



Saints Joachim & Anne  
Armenian Apostolic Church

March 23, 1991

**CERTIFIED LETTER**

His Grace Bishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate  
Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America  
630 Second Avenue,  
New York, NY 10016

Your Grace:

Pursuant to our letter of February 14, 1991, and our subsequent letter requesting an answer, we are in receipt of your letter dated March 13, 1991 (all copies enclosed).

We do respect your wishes as far as religious dicta are concerned, however, April 24th is not a religious event but a national commemoration of the genocide of our race.

In fact, in Armenia, the site of our Mother See, this date has now become a "national holiday" and the population, regardless of their Christian or political beliefs, unites together as one nation. The church and Vehapar are invited to participate in this remembrance with a clerical pilgrimage to Dzidzernagapert. By your letter, you are forbidding the Diaspora of Chicago to religiously express a communal feeling. This is your privilege.

We must deplore that Chicago Armenians cannot unite in a church on this solemn occasion to pray together. We must again warn you that extreme bitterness is already created and will be perpetuated and remembered for a long time. Furthermore, we want you to know that without discrimination, the Armenian Congregational pastor will participate in the religious celebrations and mass in the church of the Prelacy in Chicago.

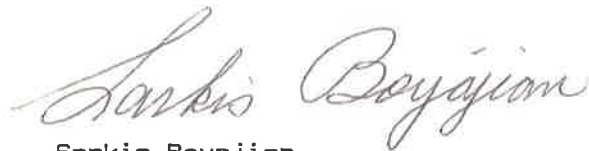
Even though religious togetherness is not allowed, the Armenian community at large (regardless of their church affiliation) should not be prohibited by you from uniting and commemorating, in unison, April 24th by a unilateral Diocesan fiat.

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During the massacres Armenians were not asked about their religious beliefs or political inclinations. They were slaughtered indiscriminately. The time has now come to commemorate April 24th as one people and be allowed by you to pray together in a church as one Christian nation.

Considering the import of this issue and the dire consequences, we humbly ask your Grace again to reconsider your position.

Respectfully yours,



Sarkis Boyajian  
Chairman, Annual Parish Assembly, 1991  
Saints Joachim and Anne  
Armenian Apostolic Church

cc: Unity Committee ✓  
Judge Vincent Gurahian, Chairman, Diocesan Council