the church and the betterment of our nation with new accomplishments. May He also grace the activity of our community leaders, our organizations and associations with new successes.

With Pontifical love and blessings,
H.H. ARAM I,
CATHOLICOS OF THE GREAT HOUSE OF CILICIA
November 10, 2005
Antelias
(Translated by Aris G. Sevag)

Catholicos Aram I Arrives in New York to Begin Visit to Eastern Prelacy

Successful Visits to Canada and California Completed

Group of Dignitaries Greet His Holiness at Airport

by Iris Papazian

photographs by J. K. Hovhanness

His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, arrived at New York's JFK airport yesterday evening, where he was welcomed by



Mrs. Lilian Hairabedian offers the bread and salt as His Holiness performs the traditional blessing.



Antoine Azzam, Consul of Lebanon, welcomes His Holiness to New York.

a small number of dignitaries and officials. His Holiness, coming from San Francisco, after completing a very successful Pontifical Visit to the West Coast, was accompanied by His Eminence Archbishop Moushegh Mardirosian, Prelate of the Western Prelacy and Staffbearer V. Rev. Fr. Housig Mardirosian.

Because of airport security, His Holiness was greeted as he stepped from the aircraft, by four people including His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy; His Excellency Antoine Azzam, Consul of Lebanon; Jack Mardoian, Esq., chairman of the Prelacy's Executive Council; and Dr. George Dermksian, chairman of the Steering Committee.

His Holiness and entourage were escorted to an area in the terminal where members of the Executive Council and Steering Committee were waiting to greet His Holiness. Two young students, Nvair Oranjian and Levon Zohrabian were the first to greet His Holiness, presenting him with white roses. Mrs. Lilian Hairabedian presented the bread and salt, which the Catholicos blessed in the traditional Armenian ceremony of thanksgiving.

The Catholicos expressed his joy at being in New York again, a place which is very familiar to him having spent some of his youthful years as a student at Fordham University.

After informally greeting those who had gathered to welcome him, His Holiness and his entourage were ushered into waiting cars and taken by police escort to the Pierre Hotel.

Hrashapar Service

His Holiness was officially wel-

came by the New York metropolitan area community as he began his visit to the Eastern Prelacy with a Hrashapar Service at St. Illuminator's Armenian Apostolic Cathedral, 221 E. 27th Street, New York City. The service, which took place in the sanctuary, was followed by a reception and Achahampouyr in the Cathedral's Pashalian Hall.

Attending the service were the members of the clergy serving the Eastern Prelacy, His Eminence Archbishop Moushegh Mardirosian, Prelate of the Western Prelacy, and His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern).

His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan welcomed His Holiness and expressed the community's joy with the pontiff's visit, which is in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Armenian Theological Seminary and the 10th anniversary of the election and consecration of Aram I. Archbishop Oshagan noted that although only ten years have passed since the enthronement of His Holiness, the achievements of those years represent a much longer time span. His Holiness's visit, he said, will bring new vitality to us, will strengthen our faith in our church and the Great House of Cilicia.

Archbishop Oshagan expressed special words of thanks to Archbishop Barsamian in appreciation of his presence.

His Holiness addressed the congregants expressing his thanks for the warm welcome. He spoke of the Seminary and its contributions to the advancement of the Armenian church and nation during the past 75 years. He spoke about the "oneness" of the Armenian Church and the role it has played in keeping the nation together. He emphasized the close partnership between the Homeland and the Diaspora that must be maintained. He emphasized the vital necessity of remaining faithful to our religious, humanitarian and national values.

His Holiness was escorted by procession and the singing of *Giligia* into Pashalian Hall where the Pontiff accepted the good wishes of the many parishioners and friends who patiently waited to personally pay their respects.

The Catholicos's visit to the Eastern Prelacy continued through to November 1. Besides the New York



Children join in to welcome His Holiness. From left to right, top row: V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, His Holiness, Antoine Azzam, Archbishop Moushegh Mardirosian, V. Rev. Fr. Shahe Panossian.



His Holiness arrives at St. Illuminator's Cathedral, escorted by H. E. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church (Eastern) and H.E. Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America.

metropolitan area, His Holiness visited Washington, DC, Boston, and Chicago, before returning to Antelias.

Visit to Prelacy Office

Earlier in the day, His Holiness paid a visit to the Prelacy office where he met with members of the clergy serving the Eastern Prelacy, as well as members of the Executive Council, Steering Committee, Prelacy Ladies Guild, and Prelacy staff personnel.

Mesrob Mashtotz Medal Awarded

In a private ceremony at the Prelacy office, His Holiness conferred the Mesrob Mashtotz Medal on composer Sirvart Karamanuk. The 93-year-old composer from Istanbul was visiting North America where a series of tributes in her honor were planned. Several personal friends including pianist Sahar Arzruni who is helping organize the tributes accompanied her. ✱



Boy and Girl Scouts lined the center aisle of the Cathedral as His Holiness made his way to the altar.



His Holiness meets with members of the Prelacy's Religious and Executive Councils during his visit to the Prelacy office.



Archbishops Oshagan and Khajag lead His Holiness out of the Cathedral at the conclusion of Hrashapar services. His Holiness and entourage went downstairs to Pashalian Hall where the faithful had the opportunity to greet His Holiness individually.



Staff members had the opportunity to meet the Catholicos during his visit to the Prelacy office. In this photo Sophie Khachatryan, Development and Information Systems Officer, greets His Holiness.



Msgr. Robert L. Stern greets His Holiness and entourage as they enter the New York offices of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) where the Catholicos was the guest of honor at a luncheon on October 21.

Left: Ambassador Armen Martirosyan bids farewell to His Holiness following a visit to the UN Mission of Armenia

Catholicos Aram I Celebrates 75th Anniversary of Antelias Seminary at Sts. Vartanantz Church in New Jersey

by Florence Avakian

photographs by J. K. Hovhanness

The majestic sharagan, “Hrashapar” rang out as two rows of scouts holding candles, escorted Catholicos Aram I of the Great House of Cilicia into New Jersey’s Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church, on Friday evening, October 21. The large crowd that filled the church greeted him with enthusiastic applause.



Bread and salt are blessed upon arrival at Sts. Vartanantz Church



Girl and Boy Scouts stand at attention behind Vehapar.

The evening was a special tribute to the virtues, values and sacred mission of the Seminary of the Catholicosate of Cilicia in Antelias, which has produced so many outstanding clerical and lay leaders, and has had a profound influence among Armenians throughout the world. This visit of His



Vehapar is escorted into Sts. Vartanantz Church, where the 75th anniversary celebration of the Theological Seminary took place.

Holiness to Canada, the West Coast, and now the Eastern United States is specifically to mark the 75th anniversary celebration of this prophetic event.

The V. Rev. Fr. Shahe Panossian, pastor of Sts. Vartanantz Church, warmly welcomed the assemblage and the Vehapar’s entourage, which included Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan, and Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, Prelates of the Eastern and Western United States, respectively, and clergy from New York, New Jersey and Canada. Father Shahe paid tribute to the founding of the Antelias Seminary, to the 1600th anniversary of the creation of the Armenian alphabet, and the tenth year marking the enthronement of the Vehapar. “The Seminary is a revelation of hope guarding the faith of our church,” he said, and called the invention of the Armenian alphabet “larger than our life, a priceless divine gift which cannot be valued without our faith. The most important parts of our nation’s soul is embedded in our literary heritage which made us so unique among so many.”

The V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar General of the Eastern Prelacy, in an inspirational address in Armenian, extolled the virtues of the Seminary. He stated that the Seminary is not an ordinary educational establishment. “The leaders of the church and the teachers deeply influenced the students throughout the years, and major international



Judge Sarkis Teshoian spoke about the history and the legacy of the Seminary in New Jersey as well as at 75th anniversary events in Washington, Boston, and Chicago.



Young and old line up to greet Vehapar.

universities have honored their graduates. Its influence has been profound, flourishes today, and will continue to do so tomorrow."

Speaking in English, Judge Sarkis Teshoian, related the detailed history of the Cilician Catholicosate until present times. He called the Antelias Seminary "a living entity, the clay from which the Armenian people are molded. The Seminary has produced teachers, clergy, choir members, and leaders of social service organizations. The value and impact of the Seminary is overwhelming," he said with obvious emotion. "The majority of the clergy serving in North America have been taught there. The Seminary is the phoenix rising from the ashes."

Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, before introducing the Vehapar, described the Seminary in eloquent remarks, as "the heart of the Catholicosate and our people. The Seminary is not just a school, but also a place, which transformed us from boys to men so we can serve our church and our people. The Seminary was born over our bones, and brought up our people. The Seminary will live through you. We need to make sure that it survives, and grows to even greater heights."

Product of Seeds Sown

Catholicos Aram I poetically described the Seminary as an area where seeds are sown. "Some die, some become wheat, life's fountain. This is the Seminary," he stated. "For 75 years, the Seminary has been the product of seeds being sown and harvested. Our students became men, but didn't stay within its walls. They went out to our people and gave them their service, a journey of light and spirit.

"The Seminary belongs to you," he stated with emphasis, his voice ringing out. "It is a place which struggles for the rights of our people. This is a time for self-reflection, to reassess our deficiencies and our setbacks. The 75th anniversary is also an occasion to look towards the future, to strengthen the mission of the Seminary.

"For the Seminary to play an instrumental role in promoting the spirit and values of our people, we need individuals with commitment and vision, to render this invaluable service to our people," he declared. "The Seminary belongs to you. My expectation is that this celebration will become a landmark event, and that the Seminary will remain strong with you always."

During the church service, Gospel readings had been recited by the V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Garabedian, and Rev. Fr. Nareg Terterian, pastor of the St. Sarkis Armenian Church. The Sts. Vartanantz Church choir directed by Deacon Nishan Baljian with organ accompaniment by Ara Dinkjian, sang several hymns, including the "Seminary Anthem," "Ashagerdk Krisdosi," "Vork Zartaretsin," the Pontifical Hymn, and the opening sharagan, "Hrashapar." Following the benediction by His Holiness, the faithful joined in the singing of "Giligia."

Catholicos Aram I and his entourage then joined the assemblage in the church hall where festive tables set with Armenian delicacies had been prepared by the Sts. Vartanantz church members. The people enthusiastically lined up to kiss the hand of His Holiness and relay their personal greetings, as the memorable evening came to an end. ✠



Scouts surround Vehapar and Archbishops Oshagan (left) and Moushegh.

Congressional and Local Leaders Meet With Catholicos Aram I

by Florence Avakian

photographs by J. K. Hovhanness

On the afternoon of Friday, October 21, Catholicos Aram I of the Great House of Cilicia met with national and local legislators at a special reception held in the spacious home of Hrair and Silva Baronian. About one hundred enthusiastic Armenian community leaders and individuals were also in attendance to greet His Holiness and listen to his inspirational message.

Accompanying the Catholicos were the two Prelates of the Eastern and Western United States, Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan and Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, the V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar General of the Eastern Prelacy, and Judge Sarkis and Mrs. Ardemis Teshoian.

Following warm greetings from the host, Hrair Baronian, Armenian National Committee (ANC) Chairman Aram Hamparian related warm regards sent by New Jersey Senator Jon Corzine, and skillfully introduced the special guests. Mayor Anthony Suarez of Ridgefield, in special welcoming remarks, presented a proclamation to His Holiness on behalf of the people of Ridgefield, New Jersey, and wished him a successful visit.

The Catholicos told the Mayor that Ridgefield had an important place in his heart, because during his years in the United States as a student, "I visited and preached at Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church many times," he said.

Congressman Robert Menendez, the third highest ranking Democratic member of the U.S. House of Representatives, who for the last 13 years has defended the interests of Armenia and the Armenian people in Congress, warmly welcomed the church leader, declaring, "I'm in awe of what you are doing in interdenominational efforts, in bringing the youth into the church, and in your work for peace and justice as leader of the World Council of Churches. I rejoice in your work, because it transcends your church."

Genocide Resolution Needs to be Vision of U.S.

Focusing his comments on the Armenian Genocide resolution, which recently passed the International Relations Committee of the House of Representatives, Congressman Menendez stated, "Those who forget history are doomed to repeat it." This resolution "ultimately needs to be the vision of the United States. Armenia has made enormous economic, political and social progress," he said, adding that the House International Relations Committee has earmarked \$75 million next year for Armenia.

"America's friends should be honest," he continued. "It is wrong for Turkey to harm Christian churches." In referring to Azerbaijan's refusal to let an important railroad line traverse Armenian territory, the Congressman adamantly stated, "The U.S. should never give one dollar to a country where the railroad is not permitted to go through Armenia.



Catholicos Aram discussing points of interest with Congressmen Robert Menendez (right) and Steven Rothman.

You know of my unswerving support for Armenian causes. It will continue in the future," he stated to thunderous applause.

Congressman Steven Rothman described Catholicos Aram I as "one of the foremost church leaders in the world, and for Armenians around the world." He revealed to the delight of the audience that his initial introduction to Armenians was through string cheese, and then related how he grew up with the Shahinian family as neighbors. "The stories of their family suffering became part of me. As a Jew, I identify with the aspirations and sufferings of the Armenian people," he said.

A member of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee responsible for foreign financial assistance, Representative Rothman asserted that Congress to date has appropriated a total of 510 million dollars to Armenia since its independence. "I pledge my unyielding commitment to Armenia," he declared to loud applause.

Congressman Scott Garrett, another strong advocate of Armenian causes in the House of Representatives, announced that he "looks forward to visiting Armenia." He also voiced his support for the Genocide resolution, for economic assistance to Armenia, and for the regional railroad to pass through Armenian territory.

In his introduction of the Vehapar, Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, reminded the gathering that New Jersey is not unfamiliar for His Holiness who was for many years "a spiritual servant, homilist and spokesman here. It was a very unique joy for all of us when Vehapar was elected as the Moderator of the World Council of Churches for a second unprecedented term. Vehapar is a champion in pursuing peace with justice for Armenians and for the world," he stated.

Continued on page 22

Catholicos Aram I Celebrates Pontifical Divine Liturgy at St. Bartholomew's Church

Pontiff Urges Faithful to Follow a Cross-Centered Life

by Florence Avakian

photographs by J. K. Hovhannes

“Bring the cross to the center of our lives, and live out the mystery of the cross. This is the meaning of the Christian faith and the Christian church,” stated Catholicos Aram I of the Great House of Cilicia to more than 700 faithful on Sunday afternoon, October 23. The setting of this Pontifical Divine Liturgy celebrated by His Holiness was the magnificent Romanesque St. Bartholomew's Church in New York with its mosaic dome, jeweled stained glass windows, and soaring columns.

The impressive service began with the Vehapar, hierarchical clergy from various ecumenical Christian churches, and more than two dozen high-ranking clergy and parish priests of the Armenian Church slowly walking in procession down the center aisle, as a combined choir from New York,



A scene of the Congregation.



St. Bartholomew's Church on Park Avenue in New York City was the site of the Pontifical Divine Liturgy on October 23.



Scene from the Liturgy.

New Jersey and Philadelphia soulfully sang the majestic sharagans, *Khorhoort Khorin* and *Hrashapar*. Conducting the choir with expert direction was

the Rev. Father Hrair Nicolian from Montreal, Canada. St. Bartholomew's organist, Paolo Bardignon, masterfully accompanied the choir in the singing of



Scene from the Liturgy.



A combined choir from the metropolitan area was conducted by Rev. Fr. Hrair Nicolian, from Montreal.

the Yegmalian *Badarak*.

In his inspiring sermon, the Catholicos, garbed in brilliant red and gold robes and miter, welcomed the ecumenical clergy calling them "our brothers," and the congregation the "children of God." On this day when the Armenian Church celebrated the discovery of the original cross, His Holiness focused his message on the message of St. Paul to the Corinthians, emphasizing that the cross is the center of life. "But the question for all of us," he said, "is the challenge and message of the cross. The greatest challenge to-

day is the globalized world."

The coming of Christ is the "coming of divine love, and the cross became the supreme manifestation of God's love for humanity, against all kinds of manifestations of power and lies," he declared. "Giving quality to our lives as Christians means to bring the cross to the center of our lives."

Armenian People Survived Through Strength of Cross

Speaking out against anti-Christian values that preach against Christian Armenian values, he stressed that



Vehapar is led out of the church by procession at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy

the Armenian people survived against all enemies through the strength of the cross. "Our journey should be the journey of the cross. This is the journey of triumph. It is the journey of immortal life. All of us as Christians are missionaries. The way of the cross is to transform the mystery and the message of life where Christian values become a sustaining force," he stated with emphasis.

During the Communion, nearly the entire faithful in attendance joined in the sacred act. Due to the very large number of people, Communion was distributed by His Holiness, and the two Prelates of the Eastern and Western United States, Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan and Archbishop Moushegh Mardirosian, as well as other Prelacy clergy in attendance.

At the conclusion of the deeply moving service, the Catholicos, Prelates, ecumenical clergy, and Armenian priests slowly walked out in procession with the choir singing the beloved *Hayrabedagan Maghtank* in honor of His Holiness, as people on both sides of the aisle leaned out to kiss the cross held by the *Vehapar*.

With the ending of the Liturgy the Faithful made their way to the Pierre Hotel where a banquet culminated the day's inspiring activities. ❖

Gala Banquet in Honor of Catholicos Aram I Takes Place in New York

Seven Community Leaders Awarded Medals

by Florence Avakian
photographs by J. K. Hovhanness

On Sunday evening, October 23, a Pontifical Banquet was held in the grand ballroom of the elegant Pierre Hotel in honor of the 10th anniversary of the election and consecration of Catholicos Aram I of the Great House of Cilicia. It was the culmination of His Holiness' visit to the Mid-Atlantic area and followed the Pontifical Divine Liturgy at St. Bartholomew's Church with the participation of the clergy and the faithful of parishes in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania.



A scene from the gala banquet at the Pierre Hotel in New York.

During his four-day stay in the New York metropolitan area, His Holiness officiated at the Badarak at St. Bartholomews Church, presided at the 75th anniversary celebration for the Armenian Theological Seminary in Antelias at Sts. Vartanantz Church in New Jersey, presided over an ecumenical conference at New York's Interchurch Center, and met with national and local legislators. He was welcomed to the area with Hrashapar services at St. Illuminator's Cathedral. Prior to his visit to the Eastern Prelacy, the Catholicos made pontifical visits to the Canadian and Western Prelacies.

Joining His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy, and V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar General, were the following special guests: Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, Prelate of the Western Prelacy; Archbishop Manuel Batakian, Exarch of the Armenian Catholics in the U.S. and Canada; Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC); Rev. Father Untzak Nalbandian representing Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian

Church (Eastern); Rev. Berj Gulleyan, pastor of the Armenian Presbyterian Church, Paramus, NJ; Armenia's Ambassador to the United Nations Armen Martirosyan and Mrs. Martirosyan; Lebanon's Consul General Mohammad El-Harake. Joining the guests on the dais were Jack Mardoian, Esq., chairman of the Prelacy Executive Council; and Steering Committee Chairman Dr. George Dermksian and Mrs. Dermksian.

During the evening seven outstanding individuals received coveted medals from the Cilician Catholicosate,



Jack Mardoian, Esq., chairman of the Executive Council, leads a toast to Vehapar on the 10th anniversary of his enthronement and to the Cilician Seminary's 75 years of service.

including Judge Sarkis Teshoian, Hagop Kouyoumdjian, Iris Papazian, Dr. Dertad Manguikian, Richard Sarajian, Esq., Antranig Boudakian and Harry Koundakjian.

Following the invocation by His Holiness, the able Master of Ceremonies Dr. Dermksian warmly welcomed the more than 350 people present. Jack Mardoian in leading the assembled in a toast to the Vehapar on the 10th anniversary of his enthronement extolled the noble virtues of the Antelias Seminary. "We as youngsters were blessed to be taught by the graduate priests of the Antelias Seminary. The renewal of our church needs a renewed clergy," he said and reminded those present that the main purpose of His Holiness' visits to Canada and the United States was the raising of funds "to make it the highest caliber seminary." To give an insight into the diligent work done for the students, a fascinating video showing the educational, social, and extracurricular life in the Seminary was shown.

Immense Contributions to Ecumenical Movement

Keynote speaker Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, well known as a humanist, scholar, educator and pastor, paid eloquent tribute to the “immense contributions” of Catholicos Aram I to the Ecumenical Movement. He related His Holiness’ special gifts



His Holiness thanks Dr. Samuel Kobia for his insightful keynote address.



His Holiness presents a cross to Dr. George Dermksian, chairman of the steering committee, in appreciation of his leadership in planning the visit to the Eastern Prelacy.



Award winners included, left to right, Antranig Boudakian, Harry Koundakjian, Ardemis and Sarkis Teshoian, Iris Papazian, Dr. Dertad Mangui-kian, Richard Sarajian, Esq., and Hagop Kouyoumdjian (not shown in this photo).

and talents at the WCC 5th assembly in Nairobi in 1975 when he represented his church as a youth delegate, and in subsequent years was elected to leadership positions in the WCC at a very young age. “You have since made a long journey and served many consultative and decision-making bodies,” Dr. Kobia stated, addressing His Holiness. “For more than a decade, and for an unprecedented two terms, you have worked to lead the Council through a period of some instability, turmoil, and challenge. Thanks to your leadership, the Council today enjoys a healthy financial situation, and has managed the organizational changes responsibly and satisfactorily.” He also praised His Holiness’ “profound intellectual” contributions to the ecumenical debate and his standing not just as an Orthodox leader, but also as an “Armenian” Orthodox leader.

“You have never forgotten this, and you have not allowed any of us to forget it either,” Dr. Kobia continued. “For many years, you have generously shared the rich theological, spiritual and cultural heritage of the Armenian people; this small nation that was privileged to receive the Gospel so early, to become the first country in the world to declare Christianity as the official state religion, and to witness faithfully to the Gospel up to the point of becoming the victims of a cruel genocide,” he stated.

“We are grateful, not only because you have taught us the long and painful history of your people, but mainly because you have helped us to draw important ecumenical lessons from it,” he asserted. “I know it is your contention that restorative justice could be the model both for the Armenian genocide and for other crimes against humanity still awaiting justice,” he declared, and pledged that the WCC is fully committed for justice on the issue of the Armenian genocide.

Dr. Kobia concluded by expressing the WCC’s deep appreciation to the Armenian Church for “offering this great son of Armenia and a great world leader” to the Ecumenical Movement. “His Holiness has been the Lord’s special gift to the WCC at a very critical time in the history of the ecumenical movement,” he declared to a standing ovation.

The twenty-one-year-old gifted baritone Suren Hazarian who had opened the special evening with the American and Armenian national anthems, delighted the audience with the *Troubadour’s Song* from the *David Beg* opera, and his rendition of the beloved *Hayastan*. He was accompanied on the piano by Janet Markarian.

Following special greetings from Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan emphasized that the Antelias Seminary is the “home of the Armenian people”. He revealed that 107 priests in the U.S. are graduates of this educational institution. He also paid tribute to His Holiness on the tenth anniversary of his enthronement, and expressed appreciation to the steering committee and local committees that organized the visit.

Service is Source and Basis of our Authority

In his inspiring message, the Catholicos expressed his appreciation to all responsible for preparing his visit. Special thanks were given to Archbishop Oshagan, Dr. Dermksian, Dr. Kobia, and the Lebanese Consul, and Armenian Ambassador.

As a citizen of Lebanon where he was born and raised,

Vehapar related that Armenians have been identified with the spirit, pain and suffering of Lebanon. "After the Genocide, Lebanon became the springboard, for the revitalization and struggle of the Armenian Diaspora," he stated.

He called his relationship with the World Council of Churches, as his "second home and school for his spiritual formation. I have identified my actions with the WCC. It has opened new horizons before me."

Stating his special feelings for Armenia, the Catholicos declared, "We weren't born in Armenia, but Armenia was born and grew up in us. We wanted to see a free, democratic republic, and today it has become a reality. We pledge our support to Armenia."

His Holiness reserved his final appreciation for "our people. You are the church," he said. "We receive our strength, guidance, motivation, and dreams from you. Service is the source and basis of our authority. Don't forget us in your thoughts, your dreams, and your generosity."

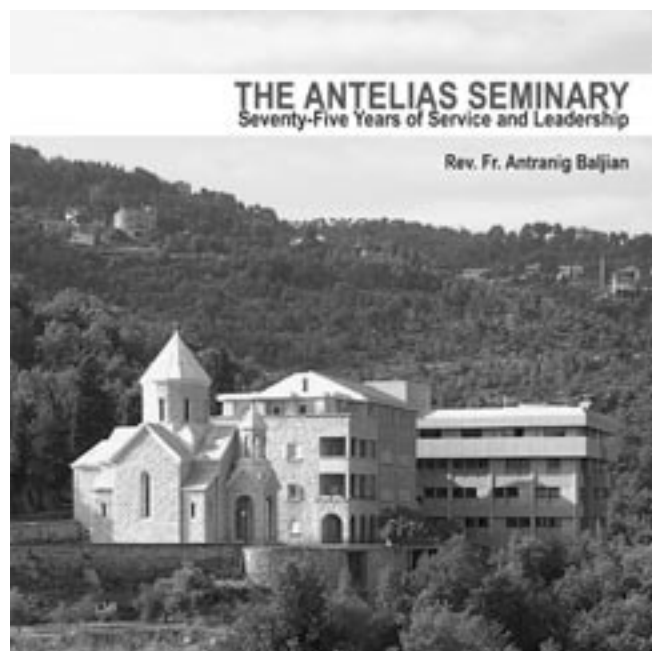
Describing his pride as a graduate of the Seminary, he stressed that it played an instrumental role in the Armenian Church and Diaspora. "It is a living reality in educating and serving our people. Attend, strengthen and glorify our church so you can benefit from it," he stated in conclusion, to thunderous applause.

Awards

Archbishop Oshagan introduced the seven individuals who were honored as His Holiness presented the medals to each with personal words of appreciation. Receiving the Prince of Cilicia medal were Judge Sarkis Teshoian, Hagop Kouyoumdjian and Dr. Dertad Manguikian. Receiving the Knight of Cilicia medal were Antranig Boudakian, Iris Papazian and Richard Sarajian, Esq. Receiving the Mesrob Mashotz medal was Harry Koundakjian.

Commemorative Booklets

Three booklets were distributed to guests including a



His Holiness presents the Prince of Cilicia medal to Hagop Kouyoumdjian.



His Holiness and Archbishop Oshagan with Dr. and Mrs. Dertad and Seta Manguikian who were the grand benefactors of the visit and who spearheaded a successful fundraising campaign to benefit the Seminary.

64-page booklet, *The Antelias Seminary: Seventy-Five Years of Service and Leadership*, written in English by Archpriest Fr. Antranig Baljian, about the Seminary's history and his experiences as a Seminarian; a 76-page booklet, *From Cilicia to Antelias...from Wilderness to Mission...from Orphanage to Seminary*, written in Armenian by Archbishop Khajag Hagopian, Prelate of the Canadian Prelacy, and the Commemorative Booklet, *Toward the Light of Knowledge: A Celebration of Service and Leadership*, dedicated to His Holiness and the tenth anniversary of his Pontificate. ✕



Catholicos Aram I Presides Over Ecumenical Symposium in New York

by Florence Avakian

photographs by J. K. Hovhaness

As the Chairman of the World Council of Churches (WCC) for two unprecedented terms, Catholicos Aram I of the Great House of Cilicia, presided over a gathering of Christian church leaders at the Interchurch Center in New York. The World Council of Churches comprises some 550 million Christians within 347 churches in 100 countries.



His Holiness arrives at The Interchurch Center on Riverside Drive in New York.

The Symposium, whose general theme was “Challenges Facing the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century,” was sponsored by the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, the United States Conference of the World Council of Churches; and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA.

The impressive event began on Saturday morning, October 22, with a moving *Arevakal* (Sunrise) service

led by His Holiness, the two Prelates of the Eastern and Western United States, Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan and Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, and the Vicar General of the Eastern Prelacy the Very Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian. The Sunrise service was followed by a Meditation based on passages from the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the Gospel of St. John, offered by Rev. Professor Robert Wright, of the General Theological Seminary.

Archbishop Oshagan, in a thoughtful introduction to the all-day symposium, sounded the clarion call of the group. “We are sent by God to be peacemakers,” he declared. “There are ethical and moral issues today which we are losing because of material humanism, secularism, widespread poverty, disease, and violence within families and in different countries. These are the challenges of the ecumenical movement. What will be our legacy to humankind?”

Addressing the question of violence, The Rev. Deborah DeWinter, Program Executive of the WCC, as Master of Ceremonies, stated that the WCC is united in fighting against violence and war, and revealed that throughout the world, 20 percent of people die from war and terrorism, 30 percent from relational and domestic violence, and a whopping 50 percent from suicide. “These are startling facts which must be dealt with,” she said.

Rev. Dr. Robert W. Edgar, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, urged “each person in his or her way to do something to heal the brokenness of the planet.” He quoted a memorable phrase of the late Pope John Paul II: “I dream of a world where no one will be so poor that they have nothing to give, and no one will be so rich that there is nothing they can receive.”

The Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, General Secretary of the



Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, presents the keynote address during the symposium.



The challenging presentation by The Rev. Dr. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, General Secretary of the Reformed Church in America, prompted a discussion with His Holiness.



Discussions continued during the luncheon and refreshment breaks.

WCC, tackled the thorny “Challenges Facing the Ecumenical Movement.” Born and raised in a remote area of Kenya, Dr. Kobia has been described by Dr. DeWinter as a “humble pastor to his people, and a brilliant, distinguished diplomat.” Opening his profound message, he described five aspects to be faced in order to shift from stumbles to stepping stones—distinguishing between faith and institutions; taking note of the shifting center of Christian populations from the Middle East to Western Europe, Eastern Europe and presently to Africa, Asia and Latin America; linking with unfamiliar groups such as the Evangelicals; and the changing balance of global Christianity with its shifting economic, social and military resources.

Learn to Listen with Care

He called for “more dialogue as a way of addressing issues. In order to have shared understanding in areas of change, authentic voices speaking to the issues unknown to others should be encouraged,” he stressed. “It is imperative to learn to listen. This is essential to interchurch understanding, and in missionary and social work. We must listen to other’s burdens with a capacity to care. Listen to care with whom you disagree. If you listen, you can care. Then respond with faith, hope and love. This is essential for peacemaking,” he stated with emphasis.

“The Gospel in an age of pluralism should be achieved ecumenically, rather than from church to church. It is important to relate to those of other non-Christian faiths for mutual understanding and the defusing of tensions,” he continued. “Why is it that we fail to provide, so that the youth go and look elsewhere,” he asked. “The emphasis should be on spirituality, not organized religion. To avoid inward, egoistic spirituality, we should encourage *spirituality of engagement* – moving from the self to the community to overcome violence, and build a more just and caring world.”

The Rev. Dr. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, General Secretary of the Reformed Church in America, in addressing the central theme from the perspective of a U.S. church leader, listed the need for several “fresh” forms of expression. “We must face whether the ecumenical movement will be inclusive or protective; visionary or organization dominated; and involved with incremental or profound changes.” He pointed out that women, youth, Pentecostals, Evangelicals,



The Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, Moderator of the U.S. Conference for the World Council of Churches and Ecumenical Officer of the Orthodox Church in America, moderated the panel discussion following the lunch break.

African instituted churches, and partly Catholics have been excluded from the ecumenical movement.

The speaker revealed that 25 percent of Christians throughout the world are Pentecostal, with an astonishing 19 million being added every year, and predicted that in 50 years, there will be one billion Pentecostals. Decrying media reports that all Evangelicals are “right-wing,” he said that this extreme group is only 30 percent of this religion. The reason that these churches are growing at such a dramatic rate is that they provide a sense of cohesion, economic and social assistance to the poor and empowerment, he pointed out. “They are the church of the poor. We need relationships with these churches.”

In conclusion, he urged that “deep” change is needed, which entails “new ways of thinking and behavior. We must discontinue the past, and take risks. We need spiritual vision, not institutional momentum. Of the world’s 2.1 billion Christians, only 25 percent are in the WCC. The daunting problem of the ecumenical movement is *communication*.”

Panel Discussion

A panel discussion on the topic convened after the lunch break under the guidance of the moderator, The Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, Moderator, U.S. Conference for



In his closing reflections, His Holiness acknowledged that the Ecumenical Movement is in search of a new identity.



Armenian clergymen listen intently, left to right: Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, V. Rev. Fr. Shahe Panossian, V. Rev. Fr. Housig Mardirosian (staffbearer to His Holiness), Rev. Fr. Bedros Shetilian, and Deacon Nishan Baljian.

the World Council of Churches and Ecumenical Officer of the Orthodox Church in America. Joining in the discussion were Bishop Thomas Hoyt, President, National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA; Fr. Arthur L. Kennedy, Executive Director, Secretariat for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; and The Rev. Dr. Diane Kessler, Executive Director, Massachusetts Council of Churches.

Thoughtful, and at times provocative, questions from the audience added to the extended discussion that dominated the second half of the Symposium.

Ecumenism must be Inclusive

In his eloquent address to the august assemblage, Catholicos Aram I stated, "The ecumenical commitment is essential for our Christian existence. We cannot live without challenges. Christendom today is in radical change, and we are part of that change. Without challenge, there is no ecumenical movement."

In covering some of the crucial challenges at the present juncture of the ecumenical movement, His Holiness said, "Ecumenism is in search of new identity, self-understanding.



Challenging questions were posed by the audience.

We are living in a broken world. Healing is needed. The church through the ecumenical movement must involve itself in healing, recovering, and discovering.

Institutional ecumenism is stagnation. How can we go beyond this and make it a people-centered reality?" he asked.

"We have to think of those outside the group," he responded. "These groups are developing their own practice of ecumenism. And this has different faces, articulations, and expectations. Today ecumenism has gone beyond individuals and churches. We need mutual listening, understanding and growth." Confessing that he had "some hesitation," about this process at first, he said he now realizes the "legitimacy" of such concepts.

"We have to go beyond interfaith dialogue. This is already happening," he asserted. "Our Christian way of life must be responsive to the concrete realities of our life. We need to elaborate an inclusive ecumenical vision where churches will deepen their particularities, but always with interaction of others. Inclusive doesn't mean you lose your identity. We are an integral part of a broader reality. We must come together in spite of our differences. This is the goal of the ecumenical movement," he concluded to a standing ovation.

A final blessing by His Holiness concluded an informative and intellectually stimulating day of hope and prayer. ❖

Congressional and Local Leaders...

Continued from page 14

Move from Awareness to Bridge Building

In his eloquent address, His Holiness stated, "The Armenian cause is not exclusive to Armenians. It is a human cause for justice, human rights and reconciliation." He recalled the words of President Jimmy Carter that U.S. existence lies in human rights. "This is basic and integral for the U.S. in all of its dimensions and manifestations," he said.

"The Armenian cause is human and sacred," he continued. "We should be committed to all people's human rights and reconciliation. The ANC is doing that, but I propose that you move from awareness to bridge building and include

non-Armenians in the ANC. Armenians are an integral part of the United States. We cannot live in isolation. America is a mosaic of diversity. We need to look at the Armenian cause in this framework. Armenians must bring their contributions through this community building process."

Voicing his expectation that the U.S. Congress will adopt the Genocide resolution, His Holiness stated unequivocally that this is an "important step in order to prevent new genocides." He advocated reconciliation between Armenians and Turks, and declared that the United States "has an instrumental role to play toward this goal." ❖

Catholicos Aram Continues Visit to Eastern Prelacy Washington, Boston and Chicago Receive the Pontiff International Symposium at Harvard Coincides with Visit

by Iris Papazian

Following his four-day visit to the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area, His Holiness continued his journey with visits to Washington, DC, Boston and Chicago. In each of the areas the program basically followed the NY-NJ agenda with 75th anniversary celebrations dominating. Each community also marked the 10th anniversary of the Pontiff's enthronement.

In each community His Holiness attended private receptions and received special guests at his residence/hotel.

Washington, DC

From New York, the first stop of his visit, His Holiness journeyed by car to the Washington, DC area where he was the guest of Dr. and Mrs. Dertad Manguikian, and was welcomed by the Holy Cross Armenian Church community with the traditional Hrashapar service that was followed by the area's 75th anniversary celebration in honor of the Armenian Theological Seminary. Attending were the Armenian Ambassador to the United States, Tatoul Markarian, the representative of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabagh, Vartan Parseghian, representative of sister churches, members of the Executive Council and Board of Trustees, NRA delegates, and the Faithful who had turned out in large numbers.

The 75th anniversary of the Seminary and the 10th anniversary of the pontificate of Aram I followed the Hrashapar service. The pastor, Rev. Fr. Sarkis Aktavoukian, opened the program. He noted that the various anniversaries that were marked in 2005 provided the occasion and opportunity for revival and renewal for our communities.

As in the New York-New Jersey area—as well as the subsequent areas on His Holiness's itinerary—the keynote addresses were delivered by V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian in Armenian and Judge Sarkis Teshoian in English.

Archbishop Oshagan expanded

on the themes offered by the keynote speakers. Specifically, he described the nation-saving leadership provided by the Seminary during some of the darkest and most tragic days experienced by the Armenian people.

The evening ended with the inspiring words offered by the Pontiff. "The Seminary provided hope," he said, "to our hopeless people following the Genocide. It is with new faith that the Seminary continues to serve our people today. Our purpose—without exception—is to serve."

During his short visit to the capital city, Vehapar paid courtesy visits to the ANC office, the Lebanese Embassy, and the Armenian Embassy.

Boston

From Washington His Holiness and entourage journeyed to Boston where on October 26, accompanied by the Prelate, Vicar, Staff bearer, and Judge Sarkis and Mrs. Ardemis Teshoian, and Mr. Zohrab Tazian, he was welcomed at the airport by representatives of St. Stephen Armenian Church,

including the pastor Rev. Fr. Archpriest Antranig Baljian.

His Holiness and entourage were escorted to the Church where they were greeted by the Faithful, many of whom had traveled from various parts of New England. A program dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the Seminary and the 10th anniversary of the election and consecration of Aram I followed the welcoming ceremony.

The program was officially opened by Rev. Fr. Antranig Baljian, followed by Biblical readings offered by Rev. Fr. Hovnan Bozoian. V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian and Judge Sarkis Teshoian delivered the keynote address in Armenian and English, respectively.

As part of the overall program, Ms. Nayiri Baljian read meditations from The Narek, and the choir sang several hymns.

His Holiness concluded the evening with a stirring speech once again focusing on the service provided by the Seminary throughout the Diaspora.



Washington: Vehapar blesses the bread and salt upon his arrival at Sourp Khatch Church, Bethesda, Maryland.



Washington: Dr. and Mrs. Dertad Manguikian with Vehapar. The Manguikians hosted the Catholicos and his entourage during their stay in the Washington DC area. They also hosted a reception at their home in McLean, Virginia, in honor of the Catholicos.



Washington: Vehapar at Sourp Khatch Church in Bethesda, Maryland, surrounded by choir members and altar servers. Also in the photo are Archbishop Oshagan and Rev. Fr. Sarkis Aktavoukian, pastor of Sourp Khatch Church.

Various Visits; Mesrob Mashtots Medal Awarded

At the request of the Prelate and the Executive Council Vehapar presented the Mesrob Mashtots medal to Mrs. Hourri Boyamian, principal of the St. Stephen Armenian Elementary School in Watertown.

His Holiness made visits to offices of the Hairenik Association where he met with editors and staff members. He also paid a visit to St. Stephen El-

ementary School, where he toured the school, interacted with the students, met with teachers, staff, trustees, and parents. The students presented a special program they had prepared in honor of His Holiness after which the school hosted a luncheon for the guests.

During his three-day visit to the Boston area, His Holiness received some guests at his hotel including faculty from the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology, representatives from the Armenian Tree Project; representatives of the Armenian Assembly, and representatives of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation.

International Conference at Harvard

On Friday and Saturday, October 28 and 29 an International Conference dedicated to the 1600th anniversary of the creation of the Armenian alphabet, took place at Harvard University, Cambridge. The conference was sponsored jointly by the Eastern Prelacy and the Mashtots Chair, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies.

The conference, which was partially funded by the Charles and Agnes Kazarian Eternal Foundation, brought together internationally known scholars including: James R. Russell, Harvard University; Michael Stone, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Karen N. Yuzbashyan, Oriental Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, Russia; Aleksan Hakobyan, Institute of Oriental Studies, Erevan, Armenia; Gohar Muradyan, Matenadaran, Erevan, Armenia; Robert W. Thomson, University of Oxford; Abraham Terian, St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, New York, John Huehnergard, Harvard University.

His Holiness attended the opening session on Friday evening. Prior to the session, His Holiness had dinner with the scholars and organizers providing the opportunity to become better acquainted in a quiet and intimate setting.

Professor James Russell, one of the organizers as well as a presenter, opened the conference and introduced Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan who after brief comments introduced His Holiness who delivered the invocation. Professor Timothy Colton, of Harvard's Davis Center for Russian and Iranian Studies, welcomed the guests.

The keynote address, "The Origin and Development of the Armenian Alphabet," was given by Professor Michael E. Stone; Professor Prods Oktor Skjaervo, of Harvard University, spoke about "Iranian Writing System, 5th Century."

At the conclusion of the Friday evening session, His Holiness was invited to address the audience that filled the auditorium to capacity. He offered his insights into the invention of the



Boston: Vehapar and V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian distribute gold crosses to the children.

alphabet and shared his appreciation of the work being done by the scholars in this regard.

The conference continued the next day with seven presentations including: "Armenia in the Age of Mashtots" by Professor Karen Yuzbashyan; "The Timing and Purposes of Mashtots' Journey North (Two 5th Century Versions of the Creation of the Armenian, Iberian, and Albanian Scripts)," by Professor Aleksan Hakobyan; "The Greek Influence on Classical Armenian," by Professor Gohar Muradyan; "Mashtots and the Early Christian Caucasus," by Professor Robert Thomson; "The Structure of Koriwn's Life of Mashtots," by Professor Abraham Terian; "The Early History of the Alphabet," Professor John Huehnergard, and "Mashtots the Magician," by Professor James Russell.

Onward to Chicago

His Holiness arrived in Chicago on Saturday, October 29, the final stop of his nearly two week visit to the Eastern Prelacy. Arriving from a flight from Boston, he and his entourage were greeted at the airport by Archbishop Khajag Hagopian, Prelate of Canada, V. Rev. Fr. Shahe Panossian, chairman of the Eastern Prelacy's Religious Council, Jack Mardoian, Esq., chairman of the Prelacy's Executive Council, Rev. Fr. Zareh Sahakian, pastor of All Saints Armenian Church of Glenview, and representatives of the Board of Trustees and Auxiliary organizations.

The same evening the community joined in welcoming His Holiness at a *Hrashapar* service. Archbishop Oshagan welcomed His Holiness on behalf of the faithful of the Eastern Prelacy. His Holiness directed his message to the faithful with special words for the youth, encouraging them to become participants in the life of the community.

Following the welcoming service, the 75th anniversary of the Armenian Theological Seminary was celebrated with a special program in the church.

The pastor, Rev. Fr. Zareh Sahakian, offered opening remarks. Der Hayr paid tribute to the founding generation whose vision and dedication served our Church the past 75 years throughout the Diaspora.

At the conclusion of prayers, hymns, and recitations the keynote addresses were delivered by V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar of the Prelacy, in Armenian; and the Hon. Judge Sarkis Teshoian, in English. Hayr Sourp and Judge Teshoian served



Boston: All eyes, young and old, are on Vehapar as he joins the youngsters at St. Stephen's School in producing an original and creative piece of art. The principal of the school, Mrs. Houry Boyamian, (second from right) was awarded the Mesrob Mashtots Medal by His Holiness.



Boston: Vehapar with the Festekjian Family. Mr. & Mrs. Raffi and Nina Festekjian hosted a reception at their home in honor of the Catholicos.



Boston: Vehapar and his staff bearer, V. Rev. Fr. Housig Mardirosian, in a discussion with Professor Robert Thomson during the dinner that preceded the opening session of the two-day conference at Harvard University.



Boston: Vehapar joins in a discussion during the conference at Harvard University with, left to right, Professor Michael Stone, Professor James Russell, Archbishop Oshagan.

as the keynote speakers in each of the communities that the Catholicos visited and their complementary presentations were received enthusiastically.

Oshagan Srpazan, speaking as a graduate of the Seminary, glowingly described the Seminary as the forge that “turns lead into gold.”

Utilizing his skills in both Armenian and English, His Holiness spoke about the graduates of the Seminary who were “infused with faith and vision, who served the Armenian people because of the education, breath, spirit and wisdom they received at the Seminary.” His Holiness showed how the Seminary produced leaders for our na-

tion—“People who in different walks of life are united in their service to our church and nation.” His Holiness reminded the audience of the Biblical story about sowing seeds (Matthew 13: 1-23). “Just as in the parable,” he said, “some of the seeds planted by the Seminary fall along the path and the birds come and devour them; others fall on rocky ground, where they do not have much soil. They spring up, but are scorched under the sun; other seeds fall on thorns and the thorns choke them. Some seeds fall on good soil and bring forth fruit. The Seminary is proud of this latter group, perhaps small in number, but big in faith, dedication

and vision. These are the people who glorify the Church, preserve the nation and nourish our culture.

A reception, which included the participation of the Saturday School students, completed the evening.

Pontifical Divine Liturgy

Sunday, October 30 was a special day for the Chicago community and the parish of All Saints Church, where His Holiness officiated over the Divine Liturgy. Assisting the Pontiff at the altar were Archbishops Oshagan and Khajag.

Vehapar’s sermon was based on St. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. “Christ bought us with his blood,” he said. “We became adopted children of God.” His Holiness spoke of our heavenly family and specifically about the dialogue between father and children. His Holiness elaborated on three important points: Responsibility, Accountability, and Participation.

“We have a responsibility toward the creations of God; we are accountable to God for our deeds and way of life; and it is not enough to feel responsible and be accountable. We must also participate in God’s work,” His Holiness said.

Gala Banquet

A gala banquet in honor of the 10th anniversary of the election and consecration of His Holiness Aram I, took place Sunday evening with more than 400 in attendance.

Mr. Artin Deirmenjian guided the program that included words of welcome from Rev. Fr. Zareh Sahakian and comments by Jack Mardoian, chairman of the Executive Council, who touched on some of the points in Vehapar’s sermon delivered earlier in the day—specifically on responsibility and accountability. He then focused on the work accomplishment by Catholicos Aram during the first 10 years of his pontificate and reaffirmed the Eastern Prelacy’s allegiance to the Holy See of Cilicia.

Archbishop Khajag, Prelate of Canada, spoke about the visits made by His Holiness during the past month and a half and the great advances realized during the last ten years by the Catholicosate of Cilicia.

Archbishop Oshagan spoke vividly about the impact His Holiness has made in ecumenical circles—impressions that he said, “Will remain



Chicago: Vehapar delivering his sermon to the faithful of All Saints Church.

for many years in the memory of the Armenian faithful and high level ecumenical leaders. Vehapar's collective thoughts, the programs he initiated and organized, and the steps he took have opened new horizons for our church, our people, and for our Holy See."

Making note of the large numbers of the younger generations in attendance, His Holiness delivered most of his message in English. His primary focus included the needs of the growing community in North America; the necessity of renewal in the thinking and working of our institutions; the need for the church to rededicate herself to the primary mission of its faith; and the imperative for our community to come out of its narrow perimeters. "Our communities must not be isolated," he said. "While maintaining their identity and uniqueness they must become a part of American society."

During his stay in Chicago, His Holiness had the opportunity to visit with individuals and groups, including the chairman of the ANC of Chicago; the pastor and representatives of the Armenian Protestant community of Chicago; the Pastor and Board of Trustees of All Saints Armenian Church, and other community leaders.

With Chicago, the Catholicos's visit to the three prelaties of North America came to an end, and he was escorted to the airport where he and his staff bearer boarded a plane bound for Zurich and then to the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia in Lebanon. ❖



Chicago: Vehapar under the pontifical canopy is escorted into All Saints Church.



Chicago: A scene during the Divine Liturgy at All Saints Church in Illinois.



Chicago: Vehapar with Dr. & Mrs. Sam Akmakjian and family. The Akmakjians hosted a reception in honor of the Catholicos.

We are grateful to the following supporters who have generously contributed on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Armenian Theological Seminary. Thank You!

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\$500 - \$750

Mr. and Mrs. John Aftandilian, Dr. and Mrs. Mihran Artinian, Dr. and Mrs. Vicken Babikian, Dr. and Mrs. Jirair P. Balikian, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Barsamian, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Bedrosian, Honorable & Mrs. David A. Erickson, Dr. and Mrs. Nishan Goudsouzian, Mr. and Mrs. Astor M. Guzelian, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Guzelian, Mr. and Mrs. Asadour H. Hadjian, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Hajian, Mr. and Mrs. William Ishkanian, Dr. and Mrs. Norayr Khatcheressian, Ms. Rose Krikorian, Mr. and Mrs. Zareh Maserejian, Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Sagharian, Mr. and Mrs. George P. Semerjian, Mr. and Mrs. Rouben Surenian, Dr. Andrew J. Tashjian, Mr. and Mrs. Raffi Yeghiayan

Guzelian Family Fund

On the occasion of Vehapar's visit to the Boston area, the Guzelian Family announced a donation to the Prelacy Endowment Fund for the creation of the Guzelian Fund that will provide scholarships for English language studies for ordained clergy and clergy candidates.

\$100 - \$450

Dr. and Mrs. Hratch H. Abrahamian, Mr. and Mrs. Aram Andonian, The Ararat Foundation, Dr. and Mrs. Haroutune K. Armenian, Armenian Renaissance Association, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph G. Audi, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Azarian, Ms. Araxie Babikian, Hripsime & Zohrab Badrikian, Rev. Fr. and Yn. Gomidas Baghsarian, Dr. and Mrs. Walter Bandazian, Aram Bedrosian Funeral Home, Rev. Fr. and Yn. Antranig Baljian, Mr. and Mrs. John Bejakian, Dr. and Mrs. George Bezirgian, Mr. and Mrs. Krikor Bogharian, Rev. Fr. Hovnan Bozoian, Dr. Ara A. Chalian, Mrs. Armine Dedekian, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Delcore, Mr. and Mrs. Ara Demurjian, Mr. and Mrs. Suren Der Avedisian, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Devlin, Mr. Richard Dilbarian, Mr. and Mrs. Hagop Dirilen, Mr. and Mrs. John Doursounian, Mr. and Mrs. Mego Essajanian, Mr. and Mrs. Stepan Fronjian, Giragosian Funeral Home, Mr. and Mrs. Garabed A. Grehian, Dr. and Mrs. Sombat Grigorian, Zabelle Hajian Azablar, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Halebian, Ms. Tamar Harutunian, Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church (Massachusetts), Mr. and Mrs. Vartkes Jamgochian, Ms. Karen Melina Jehanian, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Jelalian, Mr. and Mrs. Hrant Jilozian, Mrs. Anna Kayaloff, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Kanarian, Ms. Vartoug G. Karadolian, Mr. and Mrs. John Karnikyan, Mr. Kenneth Kazanjian, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. John W. Kchikian, Mr. and Mrs. Antranig Keomurjian, Mr. and Mrs. Artin Khajadorian, Mr. and Mrs. Aram Khatchadourian, Mr. and Mrs. Arsen Kozelian, Mr. and Mrs. Yervant Krafian, Mr. and Mrs. Raffi Manjikian, Mrs. Sona Manjikian, Dr. and Mrs. John S. Manuelian, Mr. and Mrs. Vartkes V. Mardirossian, Mr. and Mrs. Hovsep Melkeshian, Mr. Vartkes Mengouchian, Mr. and Mrs. Leon Merjanian & Family, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Najarian, Sr., Mr. and Mrs. Nishan Najarian, Mr. Robert Najarian, Mrs. Pauline Nakashian, Mr. and Mrs. Missak Ourfalian, Ms. Margaret Papazian, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Piligian, Dr. and Mrs. Vicken Poochikian, Mr. and Mrs. John Sarian, Mr. George Setian, Mr.

and Mrs. George Shahnasarian, Mrs. Mary Sheshedian, Mrs. Anne A. Shirinian-Orlando, Mr. and Mrs. Berj Tashjian, Mr. Kegham K. Tazian, Mr. and Mrs. K. Yervant Terzian, Mrs. Araxy Toomajanian, Ms. Virginia Tourigian, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Tutunjian, Mr. and Mrs. Hagop Vanerian, Mr. and Mrs. Melkon Yessaillian, Dr. and Mrs. Raffi Zohrabian

\$10 - \$75

Mr. and Mrs. Yenovk Ajoyan, Mrs. Starrie Alemian, Mr. and Mrs. Ron Antriasian, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Apelian, Ms. Rose Aprahamian, Mr. and Mrs. Karnik B. Arakelyan, Ms. Margaret K. Armenian, Mr. and Mrs. Vasken F. Arpajian, Mr. Malcolm O. Asadoorian, Mrs. Queenie Aykanian, Mrs. Virginia Azizian, Mr. and Mrs. Dickran Babigian, Mr. and Mrs. Ghazar Baghdassarian, Mr. Serco Bakamjian, Diramayr Rose & Barbara Baljian, Mr. and Mrs. Krikor Boghosian, Mr. and Mrs. Ara M. Chakarian, Dr. and Mrs. Antranig K. Chalabian, Ms. Arpy S. Coherian, Mr. and Mrs. Chris Costner, Ms. Rose Dadoorian, Mr. and Mrs. Boghos Daoudian, Mr. and Mrs. Baghdasar Derderian, Mr. Albert H. Donigian, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Dulgarian, Mr. and Mrs. George Elanjian, Christine J. Engustian, Esq., Ms. Dorothy Esperian, Mrs. Marian Felegian, Mrs. Arpine Fereshetian, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Steven Garabadian, Mr. and Mrs. Edouard Garabedian, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Guzelian, Sr., Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hagopian, Mr. Christopher Hajian, Mr. and Mrs. Hagop Hakissian, Mr. and Mrs. Antranig Hamparian, Mr. and Mrs. John Haroian, Mr. and Mrs. Shant J. Harootunian, Mr. Ralph Hashoian, Mr. and Mrs. Hagop & Zabel Hatem, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hoosian, Mrs. Claire Hovsepian, Mr. and Mrs. Varastad Janikian, Mr. and Mrs. Haig Jeghelian, Mr. and Mrs. Ashod Jelalian, Ms. Ann Jevizian, Mr. and Mrs. Artin Kaprielian, Mr. Raffi Karakashian, Mr. and Mrs. Armen Knaian, Mr. and Mrs. George Kouyoumjian, Mr. and Mrs. Ara Krafian, Ms. Lori Krikorian, Mrs. Pearl La Rosa, Mr. and Mrs. Garo Lachinian, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Manoogian, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Masoian, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Megerdichian, Mr. and Mrs. Vazken Melkisetian, Mr. and Mrs. Nazareth Melkonian, Mrs. Margaret Merlesena, Mr. and Mrs. William J. Mesrobian, Mr. and Mrs. George Misakian, Mr. Barkey Mossoian, Mrs. Anita Mouradian Granger, Mr. and Mrs. Vrege Najarian, Mrs. Araxy Nigoghossian, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ouligian, Ms. Victoria Ouligian, Mr. and Mrs. Asbed Papakhian, Mrs. Julie K. Postoian, Mr. and Mrs. Sarkis Sarkisian, Ms. Anahid A. Sarkissian, Mr. and Mrs. Hartoun Saroukhanian, Dr. and Mrs. Levon A. Saryan, Mr. and Mrs. Vartan Seraderian, Mr. and Mrs. George K. Shamlian, Miss Maritza Shamlian, Mrs. Mary Soorikian, Mr. and Mrs. Artine Tanielian, Mrs. Anahid Jafargian Terlemezian, Miss Anahid Y. Thomassian, Ms. Elizabeth Vartanian, Mrs. Veronica Walker, Mrs. Joyce Yeremian, Mr. and Mrs. Garbis Zerdelian

Majarian Trust Benefits Seminary

During the visit of Catholicos Aram I, the Eastern Prelacy Endowment Fund announced the creation of a new trust fund to benefit the Seminary.

The fund was made through a bequest made to the Prelacy Endowment Fund by the late Mrs. Lucin Majarian. Known as "The Lucine Majarian Revocable Trust," the income from the Fund will provide scholarships for students attending the Armenian Theological Seminary in Antelias.

Donations listed are as of January 1, 2006

If there are any errors or omissions please contact the Prelacy office, 212-689-7810.

Obituary

Archpriest Sahag Vertanessian



Archpriest Sahag Vertanessian
1919—2005

His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, the Clergy, and Executive Council of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, announce with sorrow the passing of Archpriest Father Sahag Vertanessian on Friday, December 23, 2005, in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Der Sahag was born in Port Said, Egypt, in 1919. He was ordained on November 3, 1963, in St. Asdvadzadzin Church in Whitinsville, Massachusetts.

Since his ordination he has served St. Asdvadzadzin Church in Whitinsville, All Saints Church in Chicago, St. Gregory Church in North Andover, Massachusetts, and Sourp Khatch Church in Washington, D.C., until his retirement.

The Extreme Unction and Funeral Services took place on Wednesday, December 28 at St. Gregory Church in Indian Orchard, Massachusetts, under the presidency of the Prelate, Archbishop Oshagan.

On this sad occasion we extend heartfelt sympathy to Yerezgeen, his children, and all family members.

May his memory remain blessed.

Religious and Executive Councils
Armenian Apostolic Church of America
Eastern United States of America

Editor's Note: When Der Sahag retired in 1990, the St. Gregory parish of North Andover, Massachusetts, gave him a retirement tribute. Here are some excerpts from the farewell address Der Hayr made that evening and at the National Representative Assembly sixteen years ago. Der Sahag was a frequent contributor to Outreach during the 1980s.

"For reasons of my age and health, I wish to dedicate my remaining time to my children and grandchildren. I don't know how my life approached the brink of its destination. I know that most of my wishes and dreams were not realized. I feel like someone who has awakened from a deep sleep. Yet, I am happy that I have contributed my modest share, working hard in the field of national/religious grounds for the benefit of our church and humanity."

"In my sermons and speeches, I have often repeated the idea that Armenians living in America are indeed fortunate to become exposed to such profound liberties and privileges. It has been a real source of joy to witness a rebirth and revival of our Armenian nation all over the world, but particularly in these United States."

"The Armenian community needs the help of each and everyone of you in order to be able to keep the Armenian tra-

ditions and our rich heritage alive. Yes, keep your Christian faith alive, hope for the better, be kind towards each other, and try to live a decent, harmonious and meaningful life."

"The clock cannot be turned back. A new generation is out there waiting to succeed me with a new spirit of self-awareness and faith. It is not time to close the doors of a church, but to open a new period of renaissance and fulfillment."

"A life without religion leads to no destination. It has no future. Let us be worthy sons and daughters of that nation of Mount Ararat, who for more than 2,000 years did not lose its identity, its faith, and most importantly, its national dignity."

"I thank God for giving me the health and incentive to serve the church and nation. I am glad that I was born Armenian, baptized a Christian, educated in the seminary and serving the people."

"May God bless the Armenian people in Armenia and those who are dispersed all over the world. May God grant health, strength and wisdom to our Vehapars, so that they may lead our people as one nation." ✠



Archbishop Oshagan eulogizes the life and deeds of Archpriest Sahag Vertanessian during funeral services in Indian Orchard, Massachusetts.

Deacon Krikor Lakissian Ordained to the Holy Order of Priesthood in New York

Renamed Mesrob in Honor of 1600th Anniversary of Alphabet and in Memory of Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian

by Iris Papazian

Photographs by Hrair Hawk Khatcherian

The New York metropolitan community came out in large numbers to witness a ceremony that takes place only occasionally in the United States—the ordination of an individual to the holy order of priesthood in the Armenian Church.

St. Illuminator's Cathedral in New York City was filled with the Faithful, some traveling thousands of miles, to witness and celebrate this ceremony on the weekend of November 19 and 20, 2005. The candidate was Deacon Krikor Lakissian of New York. The ordaining bishop was His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America. The sponsoring priest was V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar of the Prelacy, and the Godfather was Richard Sarajian, Esq.

Service of Calling

In accordance with the canons of the Armenian Church the "Service of Calling" to the priesthood began Saturday evening immediately after the Vespers service. During this service the candidate's life, faith and readiness to enter the glorious, but demanding, ministry of the priesthood was examined by the Prelate.

Deacon Krikor, on his knees, was led from the narthex of the Cathedral to the sanctuary and was presented to the Prelate by V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, the vicar of the Prelacy and the candidate's sponsoring priest.

The Archbishop questioned Father Tanielian regarding the candidate's willingness and spiritual maturity to enter the priesthood. Once this was established, the Archbishop turned to the candidate and asked whether he anathemizes and rejects the teachings

of the heretics, to which the candidate responded in the affirmative. The candidate was then asked if he is a student and follower of the holy fathers of the church, namely, the champions of the orthodox faith such as St. Gregory the Illuminator, St. Athanasius, St. Basil the Great, Sts. Sahag and Mesrob, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Ephraim the Syrian, St. John Chrysostom, St. John of Otzoon, St. Gregory of Datev, and all the fathers of the Ecumenical Councils of Nicea, Constantinople, and Ephesus. To which Deacon Krikor replied, "I am their disciple and follower." Then at the command of the Archbishop, the candidate recited the Orthodox faith of the Armenian Apostolic Church (a creed attributed to St. Gregory of Datev, which is a more elaborate creed than the Nicene Creed recited during the Divine Liturgy). Making the sign of the cross over the candidate's head, Srpazan Hayr prayed that the Lord would tenderly protect, with blessings fortify and with grace illuminate his mind, his senses, his heart, his thoughts, his words and deeds, his coming and going. The service of calling ended with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Other clergy participating in the Saturday evening service included: V. Rev. Fr. Vahan Hovhannessian, V. Rev. Fr. Shahe Panossian, V. Rev. Fr. Bartev Gulumian, V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Garabedian, Archpriest Moushegh Der Kaloustian, Archpriest Arshag Daghlarian, Rev. Fr. Nerses Manoogian, Rev. Fr. Bedros Shetilian, and Rev. Fr. Nareg Terterian.

Ordination and Consecration

The next morning, Sunday, November 20, the Cathedral was again filled. The Divine Liturgy began with



Archbishop Oshagan anoints Father Mesrob's palms with Holy Chrism with the assistance of Very Rev. Father Anoushavan Tanielian.

the Episcopal procession and continued until *Zi Voghormadz*, right before the scriptural readings. As the Prelate took his place on the Episcopal throne, Deacon Krikor, walking on his knees was brought before the Archbishop with psalmody and hymns, escorted by the sponsoring priest. After one final inquiry regarding the candidate's qualifications for the priesthood, the Prelate placed his hands on the candidate's head and prayed that the candidate 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, to call upon the Holy Spirit to accomplish the Holy Sacraments."

At the end of this powerful prayer,

Archbishop Oshagan, taking the stole from Deacon Krikor'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 Archbishop.

After a lengthy prayer, Deacon Krikor was given the vestments of his office, one piece at a time, accompanied with prayers. While he was being vested, the choir sang *Khorhoort Khorheen* (O Mystery Profound). Fully vested, the candidate was now ready to be anointed and receive his ordained name—the moment everyone was awaiting. "Blessed and anointed and cleansed be the forehead of the priest Der... Mesrob...." With these words Archbishop Os-

hagan 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. Der Mesrob turned towards the faithful and gave his first blessing saying, *Khaghaghoutioun Amenetzoun* (Peace to all). Thus, the ordination ceremony concluded.

Prelate's Sermon

In his sermon, Archbishop Oshagan spoke about service and love. "The heavens are happy today," he said, "because Der Mesrob has pledged to give his life to Christ. Since his youthful years he has followed the way of our Lord. He came to the United States to serve the Prelacy and today we have ordained him to serve as a shepherd to our people."

Addressing the newly ordained priest His Eminence said, "Dear Der Hayr, the cross is not suffering. The cross is the complete picture of Christ. When we carry the cross with complete love and dedication it is not a burden."

His primary advice to Der Mesrob was to love the Church and the Faithful. "If I have one word of advice to you, it is to love God and those you serve and to follow Christ. What does it mean to follow Christ? It means to be Christ-like in all aspects of life."

Archbishop Oshagan spoke about his choice of the name Mesrob for the new priest. "In our history the first recorded name of Mesrob belonged to a *Vartabed*. A clergyman who heard the call of God and followed Him and through his divine invention gave to our people the words of the Bible. He gave our people identity. This year is the 1600th anniversary of the Armenian alphabet, and for that reason we felt it appropriate to choose the name Mesrob. We hope as you begin your service you will always bring to your mind the work and deeds of that *Vartabed*."

The Prelate continued: "We also selected the name Mesrob in honor of His Eminence Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian

who served our Prelacy for many years with distinction." Again addressing Der Mesrob, the Prelate said: "He showed you how a clergyman should live. You saw his work, his dedication to the Armenian Church and the caring attention

he gave the people. On this happy occasion I pray that you become Christ-like and be a righteous servant of the Armenian Church. May our Lord bless you with a long and healthy life."

The Liturgy resumed with the "Kiss of Peace." The clergy exchanged the kiss of peace with their newly ordained brother by embracing him and kissing his anointed forehead and hands.

At the end of the Liturgy, the congregation was invited to come forward and greet Der Mesrob, kiss his anointed forehead and receive his blessings. With

the help of his Godfather, Richard Sarajian, the Holy Muron was washed from his forehead and hands.

Other clergy participating in the service on Sunday included V. Rev. Fr. Bartevo Gulumian, former dean of the Seminary in Antelias, V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Garabedian, Archpriest Moushegh Der Kaloustian, and Archpriest Arshag Daghljian.

Reception after Service

A reception took place in Pashalian Hall immediately after the ceremony where everyone had the opportunity to congratulate Der Mesrob, Yerezgeen, and Diramayr.

An elaborate table had been prepared by the Cathedral's Ladies Guild, which the Prelate blessed and invited all to partake.

Archbishop Oshagan again presented the newly ordained priest, emphasizing some of the points in his sermon. "I chose the name Mesrob," said the Prelate, "in honor of the 1600th anniversary of the invention of the Armenian alphabet which we are celebrating this year, and also in honor of the blessed memory of Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian, who served as Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy for two decades. It was primarily during his tenure that our new priest served the Prelacy. He grew up under his tutelage."

Der Mesrob expressed his deep thanks to Archbishop Oshagan for his fatherly guidance, to Hayr Anoushavan his sponsoring priest and teacher, and to his Godfather on this occasion, Richard Sarajian, Esq.

He spoke emotionally about the two clergymen who had great influence on him during his formative years in the Seminary and beyond, namely His Holiness Karekin II, during his pontificate as Catholicos of Cilicia, and Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian. "Neither one is with us today," he said, "but I believe they are watching us from their heavenly home."

Continued on page 34



Godfather Richard Sarajian, Esq., helps wash the Holy Chrism from Father Mesrob's hands while Diramayr Iskuihi Lakissian looks on.



News from the Catholicosate

Catholicos Aram Continues Dialogue with Youth

His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, recently issued a third "Dialogue with the Youth," a series which he started last year. His most recent message, dated January 6, is entitled "Jesus Christ: The Liberator."

His Holiness said:

This year, in my Pontifical Christmas Message to our people I focused on the theme of liberation. I would like, in the context of this dialogue, to share some of my reflections with our youth.

The concept of liberation is at the heart of the Holy Bible. The Old Testament is the history of the expectation of the Messiah, and the New Testament the history of the coming of the Messiah. However, the people of the Old Testament believe that the Messiah would come to liberate them from slavery, and restore their political kingdom in Jerusalem; while in the New Testament the Son of God comes to liberate all of humanity from the slavery of sin and establish God's kingdom in the world.

The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem is, therefore, the enfolding of God's gift of liberation. Jesus perceives His earthly mission essentially as one of liberation. Hence, it is not by accident that Christ embarks on His mission by reading that chapter from the prophet Isaiah where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19). It is significant that after reading this passage Jesus affirms that "Today this scripture is fulfilled" (Luke 4:21). We must look at the Christ-event from this perspective, and grasp the very meaning and implications of Christ's miracles, parables and teachings in light of God's engagement to liberate humanity. Salvation, which is the core of the New Testament, means liberation. Adam and Eve were expelled from paradise because of their sin. The purpose of Christ's mission was to liberate human beings by restoring to them God's fallen image and making them the adopted children of God. Christ would achieve the liberation of human beings by His cross.

As we turn once again to Bethlehem, let us greet in the incarnate Son of God our true liberator; a liberator who has made history; a liberator who is always ready to liberate each of us from our own slavery today. Christ is Emmanuel, which means God-with-us.

Christ is with us to liberate each of us from our own self. Our self can be our greatest enemy, for, by concentrating on our own self, we enslave ourselves. Because God is both the cause of our existence and the purpose of our life, we have no right to live our lives according to our own desires and designs. A self-centered life rejects God. By living a God-centered life, we will live life properly. As a person, as part of a family, and as a member of a community, we must live our life with a sense of responsibility and accountability.

Christ is with us to liberate each of us from the slavery of law. As an instrument of organizing and governing society, law can liberate. However, it can also enslave. Law which enslaves is

a source of evil. Referring to the codified religious laws of the old dispensation, the Apostle says: "We have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code" (Romans 7:6). With His blood, Christ saved us from the captivity of the old law. Law that liberates is sustained by moral and human values and promotes justice, peace and freedom. For Christianity, freedom is an essential ingredient of law; it is a God given gift to humanity. But we are called to use the freedom responsibly.

Christ is with us to liberate each of us from the slavery of material wealth. Spiritual and moral values constitute God's image in human beings. Present societies, however, are dominated by material values and are governed by materialistic purposes and interests. As Christians we must not allow material values to be at the center of our life, impacting our way of life and our decisions. Spiritual and moral values promote the basic principles that are at the heart of our human existence and that help us to lead a purpose-driven life.

Christ is with us to liberate each of us from the slavery of evil. Evil surrounds us and seizes any opportunity to approach us. When Christ was approached by evil, His response was firm: "Away from me, Satan! For it is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only" (Matthew 4:10). Wearing different faces and using different names, evil constantly approaches us. Liberated by Christ, we have the courage to reject evil, which may be attractive in appearance but destructive in essence. To strengthen ourselves, we must worship only Christ, our liberator.

Christ is with us to liberate each of us from the slavery of death. According to the Bible, death is not only the cessation of physical existence; it is also the absence of God and the dominion of sin. God so loved the world and humanity that He sent His only begotten Son to liberate us from the bondage of sin, as the Evangelist states (John 3:16). The Christ-event is God's offer of "abundant" life to humanity. We are invaded in our daily life with the kinds of trends and tendencies, with the sort of ways of life and patterns of thought that make us the captives of fear and insecurity. Christ conquered death by His cross and gave us new life.

We are living in a world full of uncertainties and anxieties. Let us remind ourselves that the Child of Bethlehem is with us, as we carry on our combat of faith and hope. Let us not forget the words of Saint Paul, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4:9), because Christ is and will remain our Liberator.

To read the Catholicos's three messages to the youth go to the Prelacy web page www.armenianprelacy.org

Second CD on Armenian Language Computer Course Now Available

The Catholicosate of Cilicia and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation recently released the second CD of "Arevig," an Armenian language computer course.

The second CD of the course includes essential grammar lessons for the 4th, 5th, and 7th grades, was recently published by the Catholicosate in partnership with the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. This volume presents the lithography of the well-known city of Akoulis. The cultural history of Akoulis is well documented in this volume of 316 pages with 523 photographs and 715 lithographic inscriptions.

Archives of Catholicosate to Undergo Organization

At the invitation of His Holiness Aram I, the director of the Armenian government's department of archives, Amadouni Virabian, and Professor Samuel Mouradian of Yerevan State University came to Antelias last week to examine the Catholicosate's new archival store room. The two experts examined the facilities as well as the contents and established a proposal for the organization of the archives, which will begin in the spring.

The archives contain important documents related to the history of the Armenian Church and nation, which through the initiative of His Holiness will be housed in an area built specifically for this purpose utilizing the latest technology.

Oriental Orthodox Churches in Middle East Issue Common Declaration

The heads of the Oriental Orthodox Churches in the Middle East participated in their 8th meeting at St. Ephrem Monastery, in Damascus in December. Attending the meeting were His Holiness Pope Shenouda III of the Coptic Church; His Holiness Patriarch Zakka I of the Syrian Church; and His Holiness Catholicos Aram I, of the Armenian Church. At the conclusion of their meeting they issued a Common Declaration concerning faith in evangelism, diakonia, Christian education, theological formation and youth activities as genuine expressions of life and witness of their churches. Issues related to theological dialogues and ecumenical collaboration on global and regional levels, as well as issues on human rights, social justice, peace and inter-faith relations were highlighted. The next meeting of the three church leaders is scheduled to take place in Antelias, Lebanon in November 2006.

Representatives of Russian, Coptic, and Syrian Churches Visit Antelias

His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, received representatives from the Russian, Coptic and Syrian Churches this week for theological dialogues held in Antelias. His Holiness welcomed the guests, stressing the importance of continuing the dialogue initiated 20 years ago between the Orthodox non-Chalcedonic and the Oriental Orthodox Chalcedonic Churches. His Holiness, who originally played an important role in establishing the dialogue, said that communication was essential within the framework of the pan-Orthodox theological relations. Bishop Nareg Alemezian, Ecumenical Officer, and Bishop Shahan Sarkissian, Prelate of the Diocese of Aleppo, participated on behalf of the Catholicosate.

Catholicos Aram Calls for Recognition of Armenian Genocide during Visit to Kuwait

There was considerable press during Catholicos Aram's recent visit to Kuwait, especially about comments made by His Holiness during a press conference that Turkey and the international community should recognize the Armenian Genocide.

The Turkish embassy in Kuwait issued a press release expressing its "rage and protest to the fictitious, one-sided, outrageous and untrue views of Catholicos Aram I."

During the press conference Catholicos Aram stated

that the Armenian Genocide is not an issue of religion, but a matter of human rights and justice. He had expressed his expectations that the Arab and Islamic worlds officially recognize the historic fact of the Armenian Genocide as a crime against humanity.

Catholic Church and WCC Assess 40 Years of Collaboration

"The Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches (WCC) could address issues of common concern together with a united voice to meet the expectations of people in a world of uncertainties and tensions," said His Holiness Aram I, WCC Central Committee Moderator during the opening of the consultation meetings on the renewal of the ecumenical movement in the 21st century and the future role of a joint consultative group between the two bodies. ✠

Ordination of Dn. Lakissian

(Continued from page 32)

Krikor Lakissian was born in Anjar, Lebanon, with ancestral roots in Musa Dagh. He entered the Armenian Theological Seminary in Antelias in 1983 and graduated in 1990. He was sent to the United States in August 1991 to serve in the offices of the Eastern Prelacy. During this time he attended Queens College to further his English education. At the Prelacy he served in a number of capacities, including for many years as the manager of the Bookstore.

He has served as a Deacon at the Cathedral for nearly 15 years. He has been a teacher of Armenian language, history and religion at St. Sarkis Saturday School and St. Illuminator's Day School. For the past three years he has served as the principal of the Siamanto Academy in New York. He is married to Ojen Baberian and they have a daughter, Taleen.

In 2001 he was recognized and honored by Governor George Pataki of New York for "dedicated service" and in recognition of the vital role he played in "promoting the needs of New York's Armenian American community." The commendation praised him for his extraordinary efforts "on behalf of the youth, through his service at Saturday, Sunday and Day schools."

Forty Day Seclusion

In accordance with the tradition of the Armenian Church, Der Mesrob spent his forty day retreat at Sts. Vartanantz Church in Ridgefield, New Jersey, under the supervision of his sponsoring priest, V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, and V. Rev. Fr. Shahe Panossian, pastor of Sts. Vartanantz Church.

He officiated at his first Divine Liturgy on Sunday, December 25, at St. Illuminator's Cathedral in New York City. ✠

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].

Requiem Service on Second Anniversary Of Passing of Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian

Archbishop Oshagan officiated at the Divine Liturgy and Requiem Service marking the second anniversary of the passing of Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian on December 11, at St. Illuminator's Cathedral in New York.

The late Archbishop, who served as Prelate of the Eastern United States and Canada from 1978 to 1998, died on December 2, 2003, while visiting New York.

In his sermon, Archbishop Oshagan remembered the gifted Archbishop who was completely devoted to the Armenian church and nation. Archbishop Oshagan recalled how the late Archbishop would push himself beyond his physical capability, determined to do as much as he could to help the Armenian people.

Prelate's Christmas Reception

V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Garabedian leads the traditional home blessing



ceremony at the annual Christmas reception/open house hosted by Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan. From left to right: Rev. Fr. Mesrob Lakissian, who was ordained in November; Rev. Fr. Nareg Terterian, pastor of St. Sarkis Church, Douglaston, NY; Archbishop Oshagan; Hayr Daniel; V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar General; V. Rev. Fr. Shahe Panossian, Chairman of the Religious Council and pastor of Sts. Vartanantz Church, Ridgefield, NJ; Ambassador Armen Martirosyan, Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations; and Movses Abelian, United Nations Secretary of Administrative and Budgetary Committee for Program Coordination. Many of the

faithful from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania attended. (Photo by Harry Koundakjian)

AREC Annual Seminar in Granite City

The Armenian Religious Education Council (AREC) sponsored a day-long seminar at St. Gregory the Illuminator



Scene from the Seminar

Armenian Church in Granite City, Illinois, at the invitation of Rev. Fr. Serop Azarian, Pastor, and the Board of Trustees, in October. The Church was the main topic of the seminar, which was conducted by Dn. Shant Kazanjian, Director of AREC, and Drs. Cornelia Horn and Robert Phenix of St. Louis University. Dn. Kazanjian spoke about "The Church in the New Testament," and Dr. Horn and Dr. Phenix focused their presentation on the notion of the Church during the early patristic period up to the 5th century.

"Datev" Seed Planted in Midwest

Thirty teens from four Midwest parishes gathered at the Techny Towers Conference and Retreat Center in Illinois, for the first Midwest mini-Datev Program, in November. Sponsored by the Armenian Religious Education Council (AREC), the weekend program aimed to offer youth in the Midwest a taste of the highly acclaimed St. Gregory of Datev Institute Christian Studies Program (popularly known as "Datev") held annually in Pennsylvania during the first week of July.

The students participated in a typical daily schedule of the Datev Summer Program plus more. Six to seven hours of interactive educational presentations, open discussions and Bible studies, morning and evening worship

services, and afternoon social activities filled the day. The weekend program culminated with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy at All Saints Armenian Church in Glenview, Illinois.

The program received excellent evaluations from the students as well as their parents. You know the seed of the Datev Program has been planted when one of the participants asks, "Can I register for the Summer Datev Program now?" Many others expressed similar enthusiasm to attend the week-long "Datev" Summer Program.

V. Rev. Fr. Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar General, and Dn. Shant Kazanjian, AREC Director, conducted the weekend program. Their presentations focused on Armenian Christian essentials—from the emergence of Christianity in Armenia, to the Holy Scriptures, Bible studies, cycle of feasts and celebrations, to the Holy Mysteries. As guests lecturers, Dn. Dr. Levon Saryan from St. Hagop Church (Racine, WI) spoke about the distinctive Christian features of Armenian currency; Dn. Stepan Frounjan, a professional musician, presented liturgical musical instruction and entertainment enjoyed by all, and Dn. Dr. Arsen Mekaelian prepared and presented a short video about the Datev Program, highlighting its three main objectives: instruction and education, prayer and worship; and friendship and fellowship.

St. Gregory Church in Philadelphia Begins Drive for Expansion and Renovation

One hundred twenty-five enthusiastic parishioners attended a reception on October 30 at St. Gregory the Illuminator Church in Philadelphia to kick-off the fundraising for the church's expansion and renovation project. Under the banner of "Growing our Church, Strengthening our Faith," the kick-off realized \$260,000 in donations and pledges thanks to the generosity of parishioners and community members.

Rev. Fr. Nerses Manoogian, pastor, encouraged the attendees to "write a new chapter in our history." The overall project of expansion and renovation will cost \$1.2 million. Der Hayr told the gathering, "We believe in the mission

of this church, and we will do our best to perpetuate that mission."

Jirair Hovnanian, the keynote speaker, proudly noted that he has been a member of St. Gregory's for 57 years. He compared the current task of raising \$1.2 million with the much more challenging project of building the current church complex in the 1960s, when funds were scarce and the congregation less established. "If you are interested in making this happen, you have to roll up your sleeves," he said. Mr. Hovnanian encouraged everyone to "get involved and be committed."

Prelacy Joins Effort to Support Youth With Tufenkian Foundation

The Prelacy is co-sponsoring the Tufenkian Foundation's new scholarship program for gifted and talented youth in Nagorno-Karabagh. Called *Daghantavor Yeridasartner* (Talented Youth), the program has been developed in conjunction with the NKR Ministry of Education and already supports more than 20 young talented students in the fields of sports, education, fine arts, and the performing arts.

Begun this year, the program provides higher education and professional development for youth who show potential to make major contributions in their respective fields. The Prelacy's annual sponsorship of \$5,000 will be devoted to expanding this effort which is sustained, both morally and financially, by the Tufenkian Foundation's Stepanakert office.

St. Stephen's Church Marks 80th Anniversary

Parishioners of St. Stephen Armenian Church of Hartford/New Britain marked their church's 80th anniversary in October. His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan officiated at the Divine Liturgy, which was followed by a banquet in honor of the second oldest church in the Eastern Prelacy (the first is St. Illuminator's Cathedral in New York City).

Archbishop Oshagan joined the parishioners in welcoming guests which included New Britain Mayor Timothy Stewart, Core Bishop George Aaron, pastor of St. Thomas Assyrian Church in New Britain; and Stephanie Kwasniewski, a Peace Corps volunteer who served in Armenia.

Rev. Fr. Archpriest Krikoris Keshishian, pastor, and board members Suzanne Midinian, Lucy Horenian, Arpi Emirzian, Nancy Karangekis, Dr. Ara Bagdasarian, Elaine Haghverdian, Steven Surabian, and Lt. Col. George Rustigian planned the milestone event.

25th Anniversary of Holy Trinity Church



Maral Firkatian Wozniak recites in Armenian after being presented with the Prelacy Youth Leadership Award by Archbishop Oshagan. Seated at the head table, left to right: Core Bishop George Aaron, pastor of St. Thomas Assyrian Church; the Honorable Timothy Stewart, Mayor of New Britain; Oshagan Srpazan; Yeretzgeen Arshaluys Keshishian; Mrs. Stephanie Kwasniewski, former Peace Corps volunteer to Armenia.

The Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church community of Worcester, Massachusetts, celebrated the 25th anniversary of the church's consecration at its present Grove Street location and the 71st anniversary of the establishment of the parish in September. The day began with the Divine Liturgy celebrated by His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan. During the Liturgy the Prelate ordained Shaheen Adelinia, Nicholas Greenhalgh, and Marcus Helie to the rank of acolytes.

The banquet following the Liturgy took place at the Crowne Plaza, with Richard Greenhalgh serving as Master of Ceremonies.

The sixteen Godfathers at the consecration of the church were recognized and presented a Bible on behalf of the Church. Presentations were made by Srpazan and the pastor, Rev. Fr. Dr. Khatchadour Boghossian to those present or members of their families. The Godfathers were: Mr. & Mrs. Aram Arvanigian, Mr. & Mrs. Gary Arvanigian, Mr. Richard Asadoorian, Mr. Jack Avakian, Mr. & Mrs. Jacob A. Hagopian, Mr. & Mrs. Sarkis "Jack" Kachadoorian, Mr. & Mrs. Edward Kooyomjian, Mr. & Mrs. James Markarian, Mr. David Melkonian, Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Melkonian, Mr. Moushegh Oviaan, Mr. & Mrs. Antranig Sahagian, Mr. & Mrs. Moses Sarkisian, Mr. & Mrs. Leo Siroonian, and the Honorable & Mrs. Sarkis Teshoian. Special recognition was made to the late Garabed "Gaidzag" Danielian, a benefactor of the church.

Archbishop Oshagan was the keynote speaker. He conveyed his message of congratulations to the Worcester

community and recalled that he was present twenty-five years ago, as a young Vartabed, participating in the consecration of the church.

Sunday School Students in North Andover Learn about Giving and Receiving



Fourth grade students at the Parthum School with their teacher Lisa Apovian with some of the books they received from the Sunday school students in North Andover.

Sunday School students at St. Gregory Church in North Andover, Massachusetts, learned the joy of giving last year. When Sunday school teacher Mary Mooradian learned that the fourth grade students of the Parthum School needed books, she decided this would be a good project for her Sunday school students.

"Every year the Sunday school has a project to teach them about charity. It shows them that they can't just take from the world, they have to also give," she said.

In a short time more than 600 books were collected and eight large cartons were delivered to the Parthum School, where according to teacher Lisa Apovian, many of the children don't have access to book. Each fourth grader was permitted to select a few books to take home. The hundreds of remaining books are kept in the classroom, accessible to all.

Arkady Ghugasian Visits Prelacy

Arkady Ghugasian, President of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabagh, visited the Prelacy office on November 15. The President was accompanied by Kevork Toroyan, chairman of the Board of Directors of Armenian Fund USA, and Ms. Nayira Melkumyan, chairman of "Hayastan" All-Armenian Fund.

Community leaders joined Archbishop Oshagan in welcoming the President who spoke about the current situation in Karabagh, the steps being taken to make life easier and more desirable for the citizens, and the Thanksgiving telethon. ❖

Prelacy Calendar of Events

February 17—Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan will lecture on issues related to the translation of the Armenian Bible. The lecture is organized by Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society of New York and will take place at the Armenian Center, 69-23 47th Ave., Woodside, NY.

February 20-22—Annual Ghevontiantz Clergy Conference. Clergy of the Eastern and Canadian Prelacies will meet at Sourp Khatch Church, 4906 Flint Drive, Bethesda, Maryland 20816.

February 26—Musical Armenia at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, New York City, 2 pm. Featured artists ZULAL A CAPPELLA TRIO (Teni Apelian, Yeraz Markarian and Anais Tekerian) and DUO MAESTOSO (Gianeh and Ovanes Arakelyan). For tickets and information contact the Prelacy office, 212-689-7810.

March 17-19—Sunday School Teachers' Conference at the Wonderland Conference and Retreat Center in Sharon, Massachusetts.

March 17—Exhibition of the works of artist Emma Gregoryan at the Prelacy, 138 E. 39th Street, New York City.

March 28—School Festival sponsored by the Armenian National Education Committee (ANEC) at Sts. Vartanantz Church, 461 Bergen Blvd., Ridgefield, New Jersey. For information: anec@armenianprelacy.org

May 5—Reunion of all students beginning from the 1930s who attended St. Illuminator Armenian School in New York. Terrace on the Park, Corona, New York. For information, 718-478-4073.

May 8—Annual Mothers' Day Luncheon by Prelacy Ladies Guild. St. Regis, New York City.

May 18-19-20—National Representative Assembly hosted by Sts. Vartanantz Church, Ridgefield, New Jersey.

July 2-9—St. Gregory of Datev Institute 20th Summer Christian Studies Program at St. Mary of Providence Center, Elverson, Pennsylvania.

Siamanto Academy meets **every Saturday** at the Armenian Center, 69-23 47th Avenue, Woodside, New York, 11:00 am to 2:30 pm. The college-accredited Academy offers Armenian language, history and Christian studies classes for high school students. For information the Armenian National Education Committee (ANEC), anec@armenianprelacy.org

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