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November 25, 1996

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate
Diocese of the Armenian Church, Eastern Diocese
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Grace:

The following is the brief month report for October and November.

Fr. Nersess will be visiting us on the weekend after Thanksgiving: all finalized plans for Lansing and Ann Arbor have been made. Grand Rapids has been a little difficult since they are not at all organized yet, but they may have a meeting if people cooperate with one contact that I have made in Grand Rapids.

I am preparing to set up Badarak schedule with both communities for next year with Fr. Diran. I have met with Fr. Diran and will prepare schedules for whole year in December--it got delayed a little due to schedules.

I am also coordinating soccer matches between youth of both communities. Although not a religious activity, it gives people a chance to meet and myself a chance to have interaction with new individuals--details to follow...

ANN ARBOR:

1) Conducted Jashou Services first and third Sundays. I provided reserve sacrament in context of Jashou service. Fr. Diran performed a Badarak on third Sunday in November.

2) The Sunday School students are preparing to do a Christmas play in conjunction with Armenian Christmas on January 5 in place of a sermon to give some chance for interaction between people in the community.

3) Shahin uzuncan has completed deacon's training and now participates as a regular at the altar. He looks forward to coming to St. Nersess next spring, when altar server's training convenes.

4) John Ohanian, Chairman, has found land--we have changed our minds about the first plot that we submitted for Diocesan Board approval because I found out about some toxic waste near the vicinity and that it was leaking through below 100 feet. John then agreed to look elsewhere and found another plot on the north side of Ann Arbor, for which I will personally check out since I have some past experience with land/real estate investigation.

5) A pledge program and dues membership package have been sent to the list of people that we have on our mailing list--we are hoping that the response will be good, so that our stewardship program components (raffles, dances, membership, pledge) can be good resources for our aggressive desires.

6) The Women's guild is planning a winter dance with the students from University of Michigan.

7) I have visited two students from the University and plan to step the visitation program once I complete the week-by-week training in Lansing by the end of December.

Lansing:

1) We have had one Jashou service in October and one Badarak in November.

2) Our Sunday School sessions convened again. Shaken coordinated them and also did class for the older up to age 16. They had a good session and the diocesan materials are being used.

3) The deacon's training has been going well--I have been going every Tuesday. Larry Nishan and Grant Sarkisian have been practicing, and we are about 50% complete in the deacon's handbook. I have provided them with tapes of the book's music. They have both started serving at the altar. Shahin from Ann Arbor has continued to help and a deacon from St. Sarkis continues to help. The two from Lansing express interest in going to St. Nersess next spring. That makes three new faces for St. Nersess!

4) A pledge system has been set up so that we can facilitate better our stewardship goals. The Chairman, Genadiy, has indicated to me that the initial response has been gratifying and promising--the immigrants are beginning to understand and show some hope.

5) A Jashou service and dinner/program is being prepared for celebration of Armenian Christmas on January 5. The program will include authentic Armenian costumes being made and dancing in authentic style. I have provided a video tape from the dance ensemble that came from Armenia in 1987. It promises to be a very interesting evening with all ages involved. As your Grace can see, I will be very busy on January 5--morning in Ann Arbor and afternoon in Lansing.

Prayerfully submitted,

Deacon Michael Ohanesian
Deacon-in-Charge, Ann Arbor/Lansing