



S A I N T H A G O P A R M E N I A N C H U R C H
St. Petersburg, Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRIMATE BLESSES LAND OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA MISSION PARISH

St. Petersburg - Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church, assisted by Rev. Dr. Zaven Arzoumanian, pastor of St. David Armenian Church, Boca Raton and also visiting pastor of St. Hagop Armenian Church, and Fr. Arnak Kasparian, pastor of St. Thomas Armenian Church, Tenafly, blessed the land recently acquired by the mission parish of St. Hagop's Armenian Church, located in the St. Petersburg area, Friday, May 27th.

The beautiful park-like 4.75 acre plot of land is located in mid-Pinellas County and is intended to serve the Armenians on the West Coast of Florida which includes Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Largo, New Port Richey, Sarasota and south to Ft. Myers.

Almost 100 people participated in the ground blessing ceremony, the blessing of the house on the property, the brief church ceremony and banquet held at St. Thomas' Episcopal Church Parish Hall, St. Petersburg.

"It is vitally important," said His Eminence the Archbishop, "that the Armenian people of the West Coast of Florida be organized and enjoy the rich Armenian community life centered around the church, the historic preserver of the Armenian people."

"It is only with the full cooperation of all members of the Armenian Community working together, can a project like this be realized," said Fr. Zaven. "I am so happy to see that this was a combined effort of the Parish Council and the Executive Board of the Armenian-American Society, which has been in existence for 14 years."

The Society, under President Louise Yardumian, donated \$85,000 toward the purchase of the land to make this dream a reality. Incoming President Arsen Bayandrian vowed that the Society would continue its support of the project.

Edward B. Korkoian, Chairman of the Parish Council, stated, "This is a joyous day for all of us. Many fine people have worked endless hours giving of their time, talent, and financial assistance to help us reach our first goal, the acquisition of the property for St. Hagop Armenian Church and Cultural Center."

Leon Sarkisian, chairman of the Building Committee, thanked those who financially assisted in the land purchase. "We still have a long ways to go," he said. "This is the first of several phases that needs to be completed. Not only do we need your financial support but we need your support by means of talent, labor, love, prayers and understanding." We must continue our efforts to make this long awaited dream turn into a reality."

"It is an honor and privilege to be able to take part in building a church in one's lifetime," expressed Edward Sarkisian, "but for some of us to be able to take part in the building of a second church is indescribable, it is truly a gift from God."

The festivities were organized by the newly appointed Parish Council consisting of Edward B. Korkoian, Chairman, Louise Yardumian, Vice-Chairman, Ardameas Janoyan, Secretary, Leon Sarkisian, Treasurer. Mr. Sarkisian encourages all Armenians who visit the area to join in this project by contacting him at 13433 - 105th Terrace North, Largo, Florida, 34644.

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