

June 5, 1996

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Dear 3~

The St. Leon Armenian Church of Fair Lawn, New Jersey, requested the Diocesan Council's consent to expand the Church sanctuary: a new Narthex, widening of the sanctuary with the addition of a dome, and expansion of the office area, with a contract value of expansion in the amount of \$480,000. (see enclosed letter)

At the December 15, 1995 meeting of the Diocesan Council the request was presented and approved unanimously.

In accordance with Article 75, sec. C. the members of the Board of Trustees shall have the duty to:

"Sell, convey, lease, improve. exchange...property belonging to the Diocese of the Armenian Church, in such a manner and upon such terms to be determined by the Diocesan Council..."

Please indicate your position regarding the Diocesan Council's decision and return the enclosed form to our office so that we may notify the parish.

With prayers,

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
Primate

Enclosures

Renovation of Sanctuary by St. Leon Armenian Church of Fair Lawn, NJ

_____ **I approve of the Diocesan Council's decision.**

_____ **I do not approve of the Diocesan Council's decision.**

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

1996 Diocesan Board of Trustees

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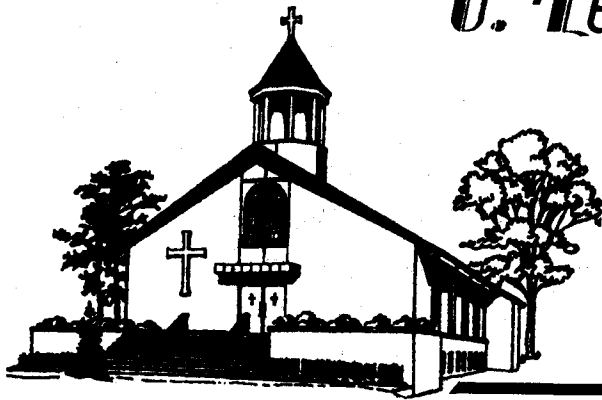
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Հ. Վահան Վրդ. Յովհաննէսեան, Հոգեւոր Հովիւ
V. Rev. Vahan Hovhanessian, Pastor

December 13, 1995

His Eminence
Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate
Diocese of the Armenian Church
New York

Your Eminence:

In response to your inquiry of December 13, 1995, wherein Your Eminence requested verification of the approval of the expansion program at St. Leon Armenian Church in 1988, please be advised that we have reviewed all our files that are available to us at this time and cannot find any correspondence with the Diocese related to this matter.

Our parish has proceeded with the expansion on the assumption that prior approval had been received from the Diocesan Council in 1988, when the project was first proposed. This was based on verbal communication of previous parish council members and members of the 1988 building committee. The present administration, unfortunately, could not verify whether this is true or not since our offices and files are in total disarray due to the explosion of the furnace in the basement of our Church, which caused also serious damages to our offices. We relied on the Parish Assembly minutes recorded in the Annual Reports of 1989 and of 1991. Both reports were submitted to the Diocese.

St. Leon's expansion program was first approved by our Parish Assembly in 1988, see attached Assembly minutes, with the condition that the project could only proceed after pledges for 75% of the cost of the project was received. This project was stopped shortly thereafter because of the earthquake and other problems in Armenia. The parish decided to postpone the project and direct our financial and human resources to help our sisters and brothers in Armenia. It is conceivable that because of this abrupt stop and of the impact of the disaster in Armenia, that the previous administration forgot to send the letter to the Diocesan Council. In 1993, the Parish Assembly confirmed the restarting of

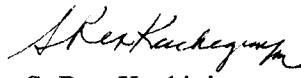
the expansion program with the same financial guarantees as approved in 1988. The Parish Assembly selected Sarkis Gabrellian and Sarkis Soutanian as co-Chairmen of the expansion committee.

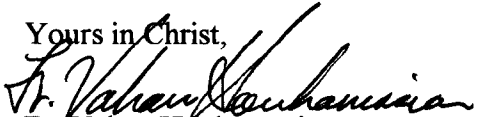
A contract has been signed and work is proceeding on the addition to our offices, the enlargement of the Narthex, the widening of the sanctuary with the addition of an Armenian Dome. Repair work related to the explosion will be tied in with the expansion. Construction is expected to be completed in April of 1996.

The contract value of the expansion is \$480,000.00 and we have received commitments in excess of the 75% as required by the Parish Assembly approval. We expect to have commitments in excess of the total cost when the project is completed. This project will place no undue financial burden on our Parish or treasury.

We assure Your Eminence, that our proceeding on this project without Diocesan Council approval, was not done with any disrespect to the authority of the Diocese or knowingly in violation of the By-laws of our Diocese.

May the Savior of the world, whose birth we will soon celebrate, grant us all His peace, and a New Year filled with health, happiness and success. Asking for your blessings, we remain,


S. Rex Kachigian
Parish Council Chairman

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Vahan Hovhanessian

FVH/mam