

JUNE 12, 1985

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE WITH PHOTO

for hymne - BEMA, etc.

Same for Oct + re-word
w/ Turk.

JH

Richard Abajian of Franklin Lakes and E. George ("Dabby") Dabagian of Fair Lawn have accepted an invitation by the Primate to share the chairmanship of the New Jersey region in a new campaign for the Archbishop's Fund.

The aim of the Archbishop's Fund is to invest the principal of the campaign funds collected in the Armenian Church Endowment Fund, and allocate the interest to the major Diocesan programs, particularly the Language Labs, the Department of Religious Education and the Armenian Church Youth organization, both Seniors and Juniors. The New Jersey region goal for the Archbishop's Fund is \$1 million over a period of five years.

The overall plan is to divide the country into five or six regions, with a separate campaign for each. New Jersey will kick off the drive. Frank A. Stoneson, director of finance for the Diocese, is working on a five-year plan or projection for the major Diocesan programs mentioned, in both the New Jersey region and the other regions to be designated.

His Eminence, Archbishop Torkom Manougian, the Primate, was present at a dinner meeting very recently when Dabagian and Abajian were discussing strategy and kick-off plans with Frank Stoneson. ~~The Primate deplored the popular misconception about endowment funds. "People don't contribute to an endowment fund," he said. "They give to a cause, whether it is religious or cultural, whether it's Armenian language education or religious education. Then the money goes into the endowment fund. Saperan Hayr's logic was~~

(MORE)

~~clear and certainly applicable to the contemplated drive.~~

The co-chairmen of the New Jersey region of the Archbishop's Fund campaign, Messrs. ~~Mr.~~ Dabagian and Abajian, are hardly strangers to the community. Actually, it happened that I had not met Richard until recently. His mother, Haghine Abajian, a survivor from Sepastia, figured prominently in the recent Genocide commemorative events, giving testimony at the Diocesan symposium and receiving on behalf of the Diocese an April 24 proclamation from the hand of Mayor Koch.

The Abajians, I learned, were the donors of Abajian Hall in the St. Leon Church Community Center. Richard and his brother, Vincent, will celebrate this year the 25th anniversary of Electro-Nucleonics, a corporation in Fairfield, N.J. which they founded, and which is prominent in the health care equipment field. Richard is secretary-treasurer and Vincent the board chairman. (He also serves on the board of St. Nersess Seminary.)

Richard, a native Jerseyan, and his wife, Marge, have two daughters: Barrie, an NYU graduate this month with a B.S. in business and finance, and Lori, a student at Gettysburg College also majoring in business.

E. George Dabagian is also a self-made businessman, founder and president of the Jersey Printing Co. in Paterson. A former trustee of the Diocese, "Dabby" is on the Board of the ACEF and of the Seminary. The history of St. Leon Church might have been very different if Dabagian and his wife, Lucy, had not dedicated themselves to the institution since young adulthood.

(MORE)

Dabagian was chairman of the construction of St. Leon's present edifice, and finance chairman of the cultural hall. These posts came after he had gained years of experience and authority as parish council chairman and in many other jobs at St. Leon. The Dabagian children are Richard ("Rick"), who is vice-president of Jersey Printing; Donna Philibosian and Linda Galgan.

A writer's aim in furnishing background in this case is to prove that the N.J. region campaign for the Archbishop's Fund is in good hands. I enjoyed watching the interaction of the men as they animatedly discussed things like team captains and procedures with Frank Stineson. The Primate listened mostly but when he made a comment, it was incisive, stripping the verbiage away to leave the meaning clear. Information and progress reports will be issued as the Archbishop's Fund campaign in New Jersey gets under way.

ANNIE DIKIJIAN