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St. James Armenian Church

VERY REV. FR. OSHAGAN GULGULIAN
PASTOR

834 Pepper Avenue Richmond, Virginia 23226 - 804-282-3818

PASTOR'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY 1990

By the grace of God, once again, we were able to complete yet another productive and successful year at St. James Armenian church of Richmond, Virginia.

To the best of my knowledge and recollection, I hereby present my annual report to the members of the St. James Armenian Apostolic church of Richmond, Virginia.

First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity and thank God for giving me strength and courage, with reasonably good health and motivation to bear witness to God's living word. Bring God's healing ministry to the ill, the solace of the Holy spirit to the bereaved families, hope to the despaired, peace and comfort to the despondent and restless.

GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Parish Council:- I would like to thank all Parish Council members of the church who throughout the entire year made great sacrifices to attend the Parish Council meetings, organize successful activities and wisely appropriated the church funds for the glory of God and betterment of our church and community. For more details, please see the annual report of the Parish Council. My special thanks to Mr. Samuel Baronian, Jr., Chairman of the Parish Council and also to the former Parish Council Chairman, Mr. Bedros Bandazian, who with great patience and wisdom was able to govern the Parish Council Meetings, and along with his colleagues contributed to the success of our church.

Altar helpers:- My special thanks to Deacon Asadour Antreassian, and Sub-deacon Krikor Garbedian, who assisted me in performing all the holy sacraments of the Armenian Apostolic Church and in all the special services that we had in our church on special occasions and feast days throughout the entire year. Also to all the Altar boys who served me at the Altar. I Especially, commend the spirit of harmony in which they served at the holy Alter of God.

Church Choir:- My special thanks to Robert Thomas, Choir Director who came every Sunday to conduct the church choir. Yeretzgin Manoogian, who played the organ relentlessly. I highly commend their devotion to serve in the House of God.

Special thanks to all the church choir members who came to sing Badarak at the beginning. I hope the remaining the church Choir Members who can't quite make it to be in church on time would made a special effort in this coming year to be in church on time. I am sure that Robert Thomas and Yeretgin would appreciate their efforts to be in church at the start of the services too.

Also, special thanks to all those who were in charge of the Altar flowers and the preparation of the mass before Badarak.

Church Organizations:- My special thanks to all church organization, old and new, for their input and cooperation and hard work. In reviewing their annual activities and financial reports, one can only congratulate them and admire their dedication to the church. May the good Lord bless you all and give you much strength and good health for the coming year.

Altar Beautification:- My special thanks to Lilly Thomas and Astghig Sahhar who took the duties and responsibilities of cleaning and preparing the new Altar clothes. My thanks to them who regularly washed and ironed the white robes that I wear for Badarak.

Secretarial and mailing:- My gratitude to Mrs. Virginia Greene, my secretary who worked hard and long hours relentlessly during all church publications, periodicals and announcements and kept me aware of my appointments and my calendar.

SACRAMENTS

Badaraks:- During 1990, I was able to celebrate Divine Liturgy at least every Sunday of the year except on a few occasions when I was away or on duty.

Special Services:- During the past year, we did schedule church services during Lent Season and Special Feast Days. However, I am not happy to report that the attendance to these church services were very poor. I must to remind you that as Armenians we have different church calendar than other church denominations, therefore, in order to preserve our identity and learn more about our faith, church and heritage we must keep the interest alive and make an extra effort to attend church services especially on these special days. We also celebrated the service of the Presentation of The Lord to the Temple (Diarentarach).

I am optimistic that in the coming year we will improve in this area.

Baptisms:- During 1990, I have performed six (6) baptisms and Chrismation. One baptism in Maryland, and I assisted one baptism in the Lebanese Church in Richmond.

Weddings:- During 1990, I performed two (2) wedding services, in total, one of which was in Maryland and the other was in Richmond Episcopalian Church.

Funerals:- During 1990, I performed (5) five funeral services at St. James Armenian Church.

To my report will be attached all the names of the above services.

MEETING AND INITIATIVES

Board Meetings:- For the records, I would like to state that during the past I presided over 12 Parish Council meetings, about (24) Ladies Guild Executive and General Meetings , ACYOA meetings, Sunday and Armenian School meetings. We organized one PTA meeting however, only three (3) mothers showed interest. We held two other special meetings one for April 24 Committee and one for Victims of Karabagh.

Home Visitation:- During the past year, I managed to make home visitation. Some repeated visitation and some first-time visitation. Some at special occasions and family gatherings and sometimes just informal socializing. Most of my visitation were prearranged by the families that I visited. I would like to continue to keep it in that way. I would appreciate it if you would get in touch with me and make arrangements that would help me keep some order in my every day schedule.

Home and Cemetery Blessings:- During the past Christmas and Easter I have blessed homes and cemeteries. I will be glad if you will let me know ahead of time if you want to bless your home and your relatives graves.

Hospital Visitation:- Bringing God's healing ministry to the ill and to patients is one of my most cherished Pastoral duties. During last year I have done numerous hospital visitation. I love visiting the hospitals and talking to the patients. It gives me a sense of spiritual accomplishments. Therefore, I ask you to let me know as soon as possible if you hear of anyone who is in the hospital, so that I can be able to bring God's healing ministry to the sick.

Armenian Adult Language Program:- We were able to start the past year the Armenian Adult Language class on Monday evening, I took the responsibility to teach the Armenian Language to the adults. There were (12) Twelve adults at the beginning of the program.

ORGANIZING

During the past year, with the blessing of Almighty God, cooperation with the Parish Council and youth of our Community, we were able to reorganize the Armenian Church Youth Organization of American, Richmond Chapter.

During the past year I was able to supervise our Church choir rehearsals and organize the Choir Committee.

Organized Archives room and work room area. Sent letters to area youth for ACYOA reorganization and also sent letters to all Armenian newspapers and magazine's in the U.S. and Canada to increase our library service. Travelled to Durham, North Carolina to speak to their Armenian Group to organize a new community. With the help of Parish Council, we organized three (3) educational lectures, two with Dr. George Bournoutian and one with Mr. Hemayag Bedeian from Armenia. Participated in Vartanantz celebration organized by the Knights of Vartan of Richmond, Virginia.

DIOCESAN AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

As the acting Pastor of St. James Armenian Apostolic Church of Richmond, Virginia, and member of the Eastern Diocese Clergy, I was invited to participated in the Diocesan and Regional activities and programs, but I was not able to attend most of the Diocesan activities since I am so far from the New York area.

1- Attended the 50th Anniversary of Archbishop Torkom Manoogian Ordination (January). I was representing the Richmond Armenian Community.

2- The Diocesan Assembly and of the Clergy, Parish Councils, delegates officers and chairpersons of all church organizations which was held in Worcester Massachusetts, and where we elected the new Primate of our Diocese, His Eminence Bishop Khajag Barsamian.

3- ACYOA Sports Weekend in Cleveland, Ohio.

4- AACCA Convention Bayside, NY where I was elected to the Choir Central Council as an Advisor.

5- Attended the welcome ceremony of Bishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate from Armenian after his ordination as a Bishop of our Diocese by His Holiness Vasken I, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of all Armenians.

6- Participated in Armenian Life March program in Washington, D.C. in February.

7- Participated in the April 24 March in Washington, D.C.

8- A trip to Washington, D.C. to meet Primate of Karabagh Bishop Barkev Mardirossian.

ECUMENICAL FORUM

During 1990, I participated in Ecumenical Meetings and activities representing Armenian Apostolic Church, be that on local or regional levels.

Some of the major events were:-

1- Celebrating Ecumenical prayer service and lecture at St. James Armenian Church honoring the victims of Karabagh.

2- Attended and participated in CROP Walk Planning Committee.

3- Participated in the Joint Thanksgiving Service at 7th Street Christian Church.

4- Several semi-private meetings with the Greek Orthodox Church Pastor Father Dombalis.

POLITICAL FORUM

I was interviewed by WWBT Channel 12 concerning the Armenian interest in the Bush/Gorbachov Summit.

SPECIAL EVENTS

1. Preparing a requiem and other booklets.
2. Participated in the ACYOA Halloween Party with a large turnout.
3. Participated during the Thanksgiving ACYOA's first appreciation Dinner Dance which turned out to be very successful.
4. Also took place two (2) New Year's Eve festive parties.
5. During the month of December, celebrated the Madagh, which was dedicated to the our Church's name.
6. Collaborated with Medical Outreach for Armenians and with the help of Dr. Nancy Avakian met with Medical College of Virginia (MCV) Doctors and Dentists to bring children from Armenia to the U.S. for those who need open-heart surgery. The first of whom turned out to be very successful and the patient has already returned to NY on their way back home.

OTHER

Besides all my above mentioned activities and duties, I attended the Union Theological Seminary, also a Seminar at the University of Richmond, and at present I am attending Virginia Commonwealth University.

NEW INITIATIVES

I would like to continue this new year with the same and new activities and I would like to improve the social activities and also try one more time to restart the Golden Age Group of our community. I have some special ideas for the children.

I also would like to increase attendance to the church, and church membership, and also the social activities.

During this coming year I would like to prepare and print new religious books, which will be handy and educational to the new generation. It will be in English/Armenian, Classical Armenian and translated.

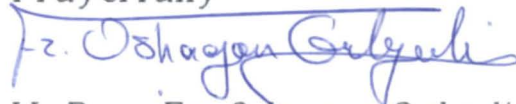
Organized new educational events and inviting new speakers from out-of-town.

To build a new bookstore inside the existing building.

All these improvements and aims will become true and real only with your help and your cooperation. And I ask God to give me health, wisdom and strength to make all my dreams true with His Blessings.

Thank you for listening to me and I am now ready to hear your questions and comments.

Prayerfully



V. Rev. Fr. Oshagan Gulgolian
Acting Pastor

1990

BAPTISM

Bryan Garabedian
Erin Melikian
Djerek Kayzkian Rowe
Kathleen Keeton
Caroline Baronian
Cody Studer
Lesly Hagopian (Maryland)

WEEDINGS

Chuck Ashjian (assisted)
Ara Hagopian (Maryland)

FUNERALS

Antranig Akseraylian
Mariam Shahinian
Haik Eramian
John Ashjian
Dr. William Bickers