

George Armenian Church and Cultural Center Building Fund, 15119 Wellman Lane, Houston, TX 77060, tele: 713 448-9686. Donations are tax deductible. A pledge may be paid over a three-year period, in a schedule of your choice. The categories of the donors are:

GUARANTOR	\$	> 50,000
BENEFACTOR	\$	10,000 - 50,000
PATRON	\$	5,000 - 10,000
SPONSOR	\$	2,500 - 5,000
SUPPORTER	\$	0 - 2,500

We urge you strongly to please support this most important and worthwhile effort for the Glory of God and for the perpetuation of the work started by the Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew.

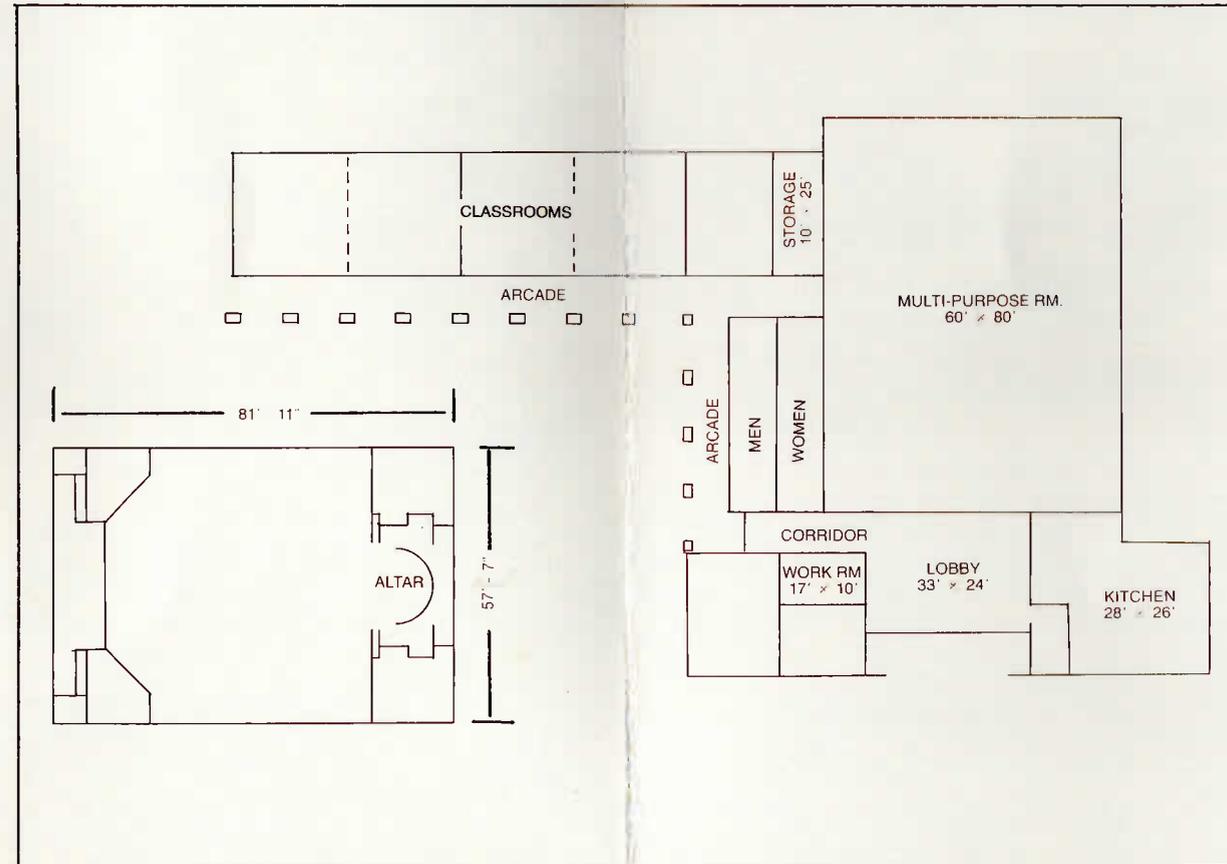
## The New Church

St. George Armenian Church is patterned after St. Hripsimé, one of the oldest and most impressive churches in Christendom. St. Hripsimé, which presently stands in the town of Etchmiadzin in Armenia, was built in 618 A.D. It combines all of the architectural features of traditional Armenian churches.

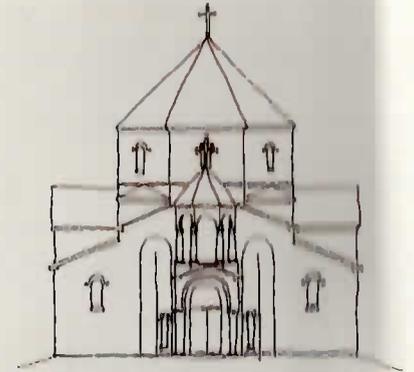
St. George Armenian Church retains these classical features. The entrance to the Church features the original concept of the bell tower. The interior reveals the soaring pillars that support the roof. The Church is topped with a "compet" or conical dome—a classical design which originated with the ancient Armenian master builders and craftsmen. The church will seat 275 people, and when completed will be one of the premier architectural gems of Houston.

The hall of the Cultural Center is spacious enough to seat 350 people. The Center will also have a modern kitchen, conference room and an office for the par-

ish priest. Eight classrooms adjoin the hall. The entire complex will be of brick and will complement the architecture of the church.



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**ST. GEORGE  
 ARMENIAN CHURCH  
 &  
 CULTURAL CENTER**



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COME LET US BUILD TOGETHER

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## The Church In Armenia

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The Church of Armenia was founded by two of the twelve apostles of Christ, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, who preached in Armenia between 35-60 A.D.

In 301 A.D., Christianity was proclaimed as the national state religion of Armenia—the first state to do so in the history of Christianity. This was accomplished mostly through the efforts of St. Gregory, also known as “Loossavoritch” or “Enlightener” of Armenia. Notable among his many other achievements was the building of the first Christian Cathedral near Mount Ararat. This Cathedral, the seat of the Catholicos of all Armenians, stands at Holy Etchmiadzin to this day.

In 405 A.D., St. Mesrop-Mashtotz with the encouragement of the Catholicos, St. Sahak, developed the Armenian alphabet. This single act provided the cornerstone around which Armenian religious and national identity developed and flourished.

Unfortunately, the location of the Armenian Homeland at the crossroads of the Near East presented a perpetual threat. Never being numerous or strong enough to ward off the hosts of invaders, Armenians were constantly forced to fight for their faith and nation. Over the centuries, the search for religious and personal freedom resulted in the emigration of Armenians. Sustaining their faith and shepherding them through these difficult periods has been the Armenian Church. Its Christian teachings, its educational breath and stirring liturgy have and will continue to be the rock upon which Armenian communities, throughout the world, rests.



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## Armenians In Texas

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The first Armenians who came to the United States in the 1830's were students. Larger immigrations began in the 1880's and the first Armenian Church in the United States was built in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1889. The first Armenian families came to Texas in 1882 and in 1895 settling in Fort Bend and Waller County—in Pattison and Brookshire. While the majority of these Armenians in the United States settled in industrial cities, these first Texas Armenian settlers engaged in farming and various forms of business enterprises. Subsequently, a few additional Armenian families came to Texas in the 1920's, late 1940's and early 1950's; but it is during the past 15 years that the greatest influx has accrued.

In 1957, there were enough scattered Armenians throughout Greater Houston that a group of women formed the first Armenian organization, the Armenian Women Organization of Houston. In 1963 a Missionary Church was formed and a Parish Council appointed by the Archbishop of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. Property was purchased in 1965 and a building on the grounds consecrated as the St. George Armenian Church and Cultural Center. As the Armenian population grew, so did the strength of the Church. As a result, the local parish was assigned its first priest in 1977. That same year the original property was sold and a 3.6 acre site on Synott Road, off Westheimer, was purchased. Plans for a new complex were developed and it is upon this new property that the first Armenian Church and Cultural Center in Texas will be constructed.

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## Why A Church In Texas

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Originally the word "church" did not imply a building. It applied to the people who came together to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. As the "church" grew, places of worship were needed. A church is, after all, a house which shelters a family. The people of a parish are a family. There is such a family of Armenian Christians in Houston, and the time has now come to build a place of worship, education and cultural heritage. Presently, the congregation is meeting in temporary quarters. When completed, the new church, community hall and classrooms will be the first Armenian Center in the Southwest. This will serve as a focal point for the spiritual and cultural needs of approximately 250 Armenian families now living in the Greater Houston area, as well as those of Armenians throughout Texas and the Southwest.

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## What Can You Do?

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You can help make the new St. George Armenian Church and Cultural Center a reality. The entire project is estimated to cost \$1.2 million. The intent is to build the Church and Cultural Center as soon as possible. Approximately \$500,000 has already been raised or pledged. Another \$700,000 is needed to make this act of faith become a reality. With God's help, construction on at least one of the buildings will begin this year. Only through your donation or pledge can the construction be completed.

All donations should be made to the St.