

May 27, 1986

Mr. Peter D. Fox, Editor
Journal Times
212 Fourth Street
Racine, WI 53403

Dear Mr. Fox:

We have read with interest, the story which appeared in the Saturday, May 3, edition of your newspaper, reporting on our Diocesan Assembly which took place in your community last week.

The article's headline and opening paragraphs concerning the possibility of admitting women to the Diaconate may cause misunderstandings about our Church's position on this important topic.

The text of the proposal discussed by the representatives to the Assembly carefully describes the procedure to be followed: a request to the Primate of the Diocese to exercise his hierarchical authority, at his discretion, to forward to the head of our Church, His Holiness Vazken I, Catholicos of All Armenians, a request to consider ordination of qualified women to the Diaconate.

It must be recognized that there are several steps that must be taken before such a proposal can be considered for implementation. The action by the delegates last week constitutes a request to the Primate to give this consideration - nothing more. As pointed out in the article, there is a great deal of work, examining our Church canons and procedures, which must be completed before further steps can be taken.

Our purpose is not to indicate rejection of this proposal, but rather to temper the enthusiasm of those who may read the story and believe that such ordination of women to the Diaconate is imminent. That is not the case.

Our Church traces its roots back to the beginnings of Christianity, when two of Christ's disciples, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, came to Armenia to preach the Gospel and died there, martyrs to the Faith. Changes in the way our Church operates are not made pre-emptorially but only after careful consideration of all aspects of the matter.

One last point, the Diocese is reported in the article to cover all of North America except Canada. There is, in fact, a Diocese that incorporates the state of California, where many of our fellow Christian Armenians reside.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Nanoogian
Primate

To: Sylvia Terzibashian

From: Nina Marson

Date: May 19, 1986

Re: LETTER TO JOURNAL TIMES, RACINE, WI - MAY 13, 1986

I just spoke to Frank Corbin on the telephone. He called Racine in reference to the letter from the Primate. The letter was addressed to Howard Hoffmaster and he has recently left the newspaper. The new editor is Peter D. Fox. The address is the same. One would think the new editor would get the letter, but he didn't. Could you please re-do the letter exactly the same only addressed to Peter D. Fox? I would think the Primate would want it out overnight mail again.

Nina