

TO BE RETURNED TO THE

PUBLICITY FILE

Diocese of the Armenian Church  
630 Second Avenue, N. Y. C. 10016  
THE RT. REV. MURON VARTABED

GOURDJIKIAN

*File: Armenian Clergy*

The Rt. Rev. Fr. Muron Gourdjikian, Vicar General of the North American Diocese of the Armenian Church, was born in Istanbul in 1912, and was christened Garbis. He received his primary and secondary education in his native city and in Greece. He early felt the call for religious service and entered, in 1929, the Seminary of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem. He was ordained a deacon in 1930. After four additional years of study at the Seminary, he was ordained a celibate priest by His Beatitude the late Archbishop Torkom Koushagian, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and as is customary in the Eastern churches, his Christian name was changed to Muron. In 1935 Patriarch Torkom elevated him to Vartabed, and in 1940 he was granted the pectoral cross and later authority to wear the purple pylon.

Until 1954 Fr. Muron served in the Jerusalem Patriarchate in various administrative and educational capacities, such as chief of the food supply service of the Patriarchate and Monastery, pastor of the nearby Armenian community of Jaffa, instructor of Armenian and church history in the Seminary, Superior of the Armenian Monastery of Bethlehem and supervisor of Armenian rights in the Basilica of the Nativity, and director of the Gulbankian Library of the Patriarchate.

During the Arab-Jewish War, in 1948, the Rev. Muron served as the chairman of the Armenian Relief Committee for the

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refugees in the Palestinian War, which was organized by Patriarch Guregh, a task which Fr. Muron successfully directed until 1950.

In 1954 Fr. Muron was invited to the United States by the North American Diocese of the Armenian Church. Arriving in September of that year, he assumed the pastorate of the Armenian churches in Bridgeport, Conn. New Britain, and Hartford.

In April, 1958 the Rev. Fr. Muron was named Vicar General of the North American Diocese of the Armenian Church by Archbishop Mampre Kalfayan, then Primate of the Diocese, Aside from the vicarship, he was entrusted with the directorship of the Sunday schools of the Diocese. He was named also as the editor of the Armenian language organ, "Haitsz Yegehetzi."

Fr. Muron was made an Archimendrite (Dzairakouyn Vartabed) in the September of the same year.

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