



DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA, 630 SECOND AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10016 • 212-MU 6-0710

June 15, 1970

Mr. Harry Cherkinian
Chairman, Parish Council
St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church
1326 State Street
Racine, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Cherkinian:

We are in receipt of your letter of May 26, 1970.
We are sorry that you were unable to come to an understanding
with Father Buttero.

As you probably know, Deacon Dickran Metjian was ordained
on June 7 and was renamed Father Paree. During the same time
you were in contact with Father Buttero, our parish in West
Allis was in contact with Father Paree, and thus he has been
assigned to the pastorate of St. John Armenian Church in West
Allis.

Regarding your suggestion of the possible transfer of
Father Paren Avedikian from Detroit, Father Paren has expressed
his intention to further his studies and did not feel he would
want to take on the responsibility of parish duties during this
period. However, if he could be convinced to study in the
Racine area, we would have no objection to such an arrangement.

We have your situation in mind, and we hope to make a
convenient arrangement in the near future.

Prayerfully yours,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

jp

September 4, 1970

Mr. Harry Cherkinian
Chairman, Parish Council
St. Mesrob Armenian Church
Racine, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Cherkinian:

We were pleased to receive Joseph Yaghian's letter of August 26 with the enclosed site plan of the future church buildings.

Please make note of the following suggestions:

1. After our visit to South Milwaukee church, we intend to meet with the Parish Councils of our churches in the neighborhood. On Thursday evening, October 22, we may have a meeting with the architect and the Building Committee wherever it is convenient for all concerned. We shall contact you on Wednesday to tell you how and from where we will come down to Racine.
2. On Friday evening, October 23, we should have a joint meeting with the Parish Council and all church organizations. Any member of the community is welcome.
3. On Saturday, we may meet with the servers at the altar and the choir in preparation for Sunday services.
4. On Sunday, besides the services, we shall follow the program prepared by the Parish Council.

Your suggestion for a member of your Building Committee and the architect to meet with the Diocesan Architectural Committee is wise and helpful. We shall contact you for a convenient date. Between September 11 and October 13 we shall be in Jerusalem to attend a Bishops' meeting.

Considering the question of a parish priest, we suggest you contact Father Krikor Hairabedian and make arrangements

Mr. Harry Cherkinian

-2-

September 4, 1970

for him to visit Racine on a regular basis, having in consideration his visits to West Pullman Parish as well.

We also shall contact Father Krikor and Father Tatoyan with regards to this suggestion.

Prayerfully yours,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

jp

January 21, 1971

Mrs. Mark Akgulian
1016 Romagne Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Mrs. Akgulian:

Your letter was moving indeed, reflecting a concern that has preoccupied our thoughts for many, many months. It is not a lack of interest that prevents the sort of solutions that are imperative, not only in Racine but in at least five or six of our parishes. It is simply a lack of resources of every kind, complicated by circumstances that rivet interest and attention almost to the exclusion of everything else.

We have often expressed our feeling that the leadership in a parish must come from the ranks of the people as well as from the pastor, since it is one church and we are all part of it. Without qualifying this, we agree of course that the part and place of the pastor is paramount in the effective mission of the Church.

And that is our problem. Besides our own continuing concern, we have two or three committees considering the matter, with rotation plans, education plans, and so on. But it remains a problem that resists quick solutions.

You must not feel that you are alone or abandoned. We are addressing ourselves to the problem, and with God's help we will find a way.

We hope to be in Racine for the regional meeting and have the opportunity to consult with the Parish Council members as well.

Prayerfully yours,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

March 8, 1971

Mr. Harry Cherkinian
Chairman, Parish Council
St. Mesrob Armenian Church
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Dear Mr. Cherkinian:

We have of course been considering the need of your Parish for a permanent pastor, for some time. The difficulties of finding a resolution should be known to you, and need not be touched on here.

We would like to inform you that it may be possible to appoint a clergyman to assume pastoral duties in your Parish. We have assembled a slate of four potential candidates: Father Nerses Baboorian of Niagara Falls; Father Guregh Kalfayan of Bridgeport; Father Mamigon Voskanian of New York; and Father Yetergian of Montreal.

We urge that you consider these and communicate your reaction to us at your earliest convenience.

Prayerfully yours,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

May 11, 1971

Mr. Harry Cherkinian
2715 LaSalle
Racine, Wisc. 53406

Dear Mr. Cherkinian:

The unity of our Church is paramount in our thoughts, hopes and prayers. And unity now is something we would devoutly wish. But as the dialogue our committee has initiated with representatives of the Separated Brethren, unity seems to be beyond our immediate grasp.

But steps are being taken to approach it. There is agreement that unity is our eventual goal. This in itself is an achievement when we consider the recent history of our community. We are hopeful that other concessions will follow and that an environment congenial to the unity we seek will subsequently develop. Meanwhile and soon we hope a step by step evolution may take place that will represent gradual realization of our hopes.

At the same time let us beware of precipitous actions that may endanger the end we seek.

The expressions contained in your letter of April 24th (so ironically appropriate a date! Or was it coincidental?) were most welcome. Still it is best to stay within the guidelines we have issued, which we will work to broaden as quickly as possible.

May our Church find the unity we so desperately need.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

2715 LaSalle
Racine, Wisc. 53406
April 24, 1971

Archbishop Torkem Manoogian, Prelate
Armenian Apostolic Church of America
630 Second Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10016

Your Grace:

A number of us, as interested Armenians from both St. Mesrop's and St. Hagop's churches, have spent many hours in conscientious deliberation for the sole purpose of trying to come to an equitable solution to the due church problem which exists in our community of Racine, Wisconsin.

Undoubtedly you feel as badly as we that the split of the Armenian Church in America has existed now for nearly 40 years, over one half of a lifetime. We are positive that at the end of this road we are on there is nothing for either side to look forward to, the past history of 40 years certainly dictates this.

We feel that it is time now that we, who were once brothers, become reacquainted again with one another. We are frustrated at the climate which exists today and at the indecision. We would appreciate all of your efforts, together with ours, to be spent towards the resolving of this one question and would like to settle for nothing less than complete unity. We believe that it is only with unity and understanding that we can preserve our beloved Armenian Church in America and will to our younger

generation the priceless Armenian heritage which they so justly
deserve.

Will you, who certainly have far greater wisdom than us,
give us direction towards attaining such a goal?

copy to Archbishop
Hrant Khatchadourian

Respectly submitted,

Joseph Galanian
Sam Akopyan
Harry Chikinian
Mike Janikian
Harold Lokean
Richard Vartanian
George Steved
John B. Buchakian
Alex A. Bagdasarian
Harry Kalvanyan
Harry Savagian
Peter Bagdasarian
Sarkis Buchakian
Edward Shomshian

September 2, 1971

Mr. Sahag Akgulian
Chairman
Board of Trustees
St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church
1326 State Street
Racine, Wisconsin 54304

Dear Mr. Akgulian:

We were pleased to receive your letter of August 25th and are happy that the pastoral needs of your church will be resolved in the very near future.

The assignment of Father Guregh Yetenegian as pastor of your parish is possible, and it is our hope his appointment may be made within the time you indicated. However, the actual transfer cannot take place until the arrangements regarding Father Guregh's replacement in Montreal are completed.

Please be assured that this matter will occupy our attention until it is consummated. We are very anxious that your parish have a pastor once again.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

August 25, 1971

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America
630 Second Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10016

Your Grace:

As we have reported to you previously, we have contacted several clergymen within the Diocese regarding a transfer to Racine, in accord with guidelines laid down by your Grace.

After much deliberation, we arranged for personal interviews with members of our parish council and the Very Rev. Shnork Kasparian and also Rev. Guregh Yetenigian. While we would have been very pleased to have Hayr Shnork assigned to our parish, he gave us little hope during our interview that he would be free to accept in the near future.

Our parish has been without the services of a fulltime priest for over two years and has been considerably weakened during that interim. We feel we can no longer continue in this manner. Therefore at a parish meeting on August 15 we informed the parish that it was our intention to request your Grace to assign Hayr Guregh Yetenigian to our parish before the end of the year.

We hope you will give our request your prompt attention. We invite your counsel in this matter.

Respectfully yours,
Sahag Akgulian
Sahag Akgulian, chairman
St. Mesrob Board of Trustees

SA/la

September 2, 1971

Very Reverend Vazken Tatoyan
St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church
1326 State Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53405

Dear Father Vazken:

We are most pleased that your church will serve as host of the Regional Meeting for the churches in your area which has been set for Friday, September 17th, at 8:00 p.m. A copy of the Schedule of Regional Meetings is enclosed for your information.

Our office will attempt to keep you informed as to how many persons will be attending the meeting as soon as we receive responses to the invitations which we have sent to all participants.

We have every hope the meetings will be fruitful.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

(enclosure)

February 9, 1972

Mrs. Rose Akgulian
422 South Street
✓Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Rose:

It was not possible to talk to you at length about the Workshop when we were in the Midwest. We have subsequently given the matter some thought, and feel that you should go ahead as planned. Let us learn something from your initiative.

The time our Chicago Regional Meeting cannot be changed because of a number of other considerations, so we will not be able to attend the Workshop. The same morning, a Workshop by the Armenian Church Choirs Association is planned in Chicago. However, we will speak with Archbishop Tiran and, if possible, interest him in attending. If anything develops, we will be in touch with you. You may want to write to him directly at: 580 West 187 Street, New York, New York 10033.

As to representation, send the necessary details to Jack and from our office releases will go out to all of our parishes. We assume that the Regional Council is at least nominally involved in this. This seems to us the proper way to proceed, at least in this first effort.

With respect to Laura's scholarship application, we will be happy to write a recommendation. We understand that there are special forms for this which accompany the application form. If this is the case, please send one of these to our office, and we will see that it is done and submitted.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

ATM/rc

422 South Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

January 30, 1972

Archbishop Torkoom Manoogian
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Grace:

We are proceeding with our arrangements for our "Social Concerns Workshop"--- for want of a better title. I hope we can count on your participation.

We have arranged to have the workshop on March 18 at the Siena Center---that beautiful facility on Lake Michigan to which we took you the Sunday of our Madagh. Dr. Joseph Sittler of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago has accepted our invitation to lead the discussion. Several local persons such as Sister Rosita whom you met have volunteered to participate in the workshop with us also.

Our Midwest regional meeting is set for March 17 and I understand you will be present. We are hoping you will be able to spend the next day here at the workshop. Is there any chance you could change the time of the Chicago meeting for 7 P.M. so we can have the full day here?

We need your advice in several respects. Have you any suggestions for the format? We thought perhaps we could begin by discussing ways in which a church can serve and can become involved---what should its role be, then to discuss how some other churches approach this area and thirdly what might be some beginning steps we might take. The main aim is to generate discussion, ventilate feeling and hopefully follow through with another workshop at a later date---or perhaps schedule a half day or day meeting just before the business session of the Diocesan Assembly to review what we did at our workshop and consider what recommendations we might be able to suggest to the General Assembly.

So please feel free to make suggestions on the format. Secondly, to whom should we open it? We prefer not to have it restricted to this area, but rather to draw from the diocese. Could you send news releases to all the parishes and to the Diocesan delegates, A.C.Y.O.A. executive body and the Social Concerns Committee. In fact, we would be very happy if Tiran Srpazan could join Dr. Sittler in leading the discussion. The fee will be \$5.00 for the full day. This will include lunch and coffee in the A.M. and the P.M.

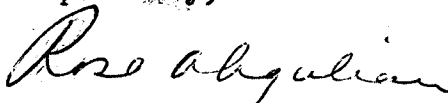
The Midwest Regional Council has agreed to sponsor the workshop although we would like our invitations to mention also your co-sponsorship. Please let me hear at the earliest possible date so we may proceed with our work. I am sending you biographical material on Dr. Sittler. Could you contact Archbishop

Nersoyan and ask if he could be present. We would then be able to include this information in the releases.

Forgive me if all this sounds disjointed. I hope it will be shaped up smoothly by March 18.

May I also add a personal request. Laura has applied for an A.G.B.U. scholarship and has had the temerity to use your name as a reference. If you feel this is an imposition please let me know and we will submit another name. If not, could you please write as generous a recommendation as possible to the A.G.B.U. for her? I told her that she had not used good judgment in beating you four times at tavloo—that she is now at your mercy.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rose Akgulian". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Rose Akgulian

RNA/lha

Call up - St. Pius

Heetz

file

April 7, 1972

Mr. Mark Akgulian
Chairman
Midwest Regional ACYOA
422 South Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Mark,

We were pleased to receive your letter of March 31, and be reminded of the matter you brought to our attention when we were in Racine.

We will surely bring the question to the meeting of the Board of Directors when they next convene. Meanwhile, we will try to explore ways by which the center might be used by our youth in the area.

It might help if you could present in more specific terms what use is intended, with respect to the hours and days, and the programs of course.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

ATM/ec

422 South St.
Racine Wis.
53402

March 31, 1972

Archbishop Torkoom Manoogian
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Grace:

I indicated to you when you were in Racine the interest of the Midwest ACYOA in acquiring the use of a part of the building formerly used as the St. Nersess Seminary as a Youth Center.

Would you kindly direct this request to the Board of Directors of the Seminary? The building would be used as the meeting place of the Midwest district ACYOA committee.

The building is located in a centrally located area for the communities that will be attending the Midwest district meeting. It would lend itself well for regional meetings, study sessions, conferences, etc. Perhaps, if we become sufficiently organized, we could develop a library for young people in the area.

Sincerely yours,



Mark Akgulian
Chairman, Midwest Regional ACYOA

August 17, 1972

The Reverend Guregn Yetenekian
Pastor
President of Parish Council
St. Mesrob Armenian Church
1326 State Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53405

Dear Father Guregh:

On Wednesday, September 27, Mr. Jack Antreassian, Executive Director of the Diocese, will visit your parish on behalf of the Diocesan Council and our Office, as part of his tour of our entire Diocese.

He will spend all day in your parish, discussing parish and Diocesan matters with you and your parish council, as well as with representatives of your ladies' organizations.

It is our expectation that you will arrange to spend some time with him so that a profitable exchange may be effected. A meeting, preferably in the afternoon, should also be set up with representatives of the ladies' group. The evening should be reserved for a meeting with the parish council, and the Diocesan delegates.

Along with matters of general concern, Mr. Antreassian will communicate one of our most urgent preoccupation -- action on our youth program in your parish. For this it will be important to have available one or two, or even a group of your young people who are or have been active in ACYOA.

We are hopeful that this visit will be extremely useful, both to your parish and certainly to us.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

ATM/ec

cc: Mr. George Stenoff

June 14, 1972

Reverend Guregh Yetenegian
Pastor
President of Parish Council
✓ St. Mesrob Armenian Church
1326 State Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53405

Dear Father Guregh:

We have received the June 7 letter, addressed to the Diocesan Council by Mr. Stevoff, concerning the special assessment.

We understand and respect such parish rules as the one referred to, requiring parish assembly approval for all expenditures in excess of \$500.00. We must add, however, that no parish rule whatever can control a decision of the Diocesan Assembly, duly noted and arrived at.

Diocesan Assembly decisions are final and cannot be reviewed, or modified -- not by the Primate, not by the Diocesan Council, and not by parish assemblies. The special assessment, as adopted by the Diocesan Assembly, cannot therefore, be a subject for your parish assembly debate or decision. This would be entirely out of order and as such not permissible.

The assessment schedule requested appears in the Annual Report distributed to all delegates and parishes last April. To that listing an additional \$55,000.00, was prorated, according to the same proportion, representing an approximate increase of about 50% in each case. This was explained in a recent bulletin.

Reverend Guregh Yetenegian
June 14, 1972
Page 2

This summer we intend to recompute our assessment schedule, based on the information submitted to us on the 1971 Annual Parish Reports. This year's assessments cannot be affected by obligations assumed this year, since the assessment rate was approved and passed by the Diocesan Assembly. But we will add any significant factors to our new computations, if you will apprise us of them. What we need to know is how much your parish is actually expending in mortgage payments this year. Building incomes must, of course, also be reported.

Our assessment system has been communicated to your parish on a number of occasions -- in various reports and at the last three Regional Meetings. It is as follows: Four factors have been considered, appropriate weight given each in the computation:

Total income, minus mortgage payments	50% weight
Paid membership	25% weight
Size of Community	15% weight
Presence of permanent pastor	10% weight

We hope these satisfy your inquiries.

We repeat our earlier comment on the special assessment. It must be remitted at the earliest opportunity, according to the bills submitted by our Office. It can, of course, be reported to your assembly, but not for action or review. This is an additional obligation decided by the Diocesan Assembly -- for the entire Diocese -- in which your delegation participated.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

ATM/ec

cc: Mr. George Stevoff

St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church

RACINE, WISCONSIN

June 7, 1972

The Diocesan Council
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Gentlemen:

We are in receipt of your monthly statement, dated May 17, 1972, for the special assessment of \$950.00, which is being presented to our parish as a result of a resolution by the Diocesan Assembly.

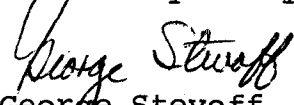
Our parish has had a long standing rule that any expenditure in excess of \$500.00 must be approved by a parish assembly. On May 21, 1972, we had a parish assembly; however, we were not in receipt of your special assessment statement as of that date and were unable to submit it for approval. Upon scheduling our next parish assembly, this item will be presented.

We would appreciate it at this time if you would forward to us a schedule of the assessments applied to the various parishes in the Diocese in order that we may review it.

We would, also, like to point out to you that, prior to the statement, our parish had contracted for the construction of a new church and hall, as I am sure you are aware, and would like to have your opinion as to the effect of the mortgage commitment which in our understanding reduces our assessment. We would, also, like to know if this mortgage assumption reduces our special assessment, which is the subject of this letter.

On many occasions, we have been asked for the formula that is applied to the various parishes in the determination of their assessment and would appreciate a schedule in order that we may review and present it to our parish.

Yours very truly,


George Stevoff
Chairman - Parish Council

cc: Archbishop Torkom Manoogian

February 1, 1973

Mrs. Rose Akgulian
618 Augusta Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Rose:

The questions you raise in your letter of January 18, 1973, concerning the nomination and election of delegates are indeed well taken.

We hope to establish the practice of including biographical sketches with the names of the candidates. This will be prepared in advance. We have not yet decided, however, whether it will be desirable to mail them to delegates in advance. If this is not done, we will assuredly circulate them early in the Assembly so that some thought may be given to selections in advance.

As to the matter of a Directive concerning parish elections of delegates, it is too late now to do what you suggest, even if we agreed. For the present we will work for the acceptance of the manual and from there perhaps develop an attitude on this question.

We feel on principle that the costs of delegates to the Assembly should be underwritten by the parishes; but we are not yet sure of the way in which we can achieve acceptance of this.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

ATM/sm

January 18, 1973

Archbishop Torkoom Manoogian
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Grace:

As machinery has been set up to have a nominating committee functioning from the end of one assembly to the onset of another, may I suggest the following procedure: since there will be time to make a more careful presentation of a slate, may we have in addition to the names of the candidate for a given post, a brief biographical sketch so we may attempt to make the selection on a little more substantive basis than someone else's advise. These could be mailed to us at the same time as the report of the Diocesan Council. This would indeed be helpful.

In reviewing the suggested form for the delegate's manual, I have nothing to add or suggest at this time.

In this conjunction, I would like to bring two suggestions to your attention and hope you will take action on both. First, I respectfully urge that Your Grace send a directive to the parishes to be read before the nomination and election of Diocesan delegates in which you point out that the Assembly is intended to be a working body; that the parish should exercise thought in the selection of its candidates; it is not an honorary position or an honor to confer upon someone, but rather persons should be selected who are genuinely interested committed to the progress of our church. Parishes should also be urged to reimburse delegates for expenses, so they do not succumb to the temptation to vote for delegates who can underwrite their own expenses thus perhaps excluding many valuable candidates. Also scheduling youth conferences and ladies aid conferences at the same time as the Assembly is a sort of tokenism. If the Assembly is to be truly representative of the working members of our church, parishes should be urged to consider women and young people who are voting members as delegates.

The second point I wish you would reflect upon is that the whole idea of financing delegate expenses should be reviewed. I repeat that there are parishes who disenfranchise themselves because they do not feel they can carry the cost of delegate expenses.

Thank you for your patient consideration of these suggestions.

Respectfully yours,

Rose Akgulian
Rose Akgulian

cc Diocesan Council

March 8, 1973

Mrs. Charles (Balian) Dadian
826 Berkeley Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Mrs. Dadian:

We were touched by your letter of February 28, with the faith and hope implicit in it, tinged so painfully with disappointment and disillusion.

What you write about is a very serious matter, one we have been confronted with from time to time. We pray that we will resolve this one according to the best interests of our Church and Diocese.

Beyond this it must be said that the obligations and the commitments all of us must feel, cannot be affected by such circumstances. It must be said that the Church is not one man, whether he be priest or Primate. The Church is all of us. And, we must guard it and work for it and bring our own share to the fulfillment of its mission, in spite of whatever obstacles may be before us. We must never allow this to change.

We do not say that this is easy. We do say that it is the only way. If we permit the frailties of others to discourage us, and to divert us from our faith and from our devotion to our Church, we will be lost.

We commend you for the warmth of your feeling and dedication. We pray for patience and strength.

This matter is at the forefront of our attention; there will be a resolution of it, but the work of our people must go on in the meantime, and their faith and devotion must not suffer any diminishment.

Prayerfully,

ATM/sa

Archbishop Torkom Maneghian
Primate

February 28, 1973

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Grace:

It is with the most upmost reservations that I write this communication to you, but in the interests of my Church community and its future, I feel the need to write and accept whatever the consequences may be.

Upon my marriage nine years ago, I moved from an Armenian community into one geographically that hardly knew what an Armenian was! Because of my basic Christian beliefs and teachings, I immediately associated and was accepted by an Episcopalian Church.

I soon realized my children, both boys; although being reared in a Christian Church, knew nothing about the traditions and customs which I felt a close tie with in my formative years. So, within the confines of my home, I taught what I could, even searching out other Armenian families to enhance the richness of our culture.

Two years ago, my husband was transferred and we were brought back to our hometown, Racine. We came back "to the fold" so to speak, and offered what services we could perform and to our upmost ability became involved in the Church community.

The consecration and dedication of our new edifice to me was only the beginning of what wonderful things could and hopefully will happen within the Church community of Racine and the mid-west. I do not have to emphasize my involvement in that particular weekend. As the newly appointed choir director I knew the task set before me; as a member of the consecration banquet committee of which meetings had started months in advance; and as the organizer and one of the directors of the chorale group of young people which had weekly meetings for several months before the occasion. But, it was just a small token to me to be able to be a part of this great undertaking.

But that is past now and our work is constant. I know I need not go into the problem that is encompassing the Racine community. I am concerned for the young people of our parish, for they are our future. But, how does one tell the future (the young people) to become involved in projects, etc., when we are laden with

a priest who is not concerned with them as individuals, let alone a group. I only am aware of a few facts that trouble me; no concern to follow with regularity the Church calender (re: religious services); no regular acolytes or candle-boy rehearsals; no schedules for the children to follow; no interest in our young people (ACYOA) our Sunday School does not follow with any interest the CRE materials and I am concerned for my children and the welfare of others when they are not being taught basic Armenian Apostolic Church beliefs within the realm of the Church School.

The road on which we are being led is not a good one. But where does one turn? As an adult, I am insulted by his lack of teachings, his constant badgering of church-goers; and his complete arrogance to any helping hand extended in good faith to assist him. Some may turn away and attend other churches, but my beliefs are imbedded so deeply that one may will not be able to turn me away from my Church!

I know of the shortage of priests within our diocese, for that matter the entire church structure, but is it really better to have a clergyman who is apathetic towards his congregation or none at all? As much as I realize the importance of a full-time clergyman, I choose the latter-----at least members of the parish will work together to unite the Church community.

This is a very difficult letter to write because I am criticizing a clergyman, not an easy task for me for I have always been taught to hold this select group of men in reverance and not openly, or for that matter, quietly, be critical of them. Minor incidents to numerous to itemize come to mind that make me leary of our present priest, and yet I do not feel I should burden you with these items.

Again, my main concern is our youth.

If an answer to what we can do to prevent the ultimate is forthcoming from you, I would appreciate it. Thank you for listening to me.

Sincerely and most humbly,

Margaret Dadian

Mrs. Charles (Balian) Dadian
826 Berkeley Drive
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

July 6, 1973

The Reverend Father Guregh Yetenekian
Pastor
President of the Parish Council
St. Mesrob Armenian Church
1326 State Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53405

Dear Father Guregh:

We have received the enclosed communication from your parish council chairman, Mr. George Stevoff. We are sending you a copy to emphasize the importance of following the proper procedure.

Any sentiments you may have concerning a transfer from a parish must be communicated to the Primate who will take it under advisement. The same applies to a parish council.

We await a letter from you to this effect.

The status of the Racine parish has concerned us for some time and we are nearing a resolution of the matter. This in no way affects the relationship of a priest with the Primate who must be apprised of any feelings that affect his service in a parish.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Maneogian
Primate

Enclosure

cc: Mr. George Stevoff
Chairman
Parish Council

Call up
7/9/73

ATM

July 5, 1973

The Reverend Father Guregh Istenekian
Pastor
President of the Parish Council
St. Mesrob Armenian Church
1326 State Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53405

Dear Father Guregh:

We have received the enclosed communication from your parish council chairman, Mr. George Stevoff. We are sending you a copy to emphasize our dissatisfaction with the procedure.

Any sentiments you may have concerning a transfer from a parish must be communicated to the Primate who will take it under advisement. The same applies to a parish council.

We await a letter from you immediately.

The status of the Racine parish has concerned us for some time and we are nearing a resolution of the matter. This in no way affects the relationship of a priest with the Primate who must be apprised of any feelings that affect his service in a parish.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

ATM/cm

Enc.

cc: Mr. George Stevoff
Parish Council Chairman

July 5, 1972

The Reverend Father Guregh Istenekian
Pastor
President of the Parish Council
St. Mesrob Armenian Church
1326 State Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53405

Dear Father Guregh:

We have received the enclosed communication from your parish council chairman, Mr. George Stevoff. We are sending you a copy to emphasize our dissatisfaction with the procedure.

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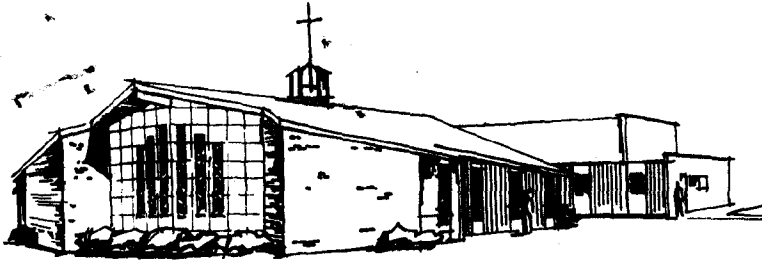
Prayerfully,

Archbishop Tor Kom Naneogian
Primate

ATN/sm

Enc.

cc: Mr. George Stevoff
Parish Council Chairman



St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church

4605 Erie Street Racine, Wisconsin 53402
Telephone 634-6550

June 25, 1973

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Grace:

On June 20, 1973, the Parish Council, along with our Diocesan delegates, met with Father Yetenekian who expressed his desire to be transferred from the parish. We understand that this request has been discussed with you and we are told, under separate cover, it is being confirmed with you by Father Yetenekian.

The Parish Council and the Diocesan delegates would like to inform you that we formally accept his request for a transfer and request that you honor Father Yetenekian's request.

We feel that this is a very reasonable and workable agreement and would appreciate your reply.

Very truly yours,

George Stevoff
Chairman - Parish Council

GS:mm

cc: Father Guregh Yetenekian

July 16, 1973

Mrs. Rose Akgulian
422 South Street
Racine, Wisconsin

Dear Mrs. Akgulian:

We appreciate the sentiments you expressed in your letter of July 5, sentiments which, as you also note, have been communicated to us by other officers and members of the parish.

We are concerned with this matter and are hopeful that there will be an early resolution. But all concerned must realize that there is more involved than one parish, important as that may be, in any reassignment of parish priests.

Whatever time is taken is done so necessarily, and in the interim it is equally imperative for parish leadership to work all the harder to make up for any lacks in any area. If and when another priest assumes the St. Mesrob pastorate, it is important that he find a congenial condition.

God will help us always in the service of His church.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

July 5, 1973

Archbishop Torkoom Manoogian
Diocese of the Armenian Church of No. America
New York City, New York

Your Grace:

Two weeks ago I was asked to be present at a Parish Council meeting at the St. Mesrob Church, along with Mikael Garoukian, as Diocesan delegates. At the meeting, the Parish Council reviewed with Rev. Guregh Yetenikian, who was also present, his almost two years as the parish priest of St. Mesrob Church. To summarize the statement of the Council, as representatives of the parish, they indicated that although they had tried to cooperate and assist and work through appropriate channels, that there was still a lack of leadership, concern and commitment on the part of Der Guregh to meet the obligations of his position as it had been presented to him prior to his assignment here.

I believe the Parish Council, thru its chairman has personally and specifically reviewed these matters with you.

During the meeting Der Guregh indicated that he had requested a transfer of Your Grace and that you presently have this under consideration. It was the recommendation of the Diocesan delegates that the Council write to you and indicate that they were aware of Der Guregh's request and that they state that they had no objection to such a transfer.

May I, too, respectfully add my comment. I do feel efforts have been made in good faith to work as a team with the clergyman and the Council and church organizations, but thus far they seem to be of no avail. The trustees, individual concerned members, as well as Your Grace, have tried to bring about a change, but the situation has not substantially improved--one might say it has deteriorated. This is particularly unfortunate at this time, when the community has achieved its goal of a new church and looked forward with excitement to an even more full and active chapter in its history. Things are truly at an unhealthy impasse.

Could we urge you, therefore, as long as a request has been made for a transfer, that you act upon it as expeditiously as possible, so there can be a graceful resolution of this unhappy situation.

We are certain we can look for your assistance and concerned exercise of leadership in this matter.

Respectfully yours,



Rose Akgulian

[white tissue]

August 17, 1973

The Very Reverend Arshag Khatchadourian
6260 Lake Shore Drive
Apartment 507
Cudahy, Wisconsin 53110

Dear Father Arshag:

You will be happy to know that the Diocese Endowment Fund has been formally established. Official news releases will be issued with details of the plan and pledged contributions. Meanwhile, with the leadership of Mr. Dadour Dadourian, we are proceeding to develop ideas concerning the Fund in many areas.

One of the important things we wish to do immediately is to call a conference of a number of our clergymen and discuss in detail what the Fund means and can accomplish, and to work out plans by which our clergymen might contribute to our efforts to make it succeed.

For this purpose we wish to invite you to a meeting at our Headquarters on Monday, August 27, 1973, beginning at noon and probably ending at 4 p.m. We will have a light lunch in the course of the meeting.

Mr. Dadourian will join us at this meeting which can be a very effective step in achieving the goals of the Fund.

We have enclosed some materials which might provide the basic information about the character of the Fund.

Please make arrangements now to be with us on August 27. We will reimburse you for the travel expense you incur.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

August 16, 1973

Mr. George Stevoff
Chairman, Parish Council
→ St. Mesrob Armenian Church
3451 Ruby Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Mr. Stevoff:

It would be most appropriate and helpful to your parish if arrangements could be made for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy one Sunday a month. To implement this, we urge that you communicate with the pastors and parish councils of the South Milwaukee and Greenfield churches, with a view toward arranging visits by their pastors.

In such an arrangement, the sum of \$50 should be paid to the parish whose priest visits your church, and \$25 to the celebrating priest.

We urge that you give this matter your immediate attention, for the benefit of your parish, until a permanent resolution is arrived at.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

cc: South Milwaukee
Greenfield

September 10, 1974

Mr. Harry Cherkinian
Parish Council Chairman
St. Mesrob Armenian Church
2715 LaSalle Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Mr. Cherkinian:

A decision has been made to assign Father Patee Metjian of the St. John parish of Greenfield, Wisconsin to serve in another parish.

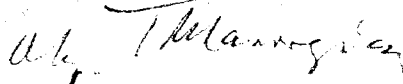
We have now under consideration Father Patee's reassignment, with the final determination depending on various factors.

Before such a determination is made, we would like to have a sense of your Council's feelings with regard to Father Patee as pastor of the Racine Church.

If you wish to approach Father Patee directly, you may do so since everyone involved is aware of the prospect of his reassignment.

Please keep us apprised of any actions you may take.

Prayerfully,



Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

vb

April 4, 1974

Mrs. Rose Akgulian
422 South Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Rose:

We want to commend you for your fine service as a Diocesan Delegate, and even more as a member of our Church. But we do not want to do so if it will in any way imply a conclusion of anything. Such commendation is customarily associated with retirements of one kind or another, so we must be careful.

We will interpret your letter in the following manner.

Your service to date will be regarded as a prologue to the more substantial things that lie ahead.

You will remain a member of the Educational Council.

As to social concerns, it is our hope that you will plan new gatherings, and perhaps even outline similar programs that might be offered in other regions.

And above all, keep thinking about us and our Diocese. We need ideas, and the continuing concern of an intelligent and interested people.

May God bless you and Sahag, and all the fine young people that populate your home.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

March 23, 1974

Archbishop Torkoom Manoogian
Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America
630 Second Avenue
New York City, New York

Your Grace:

As you may be aware, I will not be a Diocesan delegate from Racine this year. After twelve years of my participation and sixteen of Mikael Garoukian's, Racine this year will have new representatives. They are capable, competent persons and I am certain they will discharge their responsibilities ably.

It has been a privilege to serve in this capacity and hopefully I have made some small contribution to the progress of our church. I am glad to see that my suggestion that the activities during the Assembly be extended to include conferences on relevant subjects has been implemented. This year's conference "College Youth and the Church" should be informative and exciting, judging from the described format of the day.

If I can be of service in any way, please feel free to call on me. Also I would like to know what my status is as regards the Armenidan Educational Council, and what you feel should be done in the area of social concerns. Would you please take my name off of the mailing list for delegates as I am still receiving directives and also inform the resolutions and nominating committee of the fact that I am not presently a delegate.

With best wishes for your continued good health and success.

Respectfully yours,

Rose Akgulian

Rose Akgulian

422 South St.
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

still a member

check →
who are
the new D.

Plan new
gatherings

July 3, 1974

Mrs. Mark Akgulian
1016 Romaine Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Mrs. Akgulian:

We share the views expressed in your letter of June 18.

In the first instance we can only say that errors of judgment, and failures in compassion by others sometimes try us in the extreme. We need our Christian faith to sustain us.

We have talked to Fr. Varoujan, and an appropriate statement will be prepared and published in a forthcoming issue of the church paper. It is our hope that it will restore reason and balance to this unfortunate situation.

With regard to the Racine parish, we have, of course, been preoccupied with its need of a pastor. But until this can be resolved, the burden remains with the faithful to carry on their organized life, and make their church a true house of worship. It is our feeling sometimes that we rely too much on our pastors, to the exclusion of our own deep responsibilities in the life of our church, of which each of us is an integral part.

May God bless you always.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

vb

June 18, 1974

Mrs. Mark Akgulian
1016 Romaine Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Grace,

First of all, please find enclosed my letter to Father Kabaradjian, which is self-explanatory. I can not tell you how upsetting it is to me. How anyone can do such a thing to another human being, especially a priest is incomprehensible. He needs help.

So does Racine. We need a parish head. Although we function quite adequately, we are in dire need of a "head". It is as though the mother of the house went away and an aunt occasionally comes in to check things out and brushes over the surface needs. The children of that house gradually learn to make do without mother and become independent. Then the more strong-willed children surface - not necessarily the proper leaders. It somehow does not seem quite fair that the largest church in the Midwest should go this long without a permanent parish priest.

Wednesday night we were pleasantly surprised and inspired by the five young men who visited us. What a delight and inspiration. They have learned their lessons well, do not push for a hard-sell approach, and are very honest and candid in their responses to questions. Of course, the singing was beautiful. The best advertising. Wish we received more of this kind of service from the Diocese.

God help you with all your problems (such as me) and take care of you always.

Yours in faith,

Mary Akgulian
Mary Akgulian

June 18, 1974

Very Rev. Varoujan Kabaradjian
927 Brummel, Apt. 3
Evanston, Illinois 60202

Hye Sourp,

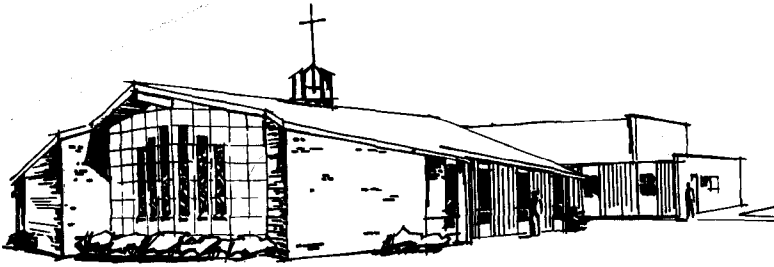
I have not been on your mailing list for your Church Newsletter for some time and the other day saw it at Injasoulians and read it. It was impossible for me to believe that your "Open Letter to Helen Minasian" was actually included in that issue. How can a Clergy Member write a letter such as that and still expect respect for his sound judgement in other affairs? You print such a letter and the reader wonders in disbelief- what could Helen have possibly written to all these people that could produce such violent reaction from you? The letter was not included in the newsletter to read and analyze. Whatever she wrote, deserved a personal answer from you. Most assuredly you are entitled to disagree, it is your privilege - but call her, or write to her directly or in your newsletter do a editorial. During the course of the years, you must receive much correspondence that quite possibly you disagree with and answer. I don't believe you have written such personal answers in you Newsletter. How could you make such slanderous accusations in print without thinking of the farreaching consequences. Imagine the effect on her whole family! And I am aware how extensive a mailing list you have.

It is not in my nature to pass judgement on my fellow man, particularly someone in the Clergy, but I just had to let you know my feelings and how sorely disappointed in your actions.

Yours in faith,

Mary Akgulian

Mrs. Mary Akgulian (Mark)
1016 Romaine Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin



161
432-A.iii

St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church

4605 Erie Street Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Telephone 634-6550

February 21, 1975

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate
Diocese of the Armenian Church
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Grace:

This is to advise that the elections have been completed in our ladies organizations and the following is the information you requested:

St. Mesrob Ladies Auxiliary - Mrs. Cetina Nahabedian, Chairman
1954 Prospect Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53404
Telephone - 414/637-2068

St. Mesrob Women's Guild - Mrs. Ellie Mazmanian, Chairman
303 Belmont Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin 53405
Telephone - 414/634-3947

The Ladies Auxiliary holds their elections during the month of December and the Women's Guild holds their elections in November of each year.

Respectfully yours,

ST. MESROB ARMENIAN CHURCH

Paul Chobanian
Paul Chobanian, Chairman

PC/eg

December 10, 1975

The Reverend Arten Ashjian
Pastor
St. Mesrob Armenian Church
4605 Erie Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Father Arten:

I received your letter of December 2, 1975.

Once again our sincere thanks for the last quarter
Diocesan assessment payment from St. Mesrob Armenian
Church.

In regard to the recent directive on the Clergy
stipend increase, upon the return of His Eminence
Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, I will pass your letter
on to him in order to get a clarification.

Regarding the South Milwaukee situation, I will keep
you informed as to when a meeting will be held.

I thank you for the information on the Cluster Jewelry
Company regarding hand crosses.

Best regards and a happy holiday season to you and your
family.

Sincerely yours,

Stephen Kambourian
Executive Director

SK:vb

October 29, 1976

The Reverend Arten Ashjian
Pastor, St. Mesrob Armenian Church
4605 Erie Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Dear Father Arten:

It is important once again to review the cooperation of the Armenian Churches in the Mid West.

We have appointed Mr. George Stevoff of the St. Mesrob Church, Racine, to be the Chairman of the Guidelines Committee and ask the parishes to send representatives to the meetings to discuss possible goals and programs for the Armenian Churches in the Mid West region.

We urge you to give proper guidance to the preliminary meetings and assist George Stevoff to organize the Council of the Armenian Churches in the Mid West.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

November 2, 1976

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10116

Your Excellency:

I write this letter with some misgivings as what I have to say is a criticism of my parish priest as well as his lack of compassion for the physical well-being of this parish. You may recall earlier this summer during one of your visits, the question of the Women's Guild By-Laws reflecting elections was discussed; specifically, Article IX, sections 4 and 5. My recollection of that meeting was that whatever we did must be in compliance with the By-Laws.

Since the By-Laws provide for a means to be amended by a legal and duly constituted membership, we did on September 30, 1976, elect to:

1. select Executive Committee members to serve for a one year term in lieu of a two year term,
2. select Executive Committee members for specific positions by vote of the total membership in lieu of election for positions by the Executive Committee members only.

Der Arten Ashjian has done everything humanely possible to discourage our attempts to amend the By-Laws. Following our September 30th Guild meeting our Executive Committee officers met with Der Arten, the Parish Council, and our three Diocesan delegates and our request for the change in election procedures was outlined. Our letter of October 5, 1976, (copy attached) was presented to Der Hayr so he could send it to you outlining our position. We now find that this information was never sent to you.

Your recent letter to Der Hayr requesting a copy of the minutes our September 30th meeting indicates you obviously did not receive and have all the facts. Had Der Hayr presented our letter to you and further stated that the Parish Council had approved our proposed election methods for the 1976 election until confirmed by your office, there would have been no need for a further confrontation with him.

Upon receipt of your recent letter, he indicated he wanted to bring it up before the Guild. Our Guild officers suggested that since the matter had been discussed and resolved with the Parish Council

and Diocesan delegates, he bring the matter before them with our officers in attendance for discussion. Without any warning he brought the matter up in our last Guild meeting. When I questioned him, he ordered me to sit down and yield the Chair. I was belittled, demeaned and disgraced before my Guild members. Your letter, while written in Armenian was only interpreted in English so we really don't know for certain all that was requested. Upon conclusion of his remarks, I asked that he remain standing so we could discuss the matter with him. He stated he had no wish to discuss it and stormed out of the meeting.

It is a pity that man with his intelligence has to be so obstinate on such petty matters. Instead of helping to build the Guild, he has sown seeds of dissension and made a shambles of the Guild morale. He has also taken unyielding positions with other organizations to the detriment of our parish, but I don't wish to burden you with other matters.

My point in writing you is two-fold. First, I wanted to insure that you received both a copy of our September 30th minutes as well as our October 5th letter outlining our position. Secondly, I felt you should be aware that unless Der Arten becomes more flexible, Less critical and more compassionate in his parish duties, he will lose the confidence and respect our parishioners. Additionally, constant confrontation with church organizations may seriously affect his health.

I love my church and want it to grow and prosper. I respect our clergy and desire that they receive the respect due them. I sincerely hope you accept my sentiments as being constructive and not destructive. My Guild members do not know I have written this letter as I wanted it to be strictly a private matter.

I trust you accept it in that being and will use prudent judgement in resolving the matter quickly.

Respectfully yours,

Vartine Cherkinian

(Mrs.) Vartine Cherkinian
2715 LaSalle Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Enc: (2)

Racine, Wisconsin
May 9, 1977

His Eminence
Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America
President of the Diocesan Council
630 Second Avenue
New York, N.Y.

Your Eminence:

Since the fall of 1975 I have been responsible for the payment of all premiums related to the group insurance policies secured by the Diocese for my and my family's protection. This arrangement was one of the terms under which the St. Mesrob Armenian Church Parish Council offered me a "package deal" in April 1975. I came to Racine in August to assume the St. Mesrob Church pastorate and at the same time I became a property owner in the City of Racine. My experience since then has brought me to the conclusion that I can not afford to support myself and my family with the stipend offered to me by the St. Mesrob Church.

On the first anniversary of my pastorate at St. Mesrob, the Parish Council raised my stipend by 7.2% after voting in August 1976 to carry out a budgetary proposal which had been approved by the Parish Assembly earlier at the annual meeting. That raise -the only one so far in this parish- brought the amount of my actual pay in 1976 to the sum of \$14,892. Out of this sum I am expected to pay not only for food and clothing, but also for my housing (mortgage until 2000 A.D., property tax and insurance), utilities, all automobile expenses (on a 1975 Chevrolet which I purchased just before moving to Racine with the help of a \$3,000.00 loan from my life insurance policy), federal income and social security taxes and state income tax, plus the premiums for the diocesan clergy insurance policies.

At this moment I have the obligation of an unpaid bill of \$421.10 which I owe to the Diocese for premiums outstanding from the 1975-1976 period. I also must worry about means of paying to the Diocese the annual premium for 1977 in the amount of \$1,074.00 as stated in the Transmittal Advice sent to me by the bookkeeper of the Diocesan office on April 1, 1977.

On April 19, 1977 I requested in writing of the St. Mesrob Church Parish Council to help me by assuming the responsibility of paying the 1977 premium in the amount of \$1,074.00. After lengthy discussion, with myself presiding at the meeting, the Parish Council rejected my request on April 19, giving as its reason the forthcoming discussion of the Pastor's stipend raise which will be on the Parish Council's agenda some time in August of this year.

If and when a stipend raise is actually paid to me at the end of August, my total stipend for 1977 (the so-called package deal) will amount to \$15,552. This sum falls far short of the amount to which I am entitled according to your recent directive on clergy stipends.

My purpose in writing to Your Eminence at this time is to express my dissatisfaction about the stipend arrangements made by the St. Mesrob Church. Under the present terms it is not possible for me to continue serving in this parish.

With filial respect,
I am your servant in God,
Arten Ashjian
(Rev.) Arten Ashjian