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DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA, 630 SECOND AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016-4885 212 686-0710

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIMATE

It seems eminently fitting that the occasion of my first pastoral visit to the St. Mesrob Parish should coincide with an ordination and a Sunday School graduation. These twin events express the fundamental vitality of our community, for in them the perpetuation of our Christian heritage is affirmed. There is no greater joy for a religious leader than to witness the passage from generation to generation of the torch of our faith.

Your forefathers who established the Soorp Mesrob parish in 1925 were continuing the most solemn tradition of our people: for wherever they have congregated in the world, the first project to which Armenians have turned their energies has been the establishment of a church. Our history stands as a testament to the conviction that the sanctuary of the Church is the true residence of the Armenian soul.

It is in that sanctuary that we nourish our young, educating them in the history and ways of our people, training them in the execution of the pious offices of the Church, instilling in them the character of Christian men and women. But the emphasis we place on the upbringing of our youth is not an end in itself. It is a beginning: a preparation for the services they will render in adulthood, a foundation for a lifetime of devotion to God.

While no other religion extolls the virtues of children more than Christianity, our faith also recognizes that with the increased abilities of adulthood, come concomitant responsibilities. I am reminded of St. Paul's admonition to his followers: "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; but when I became a man, I gave up the ways of childhood" (First Epistle to the Corinthians 13:11).

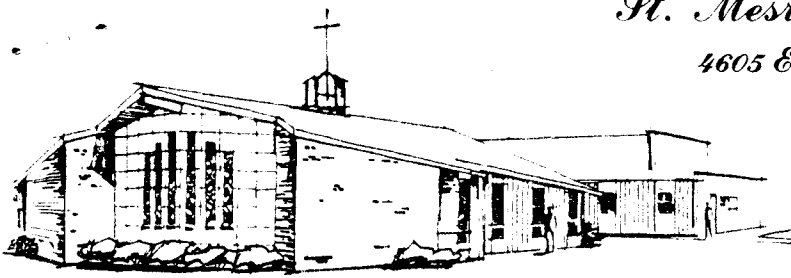
The sacrament of ordination and the ceremony of graduation are each in their own way celebrations of the entry of these young people into the full communion of the St. Mesrob Armenian Church. As we applaud their respective achievements, perhaps we may take the opportunity to fortify our own convictions and renew our own devotion to God. His burden is often heavy—as all Armenians can testify—but there is nothing more fulfilling and rewarding than service to Him.

With prayers,

Bp. K. Barsamian

Bishop Khajag Barsamian
Primate

May 25, 1991



St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church

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*Սուրբ Մեսրոպ Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցի
Իւրաքանչեւ, Իրիստանսրէ*

Reverend Father Garabed Kochakian, Pastor

Տէր Կարապետ Քահանայ Բնօրէն — Հովիւ

April 9, 1991

Rt. Rev. Bishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate
630 Second Avenue,
New York, NY 10016

Dear Srpazan Hayr,

As we are preparing for your forthcoming visit next month on the weekend of May 25th-26th, we are printing a booklet for the occasion.

It would be our pleasure to have included in it, a message from Your Grace on the occasion of your first pastoral visit to Racine's St. Mesrob Parish. This will be included in our souvenir booklet that will be given to all who attend the banquet and program.

Could you please send us your copy on Diocesan Letterhead no later than April 25, 1991.

Looking forward to the joy of your visit.

Prayerfully,

Fr. Garabed

Fr. Garabed Kochakian

