

To: His Grace Archbishop Khajag Barsamian  
From: The Representatives of the Ann Arbor Armenian Religious  
Community  
Re: Status of the Ann Arbor Armenian Community  
Date: April 30, 1993

The purpose of this letter is to provide a formal reporting of the activities of the Ann Arbor Armenian Community to Your Grace and to extend an offer to meet with the representatives of the Ann Arbor Community during Your upcoming May visit to Michigan.

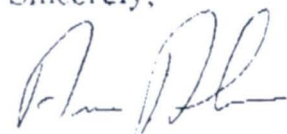
During the past year Ann Arbor Armenian community members gathered, informally at first, to discuss the community's spiritual needs. After prayerful consideration it was democratically decided that we wanted to work towards the creation of an Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church here. In September of 1992 Armen Asherian, John Kazanjian, Steven Mangigian, and John Merigian were chosen as a council to represent the group.

In November the four of us met with Fr. Paren to discuss the desires of the community. We expressed our desire to have regular services in Ann Arbor. To make sure that our activity were well within the teachings of the Armenian Church we submit ourselves to the authority of the Church by way of Fr. Paren's spiritual authority as pastor of St. John's. Fr. Paren enthusiastically endorsed the project, recognized the four of us as representatives, and provided liturgical robes. He indicated that he would present our desires to both Your Grace and to the St. John's Parish Council. Fr. Paren had also hoped to visit our community once a month to provide Holy Communion, however he later informed us that it was not possible.

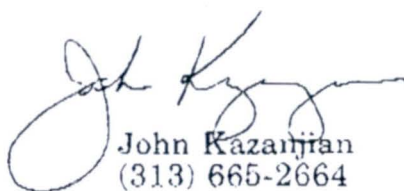
Since this meeting we have held prayer services (taken from the Divine Liturgy) on the first and third Sunday of every month. Our services have been attended by groups of 16 to 25 people. We have also prayed requiem services for the father of two sisters from Baku, for the mother of another woman from Baku, and for the victims of the Sumgaite Massacre. Deacon Michael Ohanesian has been helping us, and visiting needy families. We have also started a practice of having "general Christian fellowship meetings" on designated Wednesdays. Since our meeting with Fr. Paren, John Merigian had to resign from his position due to a work relocation in Texas. However, we three council members still continue to meet regularly to advance the community's needs.

It is our wish to maintain good, close ties with our Diocese and with you. We hope that this work will strengthen the greater Armenian community and will act as a model which can be used in other Armenian communities. Our phone numbers are provided if you wish to meet or contact us.


Sincerely,



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