

EXCEPT
THE LORD
BUILD
THE HOUSE,
THEY LABOR
IN VAIN
THAT
BUILD IT.

Psalm 127

Եթէ Տէր ոք Շինէ ՁՏՈՒՆ,
ի նԱՆԻՐ ՎԱՍՏԱԿԻՆ ՇԻՆՈՂԻ ԻՆՈՐԱ:

Սաղմոս 127.

CONSECRATION
AND
DEDICATION

ST. MESROB ARMENIAN
APOSTOLIC CHURCH AND
CULTURAL CENTER

4605 Erie Street

Racine, Wisconsin

JANUARY 21, 1973

Ջ 0 Ն

Բէյսիսի Սուրբ Մեսրոպ Հայց, Առաքելական Եկեղեցւոյ բոլոր Հիմնադիրներուն
անխտիր, որոնք Ամբողջաբերին իրենց հետ մեր Թանկագին Ժառանգութիւնը , , ,
անշեղ նպատակի եւ վեհ տեսիլքի զօրեղ մարդիկ , , , Ու համբերատար Տիկնանց,
որոնք հաւատարմօրէն կանգնեցան անոնց կողքին, զանոնք տեւապէս քաջալերելով,
խոնարհաբար սոյն գրքոյկը կը ձօնենք, երախտագիտական խոր զգացումներով :

Սոյն յիշատակի գրքոյկին միջոցաւ նաեւ այս Ժառանգութիւնը կը փոխանցենք
մեր Նոր Սերունդին եւ բոլոր անոնց որոնք պիտի գան մեզմէ ետք, քաջ գիտնա-
լով որ մեր Պապերուն Հաւատքը, որուն համար այնքան անգին ու անհամար կեան-
քեր զոհուեցան, առաւել եւս պիտի զօրանայ, պահպանուի ու յաւիտեան ապրի , , , :

In Dedication

To the Founders of St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church, Racine, Wisconsin, who brought with them to America our precious heritage . . . hardy men with strength and boldness of purpose, gifted with noble vision . . . and the patient women who stood faithfully at their sides supporting them with encouragement . . . this book is gratefully and humbly dedicated.

With the building of the new church and cultural center, we pass this heritage on to the young people and all those who come on after us, knowing that this Faith for which so many lives were sacrificed, will be cherished and guarded and kept eternally alive.



ԱՐՁԱՆ ԵՄԱՆՈՅԻՆ ԻՊՈՎԻՄ-ԲԱՍԻՆ ԱՅՅԻ ԿԱԾՐԸ
ԱՅՅԻ ԵՊՈՎԻՄԱՆ ԵՒ ԿՐԻՍՏՈՍԵԱՆ ԿԱՅՈՑ ԵՄԱՆՈՅԻՆ
ԿԱՅՐԱՄԻ ԿԱՅՐԱԿԱՆ ԿԱՊՈՑԱՐ ԱՐՈՒՑ ԱՊՈՑԵՐ ԿԱՅՐ-
ԱՅՅԻ ԱՅՅԻ ԵՄԱՆՈՅԻՆ ԱՊՈՑ ԿԱՅՐԱՄԻ

Մտնուած տեսնու եզակուս ունիւն ընդր սոբր ՆՈՒՐՈՂ
ԵԿԵՆՏԻՆՑ ԵՊՈՎԻՄ ԿՐԻՍՏՈՍ, ՕՍԿԱՆ ԿԱՐՈՒՄԻՄԵՆ ԵՒ ԿԱՅՐԱՄԻ ԿԱՅՐ-
ՏԱՅՆԱՆ ԱՊՈՑ ԿԱՅՐԱՄԻՄԵՆ, ՈՒՅՆՈՒ ԿԱՅՐԱՄԻ ԵՒ ՕՐԿԱՄԻՄԻ ԿԱՅՐԱՄԻՏԱՅՆԱՆ

Կայսրի է Մեր արարածութեանը ի անն յնն կնկնելոյնն աշխ-
տանքինն որ վնկննն արարիներունն կը ծառայի ջնն Մեծ ու քրիստոս-
տանի կնկնի կոյ հանձնելոյնն ծայրնն Վիչ:

Կառարի յոյոր յոյք կը Մեր արարածութեանը, ջնն Նորայնն կնկ-
նելոյնն օժանով: յառայնիկնն արարի Յունուարի 20-ին:

Ճեր հանձնարք, 1925 թուականին, իր արարածի Տանն կոռուցելով,
հանդիսացաւ առջիններինն Վին Արարիւն Նահանգոյ Վիչ որ և յոր
օրինն արեւելոյ արեւադինն վտառ ու պայծառ պարկոյ քրիստոնէականն հաւա-
քը և կոյ յարարութեանն ու հիանդիթի լայնը, կանուքը բաշխելով Վեր հաւ-
տարեալ զաւանդներունն:

Սոյոր երբ արարեալն յանկի առջնայ զերջնայր Տ. Թարգոմ արք-
եակնիկոսոս, արար օժանի կը կոռարի ջնն Նորայննայն կնկնելոյնն, Վին
թարգոմ ճողով, Սարքը կը շարունակէ Մեր Կարարածութեանն օրնու-
թիւնն կը յրկնք ջնն Վնկուր, Գրահարանքի Մեր ջնն կոռարով
արարած իւրոր ջնն վարարիանն ճարտիներունն, յանձնարարներունն և
պատարիանն անշունչ արանք իրենն ժրջանն աշխատանքով, իրենն լա-
րայնիանն և կնկնութեանն օժանդութեանն իրարանայնայնն հանձնարքի
առաւանճաւոյ ժրգիրքն առանն վայելոյնն և կերճ արարածի Տանն
Վր անկնկարն:

Տիրոջ արարածութեանի թող անաւանն Վնկոյ և լայնի Վիչ շարք
ջնն Սարք Մերոյն կնկնելինն լայնը բարձրներն ու շարունակը կնկնի
բաշխելով Վիչն ջնն Վն և յարար յարանդներունն:

Կարգարի կնկնարար, վնկնելի ջնն անշունչ պարկոս, և վնկնիկոս-
զոսն անաւանն ջոմ Սիրոյն, պարկոս ի կոռարութեանն արարին



Handwritten signature

ԿԱՐԱՐԱՐՈՍ ԱՄԵՆՍԻ ԿԱՅՈՑ

Տանն կնկնարար ի 21-ն Նոյեմբերի
1922 Փոքիկանն արի,
և ի արարածի կոյոր ՈՒՐԸ
ի արարածն Վիրոյն կը ճարարի

ՀՆԻ 737







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

November 6, 1972

To all the faithful of St. Mesrob's Parish in Racine, Wisconsin, we extend our warm congratulations for the devotion and concerted efforts which have made possible the construction of a new church in so short a time. The realization of the plans for this building is the result, we are certain, of deep faith and exceptional dedication. Everyone who has in any way helped in this project should feel great spiritual satisfaction.

Eighty years ago a group of Armenians left their native provinces and established themselves on the shores of Lake Michigan in a humble corner of rapidly growing Racine. They worked strenuously to help in the advancement of their new home and also aimed at establishing Armenian community life with all its national traditions so that they might soon have their own parochial organizations, their own church, Armenian language classes, library as well as other organizations.

The history of their and your collective efforts over more than half a century is witness to the fact that the community living in Racine has always been resolute and has always sought those goals which truly enlighten the soul. Everyone - men, women, youth and children - has joined in the effort to ensure that the Armenian Church remains shining and joyful, that the Armenian school does its work regularly, that the children receive their religious education, that Armenian cultural programs are on an ever higher level and that they do their share in alleviating the burdens of the Church and bring their assistance to the programs planned for the progress of the entire Diocese.

The consecration of the newly-built church on the weekend of January 20 will inspire parishioners of all ages, inspire all of you with the hymns and prayers of thanksgiving, to labor with even greater enthusiasm to establish conditions more favorable to the progress of our community and ecclesiastical life.

We bless all our people of Racine and we wish that they will gather around their Pastor, the Parish Council, and ladies' and youth organizations so that the life of the parish will always remain strong and with the blessing of God share in the task of enhancing the Armenian Church and of safe-guarding and spreading our Armenian cultural heritage.

Prayerfully,

Abp. Torkom Manoogian

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate



DIocese of the Armenian Church of America, 630 Second Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10016 • 212-MU 6-0710

Գ Ի Ր Օ Ր Հ Ն Ո Ւ Յ Է Ա Ն

ՐԷՑՄԻՆԻ ՆՈՐԱԿԱՌՈՅՑ ՀԱՅՑ. ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻՈՅ ՕԾՄԱՆ ԱՌԹԻՒ

Ջերմապէս կը շնորհաւորենք Րէյսինի Ս. Մեսրոպ եկեղեցւոյ համայնքի նախանձախնդիր եւ աշխատունակ մեր զաւակները, որոնք միասնական ջանքերով կարողացան կարծի ժամանակի ընթացքին ամբողջացնել շինութիւնը նոր եկեղեցիին: Վստահ ենք որ խորունկ հաւատքի եւ քացառիկ նուիրումի արդիւնքն է այս սքանչելի իրազործումը, որուն համար հոգեկան մեծ գոհունակութիւն կը գգան արդարեւ բոլոր անոնք որոնք որեւէ կերպով սատար հանդիսացան ընդհանուր գործին:

Ութսուն տարի առաջ հայրենի զաւառներէն եկևոր խումբ մը ազգակիցներ կայք հաստատեցին Միշիկըն Լիճի փոլսնքը արագ թափով աճող Րէյսին քաղաքի խոնարհ մէկ անկիւնը: Իրենց ժիր մկանները լարելով անոնք լծուեցան իրենց նոր բնակավայրի զարգացման նպաստող աշխատանքներուն: Մեւ սիրով հետամուտ եղան ստեղծելու տոհմային աւանդութիւններով օծուն հայկական կեանք մը, որ շուտով պիտի ունենար ծխական մարմիններ, սեփական եկեղեցի, հայերէն լեզուի ուսուցման դասարաններ, գրադարան եւ մշակութային ու հասկական կազմակերպութիւններ:

Աւելի քան կէս դարու շրջանին հաւաքական մարտուամերու իր պատմութիւնը կը վկայէ թէ Րէյսինի մեր պատուական ժողովուրդը միշտ արթուն է կանգնած պատնէշին վրայ: Աննահանջ հետապնդած է հոգին լուսաւորող նպատակներ: Հիանալի հետեւողութեամբ կանյք եւ երիտասարդներ կամեցած են իրենց թարմ ուժերը միախառնել այրերու աշխոյժ կողովին, որպէս զի շէն ու պայծառ մնար հայք. Եկեղեցին, կանոնաւոր գործէր հայ Դպրոցը, կրօնական դաստիարակութիւն ստանային մանուկները, որակաւոր ըլլային հայ մշակոյթին նուիրուած յայտագիրները եւ յաջողակ ազգին կարիքներու բարձման համար բացուած արշաւները, եւ տակաւին կարելի ըլլար ակնկալուած աջակցութիւնը ընծայելու թեմի ընդհանուր յառաջդիմութեան զարկ տուող ձեռնարկութիւններուն:

Նորաշէն եկեղեցւոյ օծումը, Յունուար 20ի շաբաթավերջին, առաւել եւս պիտի ոգեւորէ ամէն հասակի բարեպաշտները: Եւ գոհաբանական իրենց աղօթքին ու երգին շունչով լեցուած անոնք աւիւն եւ կամեցողութիւն միախառնած, պիտի մզնին աւելի նպաստաւոր պայմաններ ստեղծել եկեղեցական եւ ազգային առաջադրութեանց պողաւորման համար:

Կ'օրհնենք Րէյսինի համայն հայութիւնը, եւ կը մաղթենք որ ամէնքը տեւապէս բոլորուած մտան շուրջը հոգեւոր հովիւին, ծխական Խորհուրդին, տիկնանց եւ երիտասարդաց միութիւններուն, որպէս զի համայնքային կեանքը միշտ մնայ զգրաւոր եւ Աստուծմէ պարգեւուած շնորհները արժանաւոր կերպով մատուցուին հայք. Եկեղեցւոյ բարեզարդութեան եւ հայ մշակութային ժառանգութեանց պահպանման ու տարածման:

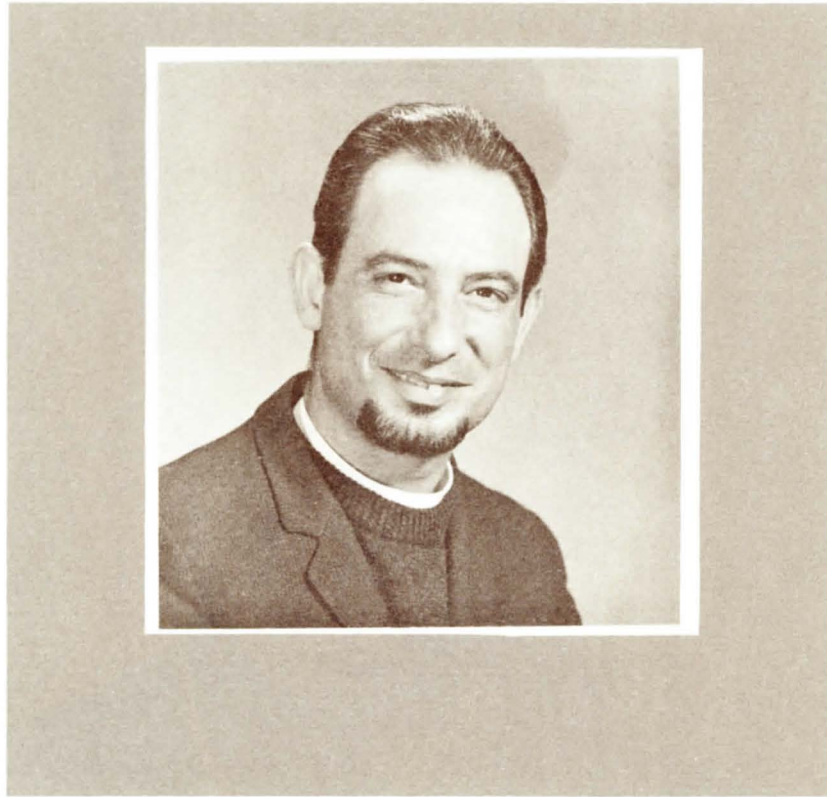
"Եկայք ժողովուրդք ի տամարի փառաց Քրիստոսի, տուք ամենեքեան օրհնութիւն ի բարձունս":

Հոկտեմբեր 24, 1972
Նիւ Եորք

Սեռոյ որդուկիւ
Քորնելիոս Արքեպիսկոպոս
ԹՈՐԳՈՄ ԱՐՔԵՊԻՍԿՈՊՈՍ
Սեպտեմբեր



Pastor's Message



"Come, let us build the Holy Altar of light —."

Dear Parishioners:

We have built the church. We kneaded our faith, our inspiration and sweat with the stone and mortar of the structure. Your efforts and sacrifices are crowned with complete success. The church building and the cultural center are now our pride and glory. "Thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."

Our work is not yet completed, however, because the ultimate purpose in building a church reveals itself only in the midst of eternity. Working in the service of the Lord is likened to climbing a mountain, the peak of which is in God's domain.

We receive the precious inheritance of our fathers and strive to enrich it and to pass it on to the next generations to continue this sacred mission. The greatest happiness and reward lies in the attaining of a worthy goal. For this reason, the faith practiced within the church, and its fruits, are more important.

Archbishop Karekin Servantzliants, an eminent Armenian churchman of the past generation, once visited an Armenian community where they had just completed a most imposing and costly church building. He praised the people, the building and its architectural beauty, but added, "I would not exchange all of this for a true Christian soul."

The important meaning, therefore, is that we use the church and its physical aspect as a means toward the goal of becoming true Christians and that we grow stronger in our faith and in our love of God and His children. May the blessing of our Lord be always upon you.

Prayerfully,
Rev. Guregh Yetenekian

Brief History of the Armenian Church

The Church of Armenia acknowledges as its original founders two of the twelve apostles of Christ, Thaddeus and Bartholomew.

In the year 301, there happened a most important event not only in the history of Armenia, but in the annuals of the Christian Church. The faith which from the beginning had been relentlessly persecuted throughout the world, was proclaimed as the national religion of Armenia.

The man who made light shine in the land of Armenia, was St. Gregory, called the "Enlightener" or "Illuminator" of Armenia. He was formally elected as the supreme head of the Church.

The one serious disadvantage that the church labored under was the lack of an Armenian alphabet. All the scriptures had to be read in Greek or Syriac. One of the scholars of the time, Mesrob Mashtotz, a former secretary of the royal court, left his position to take the vows of the missionary monk. After searching, traveling and consulting with brilliant scholars, Mesrob composed an alphabet of 36 letters in which every sound of the Armenian language was represented.

In 450, Yazgerd II, king of Persia, issued a decree commanding all Christians to embrace Mazdeism. A violent revolt began under Vartan Mamigonian. Overwhelmed at the battle of Avarayr (451) Vartan was killed together with more than a thousand of his men. The death of Vartan was a severe loss for the Armenians, but the battle of Avarayr saved the nation.

The Armenian Church celebrates the anniversary of the Battle of Avarayr and pays tribute to the heroes who fell on that field. Their memorial day is a major holiday for all Armenians.

The Armenian Church accepts the first three Ecumenical Councils of Nicea, Constantinople, and Ephesus, where the fundamental doctrines and principles of Christianity were declared and adopted by all churches. Its hierarchal organization consists of the Catholicos the supreme head of the Armenian Church, who resides in the ancient city of Etchmiadzin, the Catholicate of Cilicia, the Patriarchates of Jerusalem and Constantinople, and various dioceses under the jurisdiction of the patriarchates and catholicates. The clergy of the Armenian Church are of two classes: the married clergy who are most often the parish priests; and the celibate priests, who are eligible to rise in the ranks of the hierarchy.

The Armenian Church has remained autonomous to this day, but it is taking part in ecumenical dialogue. In the 7th century, the Arab hegemony over Armenia began and in the 15th century it was continued by the Turks. Nevertheless, under the Catholics, Armenians refused to convert to the religion of Islam.

A near-devastating blow was delivered to the Armenians in the period of 1914-18 when the Turks massacred nearly two million of the Armenian population under the rule, the survivors were scattered throughout the world.

The number of Armenians in North America today is about 400,000. The Armenian Church of North America has two dioceses. The Eastern diocese, with a population of 250,000, known officially as the Diocese of North America, has jurisdiction over Canada, Mexico, Cuba and all the United States except California. The Western Diocese was organized in 1928 and has jurisdiction over the 150,000 Armenian population of California.

In the last 24 years, 21 new churches have been built in the Eastern Diocese. The number of parishes now total 43 in the east, and 13 in the west.

In Canada there are 5 parishes; Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, St. Catharines, and Vancouver with a population of 20,000.



Saint Mesrop. The inventor of the Armenian alphabet and the co-founder of the Golden Age of Armenian literature and of Christian Armenian culture. He was also the inventor of the Georgian alphabet, and an advisor in the invention of the Gothic alphabet.

St. Mesrob

St. Mesrob, the patron saint of our church, is one of the most revered saints. It was St. Mesrob who created the Armenian alphabet in the first quarter of the fifth century, an achievement which our people regard as a miracle and to which they attribute their ability to maintain their identity as a people.

Prior to that time, Armenian was the spoken language, but there was no written Armenian language. Persian, Greek and Syrian were the languages used depending on the geographic location of the people. The Bible was read in Greek and Syriac in the churches and then translated into Armenian. St. Mesrob, who had been a secretary at the royal court and was a very learned man, had left the court and taken vows as a missionary monk. As he traveled about and tried to teach, he became convinced that Christianity had no chance to endure in Armenia unless people could have access to the Bible in the Armenian language. He received the support and total commitment of the Catholicos, Sahag, in meeting this need. After extensive research and study, while he was in Samosad, as though in a vision, he created the alphabet of 36 letters to which two letters were later added. As a people we attach particular significance to the fact that once the alphabet had been created, the very first task they undertook was the translation of the Holy Bible. St. Mesrob's miracle continued, and a people who had not had a written language, no grammar, no rules for literary form, translated the Bible into Classical Armenian. The translation has been referred to by scholars as "The Queen of Translations."

It is no wonder that as Armenian pilgrims travel to Armenia, one site they are certain to visit is St. Mesrob's tomb in Oshagan.,

St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church History

Feeling a need for church services, the few Armenians who had settled in Racine, in 1910, would on occasion invite the Chicago Armenian Church priest and hold services in Wergeland Hall on State Street. However, from 1912 up to the time of the censecration of St. Mesrob Church, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 614 Main Street, Racine, allowed the Armenians use of their church on Sunday afternoons and whenever necessary without fee.

According to the minutes of the Board of Trustees, on August 19, 1923, the Armenians of Racine, then having reached a population of about 150 met at Wergeland Hall for the purpose of establishing a permanent Armenian church home. Included on the building committee were: Krikor Kamakian, Haroutune Kalagian, Haji Hajinian, Arsen Levonian, Movses Garabedian, Armenag Vartoukian, and Sarkis Buchaklian.

In a communication to the Building Committee the Primate, Archbishop Tirayre Hovanessian, stated that it would be his fondest wish that the church on State Street be purchased, as opposed to building a new one. His Grace felt that no church the Armenian community was in position to build could match the serenity and beauty of the State Street church. It was then agreed that this church be purchased. The Bargaining and Negotiating Committee—Atty. Gulbank Gulbankian, Hairabed Dadian, Toros Madaghian, and Khosrof Yaghoupian was formed. They were successful in lowering the asking price to \$18,000. Acting in behalf of the Armenian church, Mr. John Kamakian signed the necessary documents to establish ownership on October 12, 1924.

An additional \$7,000 was spent for repairs, renovations, and changes to conform with standards as set forth by the Diocese. The altar with its intricate carvings was fashioned and built by Avak Akgulian, the altar and door paintings were done by Gulbank Akgulian and The Holy Sepulchre was built by Sahag Jansouzian. The baptismal font was a personal gift of the first permanent priest, Rev. Vartan Tavidian.

The church's godfather, Krikor Keishian, requested that the church bear the name of St. Mesrob, the founder of the Armenian alphabet.

Former St. Mesrob Priests

Rev. Vartan Tavidian
(1923 - 1929)
Rev. Arsen Torosian
(1940)
Rev. Khoren Mamigonian
(1941 - 1943)
Very Rev. Soukias Kalfayan
(1943 - 1945)
Rev. Artocn Sempadian
(1950 - 1955)
Rev. Mesrob Avedian
(1957 - 1959)
Rev. Dajad A. Davidian
(1962 - 1969)

St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church, 1326 State Street, Racine, Wisconsin, was consecrated on December 25, 1925, by the Primate, Archbishop Tirayre Hovanessian.









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Ապրիլ - 1 - 1935





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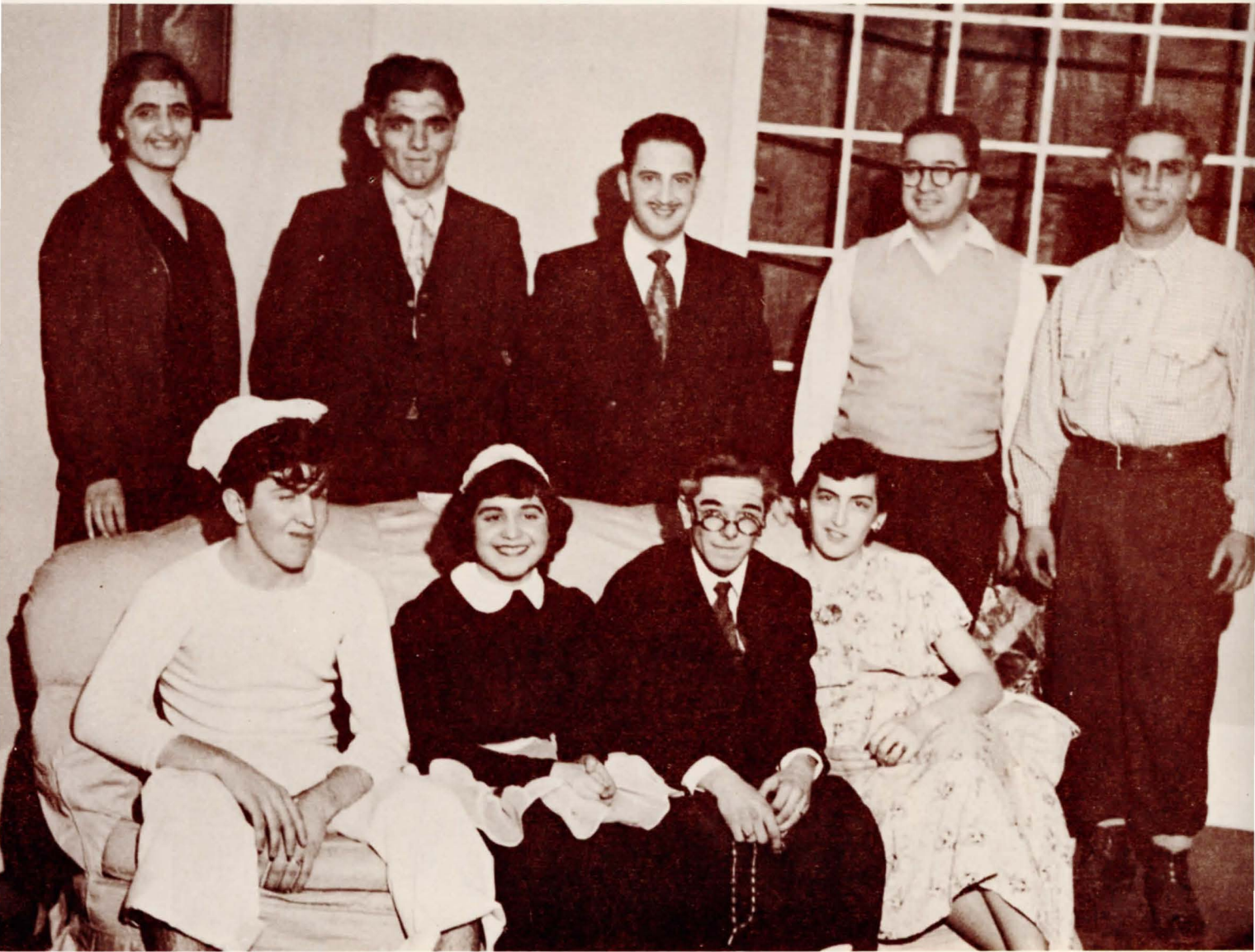


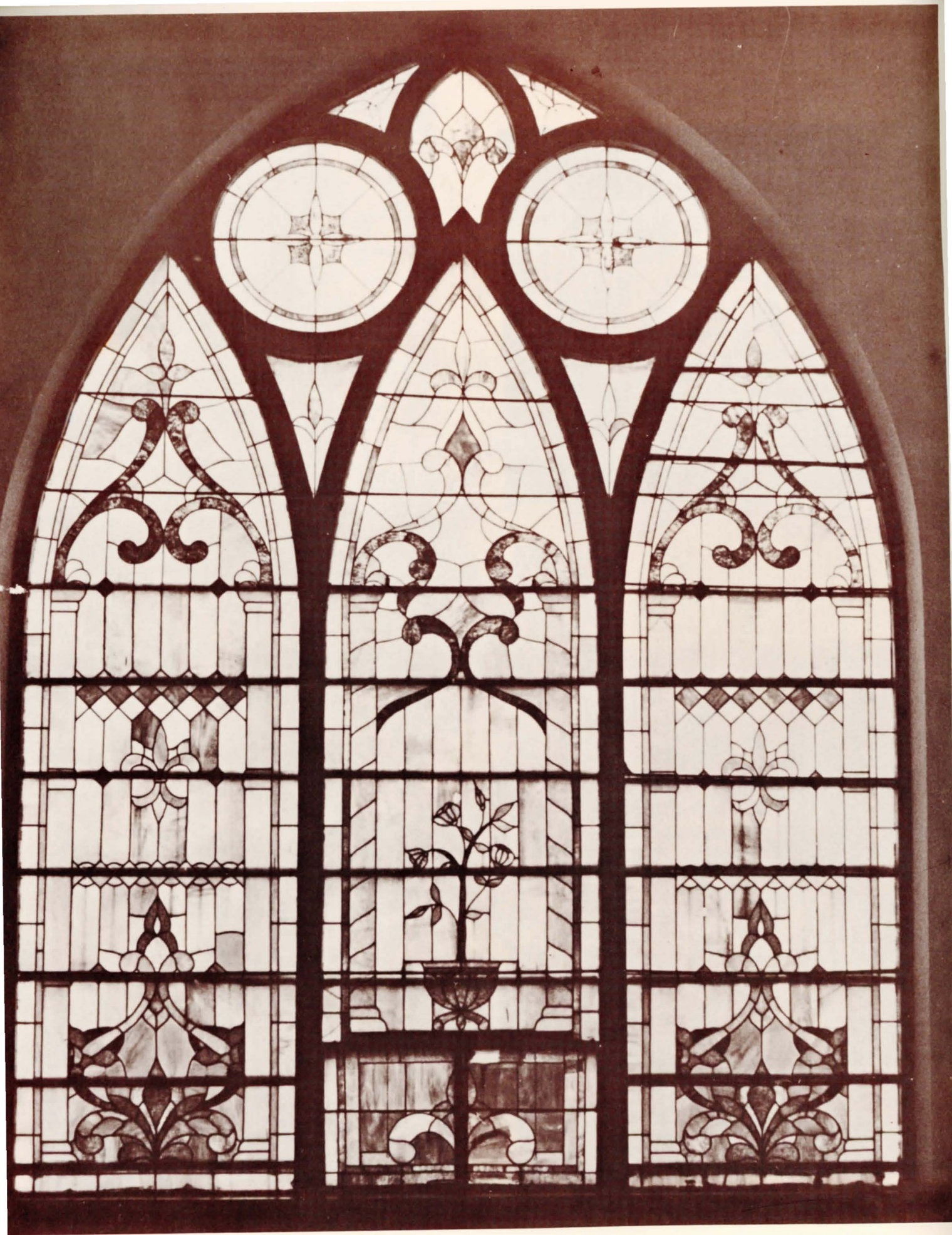












Deacons and Servers



HAIRABED
MIKAELIAN



PENIAMIN
TOROSIAS



HAJI
HAJINIAN



SAHAG
JANSOUZIAN



HAROUTUNE
BAROOTIAN



ZERON
DANAJIAN



ARMENAG
VIDIAN



SAMUEL
AVAKIAN



SAHAG
VARTANIAN



CHARLES
HARDY



MIKAEL
GARDOUKIAN

HOVHANNES
GURUNIAN
(Not Pictured)

Deacons

Deacons (*Sarcavags*) constitute the fourth rank in the hierarchy in our church. According to the book of the Acts of the Apostles, certain persons were appointed to serve at the communal dinners held before or after religious services where Christians used to come together having "all things common." Later, when those dinners were changed into spiritual banquets, the same servers became deacons at the altar, assisting the priests in officiating the Sacraments.

A deacon, in carrying out his duties, may perform the *Anaphora*, *Veraperoun* in Armenian, read the Jashou Lection of the Gospel, chant the Biddings of the Divine Liturgy, cense the altar and congregation, carry the chalice and other sacramental objects. The deacons, by ordination, are authorized to perform these tasks.

The distinctive identification of Deacon, Subdeacon, and Kisasarcavag is the stole (*Ourar*) which he wears upon the left shoulder during all church services.





Parish Council

"The parish assembly shall elect from among its members a parish council . . . , who shall be custodians of the properties of the church and shall, together with the parish priest, be in charge of the conduct of the affairs of the parish."

The St. Mesrob Parish Council consists of a seven-member Board of Trustees. Presently its members are:

George Stevoff, Chairman
Sahag Akgulian, Vice-Chairman
Nishan Hacherian, Secretary
Harry Armaganian, Treasurer
Harry Boranian, Gene Chardukian, Dan Mikaelian

Every Wednesday evening the Board along with its President, Rev. Guregh Yetenekian, meets at the church hall.

The duties of the Board are:

- to collect dues and all other income.
- to maintain proper records in a Register of Baptisms, Marriages, and Deaths.
- to ensure the proper and regular performances of church services.
- to establish, to supervise and to give moral and financial support to the various schools of the parish.
- to prepare the annual budget and submit it to the Parish Assembly for approval.
- to examine the accounts of its subordinate bodies.
- to carry out the decisions of the Parish Assembly.
- to present to the Parish Assembly its financial statement after it is approved by the Auditing Committee.
- to encourage all educational, benevolent, and cultural organizations in the community.
- to execute the instructions given them by the Archdiocese and the Diocesan Council on matters relating to the administration of the Diocese and the Parish.

Probably the biggest and most time-consuming project of the Board is the planning, preparation and execution of the annual *Madagh*. At St. Mesrob great emphasis was always placed on this event not only for its religious significance but also for its financial rewards.

Translation of the Minutes of the First Recorded Trustee Meeting

First Trustee meeting of the Armenian Apostolic Church, January 13, 1918, Racine.

AGENDA

1. Election of new officers of the Board.
2. Assignment of a three member committee which will represent the Armenian community.
3. Decision to keep up-to-date financial records and minutes in an official book.

RESOLUTION — 1. During the first meeting of trustees of the Armenian Apostolic Church, which was held on January 13, 1918, at 804 State Street (Barsam Kalfayan's home) at which time the election of the Board of Officers took place. The officers are as follows:

Hovannes Poladian, Chairman
Khachig Dedeian, Secretary
Avak Akgulian, Treasurer
Rupan Mananian, Vice-Chairman
Barsam Meneshian, Vice-Secretary
Neshan Kazerian and Barsam Kalfayan, Counselors

RESOLUTION — 2. The Board of Trustees appointed a committee of three from its body which will have the duty of representing the Armenian community whenever and wherever need will be felt.

Those representatives are as follows:
Neshan Kazerian, Barsam Kalfayan, Rupan Mananian.

RESOLUTION — 3. We, the trustees of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Racine have also decided to keep, hereafter, an up-to-date official minutes book which shall also include our organization's financial records.

The meeting was adjourned after the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Newly elected trustees of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Racine.

(signatures)

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Building Committee

The Building Committee was originally known as a Planning Committee to investigate the feasibility of building a new church. Its adoption was made at a Parish Assembly Meeting in 1964. The original members were as follows:

Reverend Dajad Davidian, President
Paul Minasian, Chairman
Mike Garoukian, Vice-Chairman
Sue Esayian, Secretary

John Esayian
Sam Akgulian
Mike Janikian
George Gulbankian

Harry Cherkinian
Mark Akgulian
George Stevoff

One of the first undertakings of the committee was to increase and implement the pledge system started in 1963 by Rev. Davidian. The accumulation of monies through the pledge system was directed toward this Building Fund. In 1963 the total pledges brought in were \$5,000 and reached a high of \$21,000 in 1967. The proceeds from these pledges went for the payment of the Erie Street property purchased in 1966 for \$57,500. Payment of the mortgage was completed in 1968.

The original building project called for a church to seat 225-250 members with a seating capacity of 225-250 in the hall area. The project was given to the architectural firm of A. J. Seitz, Ltd. on August 29, 1969.

After reviewing many preliminary designs, a formal bid opening was held on August 18, 1971, for an approved design. The cost of the original plans called for a project cost of \$468,000. All bids were rejected by the committee and referred back to the architect for design changes to lower the cost without reducing the interior square foot area.

On November 17, 1971, new proposals were submitted for bids, with the firm of Johnson & Henrickson, Inc., ultimately chosen as the general contractor.

The project was started in early 1972 with the relocation of the parish home.

The new revised plans called for a church which would seat 230 people. The hall area which is 50 ft. wide by 68 ft. long will accommodate up to 400 people for a dinner and can also be used as a gym. The projected total price would be in excess of \$275,000.

1972 Building Committee

Rev. Guregh Yetenekian, President
Harry Cherkinian, Chairman
Sam Akgulian, Vice-Chairman
Mike Janikian, Secretary
Perry Paragamian, Treasurer

Mike Garoukian
John Esayian
Mark Akgulian
Harry Akgulian
Al Topalian
Sahag Akgulian
George Sahagian
Dick Vartanian
Paul Buchaklian
Ira Eland
Sarkis Kazarian
Joe Yahnian
Frank Vidian
George Stevoff



Ladies' Aid Society

St. Mesrob Church's largest and oldest women's organization, the Ladies' Aid Society, has been in existence since the founding of the church in 1925. The five women serving on the 1924 nineteen-member building committee became the first executive body of the Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Mary Dadian, Chairman; Mrs. Johar Dadian, Mrs. Margaret Hajinian, Mrs. Hripsime Kamalian, and Mrs. Haiganoosh Kirkorian.

Service is the instrument which keeps the group active and useful—whether it be visiting the sick and bereaved, welcoming a newcomer, extending a hand of helpfulness, or servicing a funeral reception.

"Light is the task when many share the toil" is a verity that typifies the prevailing spirit in all of their endeavors. The organization has won its greatest fame in specialty cooking and Armenian delicatessen baking. This talent is used not only to produce revenue for their treasury, but it is drawn upon by all of the church organizations for their own particular projects.

Some of their many tasks are preparing holy bread (*mas*), financially assisting the Sunday School and the Armenian School, sewing church vestments, managing the shish-kebob stand at the annual Madagh. In former years when no outside services were hired, they, together with the Trustees, undertook all custodial duties.

The 1972 membership roster lists 108. Through the years the original \$2.00 yearly membership dues has remained unchanged. A seven-member executive committee undertakes all projects and activities. General membership meetings are held on call. Through self-denial, sacrifice and careful budgeting they have been successful in adding upwards of \$1,000 each year to the treasury.

Faith in God, concern for the welfare of the Church, and hard work are the contributing factors to the Ladies' Aid longevity and success.

Serving with Miss Anna Keishian, Chairman of the 1972 committee, are: Mrs. Elizabeth Eland, Mrs. Mary Kamakian, Mrs. Rose Minasian, Mrs. Lucille Nield, and Mrs. Osanna Torosian; also the late Mrs. Zaroahy Akgulian.



St. Mesrob Women's Guild

The St. Mesrob Women's Guild was organized by the Very Reverend Soukias Kalfayan. Their first meeting was held on July 17, 1945. Its executive board consisted of: Mrs. Blanch Hardy, Chairman; Mrs. Evelyn Armaganian, Vice-Chairman; Miss Rose Kirkorian, Secretary; Miss Altoon Levonian, Corresponding Secretary; Miss Alice Garabedian, Treasurer and Mrs. Virginia Musurlian, Assistant Treasurer.

This organization provides an opportunity for young women, full of enthusiasm and new ideas and a willingness to work, to serve their Church in some tangible way. The objectives of the Women's Guild are to cultivate among members the spirit of mutual Christian love and cooperation by moral, spiritual, educational and social activities and to cooperate with the Priest and all organizations affiliated with the Church for the material progress of the church.

The activities and fund-raising projects of the Guild have been many and varied. The first major project of the Women's Guild was to purchase and install a new organ for St. Mesrob in 1948. However, two very important services rendered year after year by the Guild are to provide fresh flowers for the altar every Sunday and to make quarterly visits to the Armenian aged and ill at many convalescent homes in Racine County. In addition, each year the Guild sponsors a dinner and program to honor and entertain their mothers. Over \$9,000 was given to the Building Committee for the new church complex.

The Guild has 45 members at present. Membership meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month. The 1972 officers are: Mrs. Marjorie Mikaelian, Chairman; Mrs. Elizabeth Eland, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Anna Chadergian, Corresponding Secretary; Mrs. Jeanne Armaganian, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Mary D. Akgulian, Treasurer; Mrs. Sue Vidian, Assistant Treasurer. The advisors are Mrs. Mary Domanico and Mrs. Mary Kaprelian.



Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6

The aim of Sunday School is to bring the teachings of Jesus Christ to their children and members; teachings that give meaningful value and worth to this life; teachings of love toward our brethren; teachings of respect and honor; teachings of order, law and authority, teachings of humility, kindness, honesty, truth; teachings that prepare Christians for a far better, happier life in heaven with the Lord.

Sunday School

That desire to have our children reared in the teachings of the Bible was prominent in the minds of our first two superintendents, Toros Madaghian and Jack Madaghian. That same desire has continued along with the succeeding superintendents in Harry Boranian and Sam Kaprelian, the present superintendent. At one time, for a number of years, in place of a superintendent, a Board of Directors governed Sunday School.

St. Mesrob Sunday School, the first founded by an Armenian Apostolic Church in the Americas, is observing its 37th Anniversary this year. The Racine Sunday School was chartered by Archbishop Mampre Kafayan in 1935 after a eight year crusade for such a school by Toros Madaghian, its founder.

Since its founding, Sunday School has continued without interruption on a year-round basis until 1968, when a summer recess was instituted. Sessions are one-hour in length, from ten to eleven o'clock each Sunday morning. The first portion of this period is devoted to general assembly, with the superintendent leading in the opening prayer, delivering a devotional talk, and making announcements. Following a fifteen-minute hymn sing, the assembly disperses into graded classes. The cross and crown pin award system, an international one, is used to promote perfect attendance. Once monthly the major portion of class time is spent attending church services. The year is climaxed with a presentation of a Christmas pageant. Sunday School attendance reached an all-time high in 1963 with 108 students. Enrollment for 1972 was 75.

The 1972 teaching staff includes Janet Barootian, Miss Margaret Garbedian, Mrs. Jeanne Armaganian, Mrs. Nancy Kazarian, Mrs. Claire Kadamian, Mrs. Var Cherkinian, Mrs. Elsie Garoukian, Miss Hunaz Hazarian, Mrs. Paulette Barootian, Miss Lucy Derderian, Mrs. Helen Minasian, Mrs. Mary K. Akgulian, and Steve Barootian as assistant to Sam S. Kaprelian.

"You are dedicated to a great and sacred mission. Selflessly, energetically and optimistically, you serve our centuries-old Church and our faithful people, through your work for our new generation, and for the spiritual life of our children."

His Holiness, Catholicos Vasken I



The St. Mesrob Choir

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly . . . singing with grace in your hearts unto God." Colossians 3:16

St. Mesrob Church has prided itself on the quality of its choirs since the church was founded. We have been grateful for the leadership provided by Deacon Peniamin Torosian, Nina Jansouzian, Paul Chobanian, Charles Balian, Berge Mikaelian Pat Balian, Nishan Chaderjian and Margaret Dadian.

Since the inception of the Association of Armenian Church Choirs of America, Racine has been a member. In 1952 and 1962, Racine was host to the national choir assemblies.

The St. Mesrob choir has been one of the few in the North American Diocese who can sing the Gomidas Badarak, the Ekmalian Badarak and the Arevekal Service in its entirety. The choir has made trips to Minneapolis, Minnesota to perform services for the Armenians in the area, as well as to other sister parishes in the Midwest. In the past the choir under the direction of Charles Balian, has presented concerts of secular and sacred music. Miss Janet Cherkinian has been serving as organist for the past 7 years.



The Armenian School

At the request of the Trustees, Armenian schools have existed in Racine since the founding of our church. Student enrollments have fluctuated from over one hundred to the currently enrolled forty-eight students. They have met in the church hall, at the public schools and at the university extension. The first teachers were M. Garabedian and Hairabed Mikaelian. The names of some other past teachers are: Varteres Garoukian, Manoog Derderian, Eghia Gelenian, George Jigerjian, Hripsime Zalementz, Anna Barootian, Nuvart Kalagian, Anna Keishian and others.

The funds for the operation of the school have been raised by affairs sponsored by the educational committee and the trustees. Donations have also been received from the Ladies' Aid, the Young Women's Guild and the AGBU.

The end-of-the-year program presented by the students is an affair eagerly looked forward to with anticipation.

Lack of facilities has been a real handicap to the dedicated teachers and eager students. In the new cultural center, we will have adequate classroom space and a real learning environment.

The 1972 teaching staff:

Rev. Guregh Yetenekian
Mrs. Araxie Hardy
Mrs. Mary K. Akgulian
Mrs. Elsie Garoukian



Mikael Garoukian

Rev. Guregh Yetenekian
1972 Diocesan Delegates

Rose Akgulian

Diocesan Delegates

Diocesan delegates are elected for four year terms to represent their parish at the Diocesan assemblies. The Assembly which meets annually is made up of delegates from the parishes within the Diocese and makes the final decision on Diocesan policy, budget and substantive issues.

Diocesan Auxiliary

The St. Mesrob Church of Racine has always been very supportive of the Diocesan Office. It was one of the very few parishes in the Diocese which had an active Diocesan Auxiliary committee. This committee was composed of dedicated women in the parish and had as its chairman for ten consecutive years, Mrs. Zarouhy Akgulian. For years this group sent in substantial sums of money which it raised through cultural programs to the Diocese.

Bible Study Group



BIBLE STUDY GROUP

St. Mesrob's present Bible Study Group meets each Thursday afternoon in the church hall with both the Reverends Guregh Yetenekian and Krikor Hairabedian presiding. The group is dedicated to discuss and learn truths concerning the faith of our Lord. They meet in hopes of enriching their lives through His understanding.

Presently, there are between 15-20 persons who attend the weekly group. They meet with other bible study groups from our sister parishes. There have been various other bible study groups throughout the years with the earliest one starting in the mid-thirties in the home of Miss Anna Keishian.

The Educational Committee



THE EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE

The current educational committee was appointed by the Board of Trustees and is made up of the following members: Miss Tarquin Andekian, Chairman, Mrs. Virginia Musurlian, Myron Mikaelian, Mike Manogian, Mrs. Claire Kadamian, and Mrs. Marie Chardukian. The responsibility of the committee has been to recruit staff members, enroll students and meet the financial needs of the Armenian School through various fund raising functions.

From 1925 through 1944 these duties were carried out by the Parish Council. In 1944, the Parish Council appointed an educational committee whose function was to meet the needs of both the Armenian School and the Sunday School. This committee continued to serve until 1952 at which time, a new committee was formed to deal specifically with the needs of the Armenian School.



Armenian Church Youth Organization of America

On March 21, 1946, Bishop Tiran Nersoyan organized the Racine Chapter of the ACYOA. The first executives were: Sam Garabedian, Sahag Akgulian, Jack Madaghian, Catherine Madaghian and Shockey Gengozian.

In September of 1955, the Racine Chapter was host to the Ninth Annual Assembly. The proceeds from this convention of \$2,000 was turned over to the Parish Council to help pay for the renovation of the outer masonry of the church.

Two Racine members, Shockey Gengozian and Judy Hachikian were elected to the Central Council of the ACYOA and were instrumental in making policies for all the chapters.

On September 4, 1966 the Racine Chapter was awarded the "A-Award" at the 20th Annual Assembly in Providence, R.I.

The national ACYOA is now in the process of being reorganized by the Diocese. However, the Racine ACYOA continues to be active in the social, cultural and spiritual life of our Church. Many of the church leaders of today originally worked together in the ACYOA.

The St. Mesrob chapter at present has 20 members. The officers are: Mark Akgulian, Chairman; Susan Minasian, Vice-Chairman; Marge Garbedian, Secretary; Lisa Akgulian, Treasurer and Debbie Janikian, Publicity. The advisors are Robert Akulian and Alice Hazarian.



ALTAR SOCIETY

The present St. Mesrob Altar Society was founded in November, 1971. Its members are Mrs. Marie Chardukian, Chairman, Mrs. Rose Kaprelian, Mrs. Elizabeth DerHovsepian and Mrs. Mary Katibian. Deacon Charles Hardy serves as its advisor and consultant.

Originally, the intent of forming an altar society was for the purpose of mending and repairing robes for the choir, deacons, and acolytes. Their duties, however, have been expanded to include alteration and upkeep of vestments and providing needed robes and accessories for the deacons.

To further make use of their talents, the Parish Council asked for their assistance in planning and procuring the draperies for the new church.

St. Mesrob Ball Team



Since 1950 St. Mesrob has sponsored a softball team in the Racine Church League. During these years the ball teams have won three championships. The first two championships were won in 1959 and 1961 with the latest one being achieved this year.

The players throughout the years have provided our congregation with delightful entertainment and thrills with their skills and abilities. The congregation in turn has supported their team.

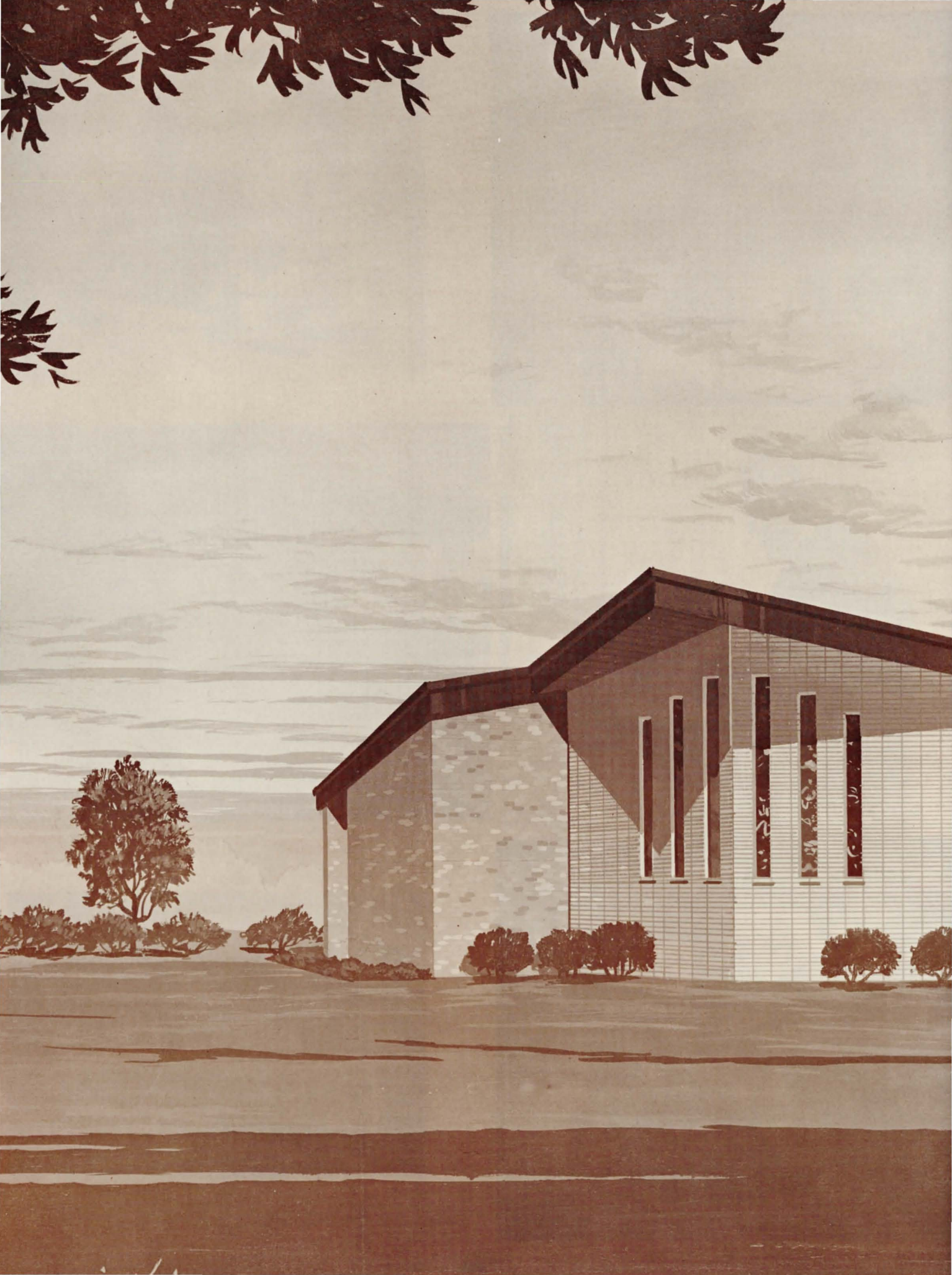
The players of the 1972 team are:

Robert Akulian
Mike Garoukian
Armand Mazmanian
Naz Chalekian
Leo Hagopian
Paul Minasian
Adam Chalekian
Sam Samuelian

George Buchaklian
Kirk Buchaklian
John Buchaklian
Dan Korakian
Steve Barootian
Garo Injasoulian
Gary Vidian





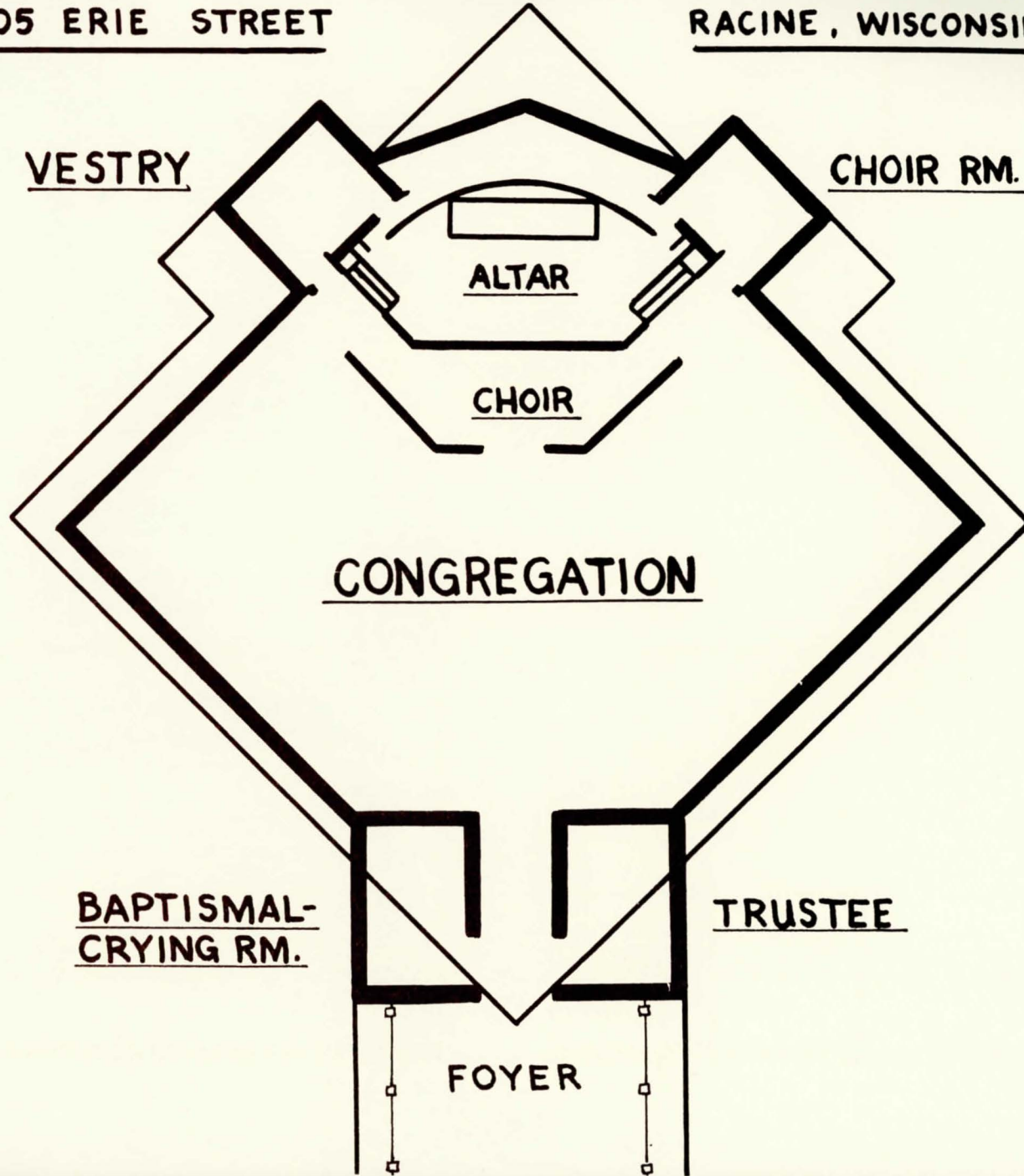




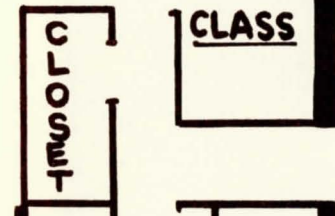
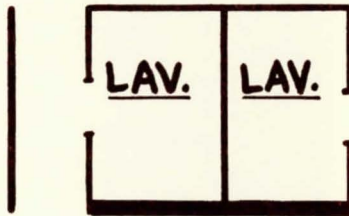
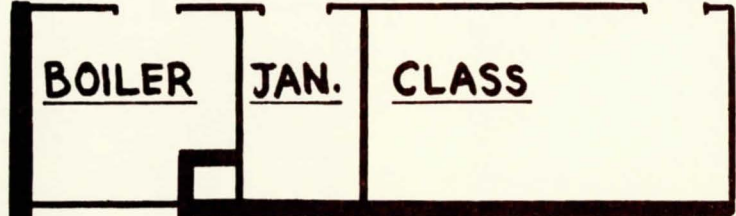
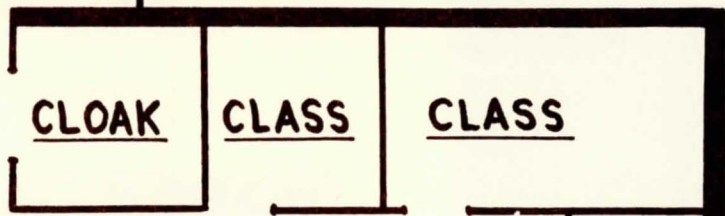
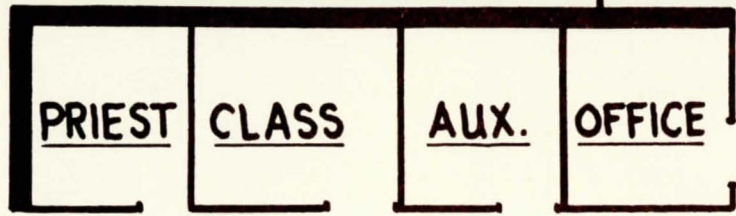
ST. MESROB ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH

4605 ERIE STREET

RACINE, WISCONSIN



FOYER



HALL



The Significance of Consecration

In the Book of Genesis, it is written: "And he (Jacob) took a stone, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on top of it; he called the name of the Place, House of God-Bethel". (Chapter 28. 18-19). Thus began the ritual origins of the consecration of a Christian Church, which go as far back as Hebrew times to the consecration of Solomon's temple.

Consecration is "the act by which a person or thing is separated from common use and permanently dedicated to the service of God". Besides its permanence, a consecration is distinguished from simple blessing by its greater solemnity.

The word "Church" (ecclesia) originally referred to the group of people who came together in order to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. The first Christians did not have special buildings for their religious services. They gathered together in private houses. It was only after the end of the third century that the erection of church buildings began. Our own mother church at Holy Etchmiadzin has the distinction of being one of the very first buildings in the world built especially as a church.

The essential part of the consecration of an Armenian Church is first the anointment of the Altar, then of the two pillars of the front of the Ambon (where the lectern is placed), then consecutively of the western, northern and southern sides of the church, and finally of the Main door. All but the Altar, Ambon and the Main Door are consecrated in the name of the twelve Apostles and of St. Paul. The anointing is done with Holy Chrism or Muron and incense is used throughout the service. Holy Chrism is the symbol of grace or divine presence. Incense is the symbol of praise.

In a truly Christian community all buildings and all things should serve God. An Armenian church is a building where our Lord Himself is bodily present because the Divine Liturgy is celebrated there every Sunday. For this reason it has a very special function. It should be set apart and it should be consecrated.

When a church is consecrated, it is also given a "name". We do not merely name a church, we actually entrust it to the special care of the saint, or saints, to whom the church is dedicated. We make a gift of the church to him. The "naming" of a church also involves a promise. It is a promise of the people of the church to live according to the ideals of the saint invoked, or according to the will of God.

Our church therefore has been "set apart" for a special, sacred purpose. It has been dedicated to God. We have entrusted ourselves to the special care of the saint or saints invoked, and have promised to live as they would wish us to live, namely according to the holy will of God.

The name of our new church, which is the continuation of our old church on State Street of the same name, has been dedicated to the memory of Saint Mesrob. Saint Mesrob invented the Armenian alphabet in 393 A.D. Saint Mesrob and Saint Sahag translated the Holy Bible into Armenian in 426 A.D. They founded the Golden Age of Armenian literature and the Christian culture of the Armenians.

A consecration is also a joyous occasion. It is natural to feel happy and fulfilled when a tremendous task has been successfully completed, and we behold a worthwhile achievement of our own. But we cannot rest until the gift that we make to God through his saints is as perfect as we can make it. We must make our church as beautiful as possible, engaging the help of the finest artists and using the best materials available within the utmost of our financial means. And we must aim, above all, to achieve our own spiritual perfection.

A church is, after all, a house which shelters a family. The people of a parish are a family. We must make a renewed effort on the occasion of the consecration of our church to make the Armenian Christian family of Racine one that brings honor to the name "Armenian" and does justice to the name "Christian".

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Description of the Ceremony of Consecration

On the eve of Consecration, the bishop, the clergy, the choir and the congregation gather outside the Church. The ceremony of Consecration begins with solemn chanting of devotional hymns before the closed door of the Church. The bishop knocks ceremonially at the door of the Church which is then opened and the procession enters the Church.

This is a symbolic service signifying the Lord's acceptance of everybody who wishes to receive salvation into His Church. Then prayers of Thanksgiving, psalms of glorification are said and joyous hymns of triumph are sung for the Lord's acceptance of His people and for His mercy upon His flock.

On Sunday morning, at the beginning of Holy Liturgy, two deacons, bearing two bowls of water and wine, wash the altar and the pillars of the altar first with water and then with wine. And while they are washing, two priests recite the twenty-sixth Psalm in antiphon: "Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity . . ." While they are reciting the Psalm, the Archbishop and Bishop come forth before the altar, vested. One of the priests holding the Holy Chrism (Soorp Muron) goes before the Bishops and then they all go up the bema singing the hymn pertaining to the building of the Church by the Apostles and the missionary work of St. Gregory the Illuminator.

Then the Archbishop censes the Holy Chrism, the clergy and the people. Receiving the Holy Chrism, he blesses the congregation with it, and then lays it upon the altar.

Two of the clergy recite the twenty-third Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd. . . ."

Then the clergy sing the fifth verse, "Thou has prepared before me a table . . ." The Archbishop says a prayer. Then the choir sings the hymn of Holy Spirits, and, while they sing, he pours some of the Holy Chrism on top of the altar three times, also in a small cup; this is followed by the whole congregation singing; "Amen, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. . . ."

The Archbishop, with his right thumb dipped in the Holy Chrism, anoints the top of the Altar in the form of the Cross.

The Archbishop and the Bishop, in like manner, anoint the following, one after the other: the four corners and the front of the altar, the two pillars of the altar, the center of the front of the bema, the east wall (above the main entrance), the north side of the Church on the wall, the south side of the Church on the wall.

Every time the Bishops anoint these special spots, they intone: "Blessed, anointed and sanctified be the top of this Divine Holy Altar of Saint Mesrob Church, with this sign of the Cross and with this Holy Gospel and with this Holy Chrism, and with the grace of this day in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages".

After the consecration of the Church, the Antasdan, which is the solemn blessing of the four sides of the world, takes place.

The Bishops and the clergy then ascend to the bema; one of the Bishops censens the altar and the congregation. One of the priests presents the seven vestments of the altar on a tray to the Bishops. These are a large white, clean cover, four capes, an apron to be hung in front of the altar and a white corporal. The priests also presents five lighted candles, the Holy Gospel, the Cross, and the picture of the Blessed Holy Mother of Jesus. The Bishops then place them all on the altar, kissing them one by one.

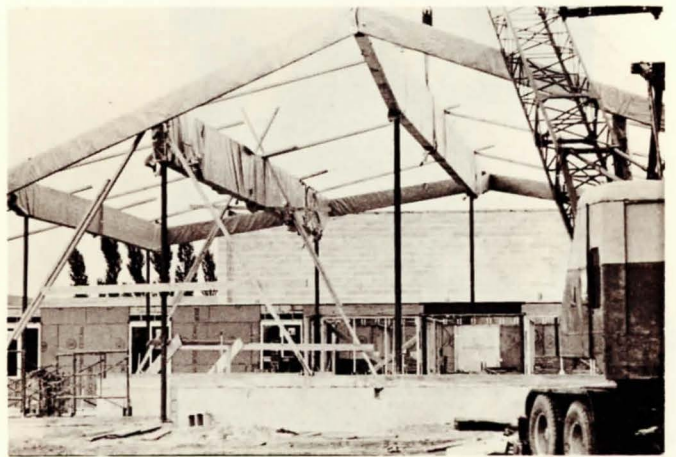
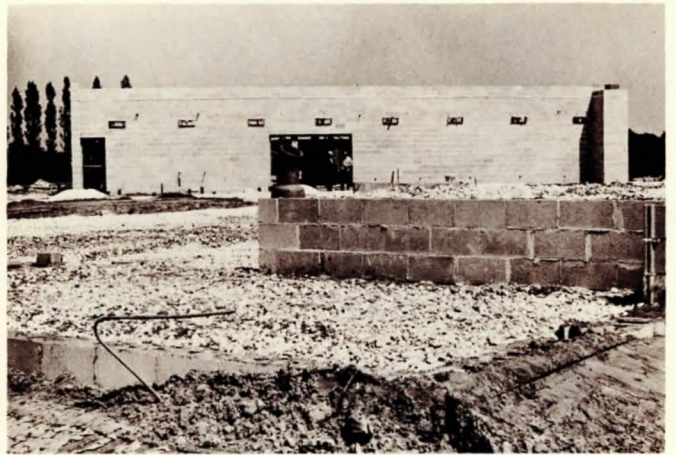
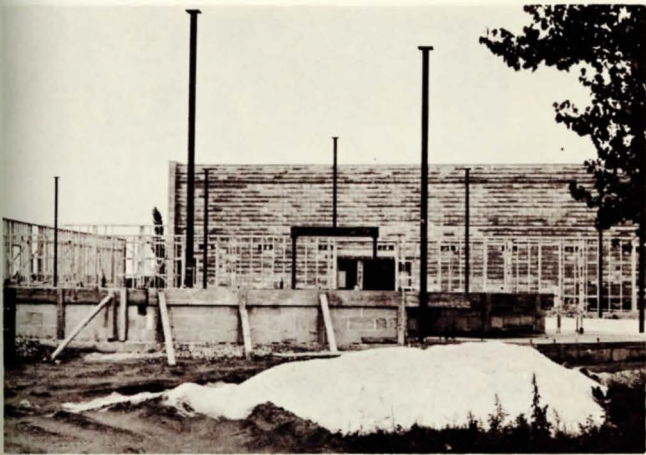
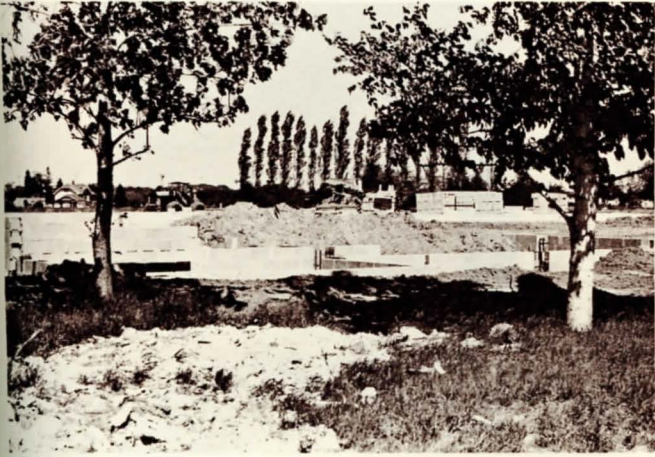
During these arrangements, two deacons say Psalm ninety-three, "The Lord is Kind; He is clothed with majesty" Then comes the prayer of consecration. The curtain is drawn and the deacons adorn the altar with ornaments, candles and flowers. At this time the following lessons are read from the Holy Scriptures:

- 1) Isaiah—Chapter 60: 1-13
- 2) 1st Epistle of the Apostle Peter, 2: 4-10
- 3) The Gospel of St. Matthew, 7: 24-27

Then the curtain is withdrawn and the choir sings the hymn: "Loosavoriya Yeroosaghem"—"Lighten Up, O Jerusalem, for Thy light is come".

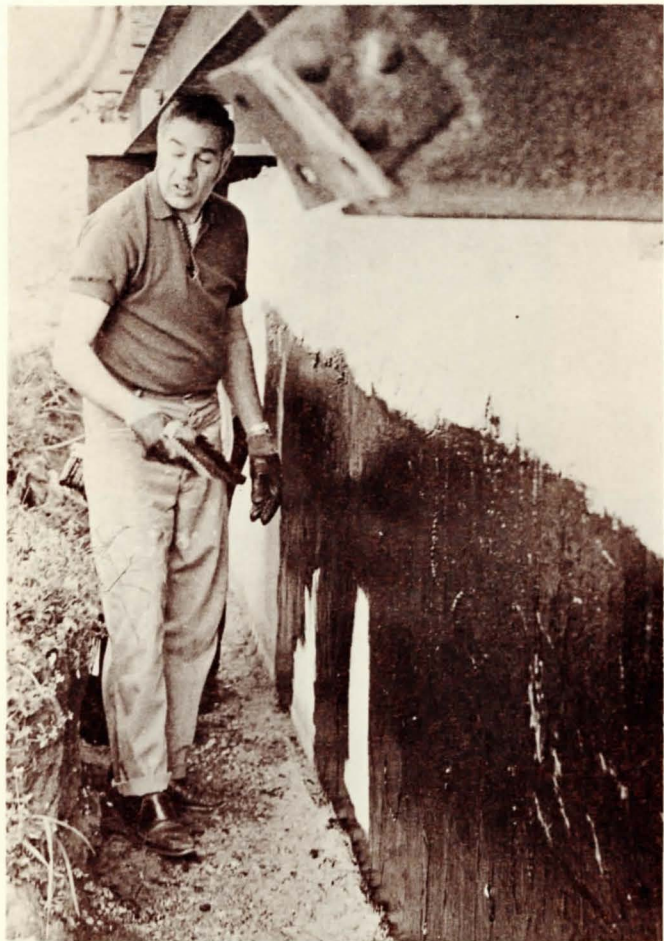
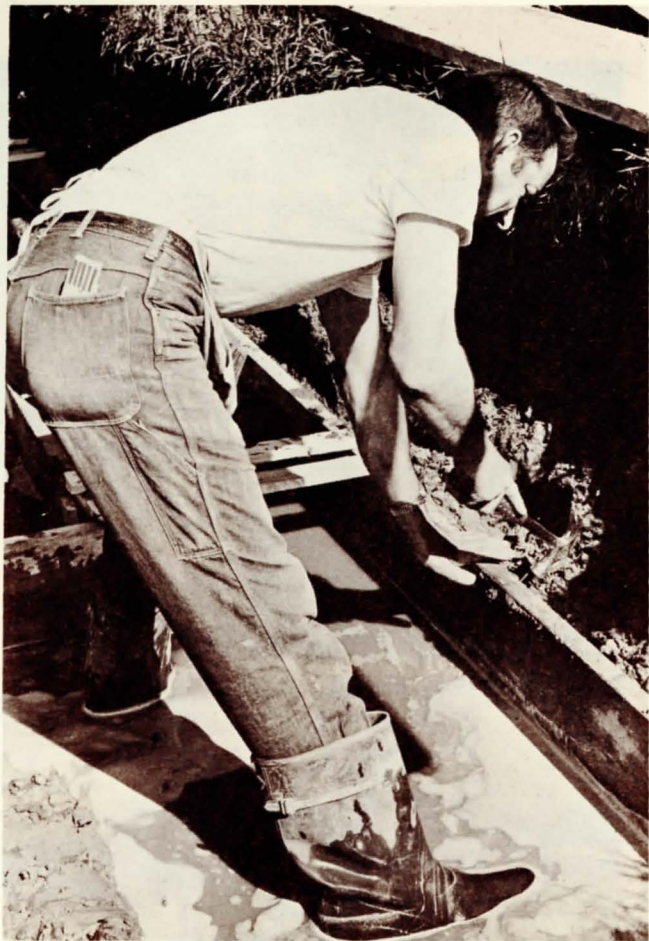
While the hymn is sung, the candlelight service begins, signifying the conclusion of the Consecration and the completion of the celebration with the Bishops lighting their candles from the altar, passing on the light to the other clergy who pass it on to the people to light their candles. The clergy then kiss the Holy Altar and come down in a procession and arrive in the chancel around the Bishops, who offer the Last Prayer and close this special ceremony singing and reciting The Lord's Prayer.













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