

630 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10016-4885  
 Department of Youth Ministry  
 DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH

## THE TRIVIA BOX

Each month a question will appear in the trivia box. We hope that you will try to answer the question. Research may be necessary! Please send in your answer to the Department of Youth Ministry, 630 Second Avenue, New York, New York, 10016-4885. Each issue of *The Circular File* will contain a trivia question, those college students who answer the question correctly will receive a special prize compliments of the DYM. It will be worth your efforts—trust us!

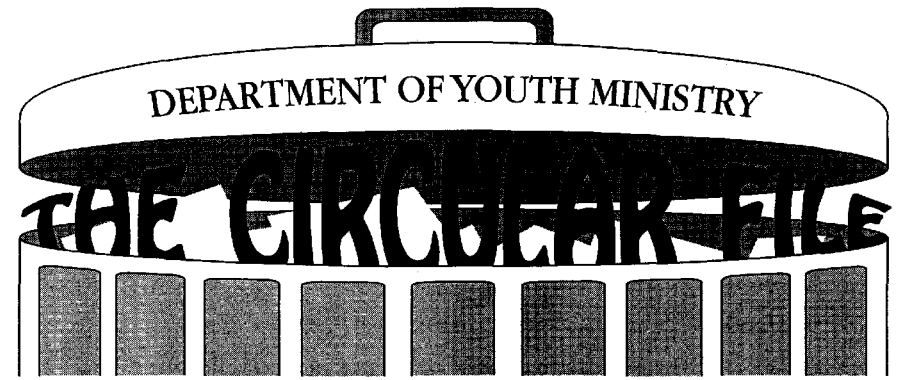
*How can I receive The Circular File again next year?*

## IN SEARCH OF...ALL ARMENIAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

The Department of Youth Ministry is gathering the names, addresses and phone numbers of all Armenian College Students. YOU can help us!! Do you have a friend that would like to receive *The Circular File*, as well as being on our mailing list? If so, send us their address or pass *The Circular File* onwards—that is to your friend—not the trash.

PLEASE FILL OUT THE FOLLOWING FORM AND MAIL TO:  
 DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH  
 Department of Youth Ministry  
 630 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10016-4885

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 COLLEGE \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PARISH \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



THE CIRCULAR FILE • APRIL/MAY 1995 • VOLUME I, NUMBER 5

## family tree

1. A genealogical diagram of a family's ancestry.
2. The ancestors and descendants of a family considered as a group.

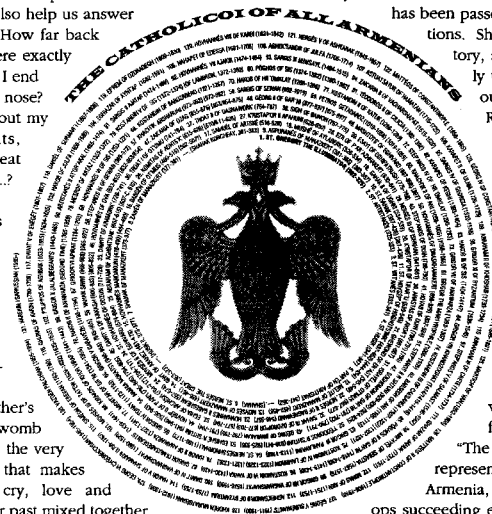
Webster has spoken... translation please... In other words, family trees help us reach the root of our human existence through tracing the familial clans that we call our own, whether it be the Najarian clan, the Hovhannessian clan, the Kasparian clan or the Smith clan. Family trees also help us answer the following questions: How far back can I trace my roots? Where exactly did I come from? How did I end up with this Armenian nose? How can I learn more about my ancestors—grandparents, great grandparents, great great grandparents, etc...? At some point in our lives most of us ask these kinds of questions.

The blood in our bodies is our own and it makes us who we are, yet that same blood, whether we like it or not, has been passed on through generations—from your mother's womb, from her mother's womb and her mother's womb—you get the point. It is the very blood inside your body that makes you tick, think, react, cry, love and breathe. It is you and your past mixed together in this miraculous, plasmic, blue substance inside your body that is either A, B, O negative, O positive or something else rare, and without it you would not exist. So now it seems understandable why you ask yourself, "Where did my

blood come from? What village did my grandparents come from in Armenia? How did my family end up in Iran, France, America or Lebanon?"

Have you ever considered that the Church is like a family tree? She has her roots planted in firm soil, that has been passed on throughout the generations. She has a place of origin, a history, a blood line and yes, a family tree. The recent elections of our new Catholicos in the Republic of Armenia is a prime example of how the family tree of the Church exists, operates and is preserved.

The Armenian Church is an Orthodox (true faith) Church with its Christological foundations founded in Apostolic succession. This means our national Armenian Church traces her origins to Jesus Christ and His Apostles, whom were chosen to be the first followers of Jesus Christ. "The Catholicos of All Armenians represents the Apostolic succession in Armenia, where through a line of bishops succeeding each other the ministry of the Christian Church, assigned to the Apostles by Jesus Christ, has been transmitted to the present." (Chosen of God: The Election of the Catholicos of All Armenians, Krikor Vardapet Maksoudian).



continues on page 2

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear CF Readers:



**KRISDOS HARYAV EE MERELTZ  
ORHNYAL EH HAROUTYOUNN KRISDOSEJ**

**CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD  
BLESSED IS THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST!**

Hello, hope this issue of *The Circular File* finds you well in health and in spirits. This will be the last CF issue until the fall. Congratulations to the graduating class of 1995. May God shower you with His blessings. It has been an exciting year, especially with the creation of *The Circular File*. It has been a pleasure preparing each issue and I hope you have enjoyed our College newsletter. Please stay in touch and if there is anything we can do for you at the Diocese, please do not hesitate to call us. Don't forget the Armenian Church is your home.

Sincerely,

Dn. Greg Doudoukjian

Dear Students:

We hope that you have enjoyed this new publication of the Department of Youth Ministry. We have enjoyed bringing it to you and hearing from you as well. This year the department was able to visit college campuses and meet many of you. We hope that next year we will be able to increase our visitations and meetings.

*The Circular File* got off to a great start and we are already planning for the fall semester. We are concerned, however, that many of you will have new housing in the fall and that new students will be attending your colleges and universities. In order for us to be able to reach you and your fellow Armenian students, please let us know your new campus address as soon as you know it and, if there are new Armenian students at your school, please pass their addresses along to us as well. We are interested in reaching as many students as possible and you can be a great help to us. In the fall of 1994 we had almost no Armenian college student addresses—today, we have over 450! We would like to see that number grow next year. You can help.

We hope you have a wonderful summer. If you are in New York, please stop by 630 Second Avenue (at 34th Street—you can't miss the building!) We would love to meet you.

Sincerely,

Laura Gordonian

Director, Department of Youth Ministry

*family tree**continued from the front page*

From the missionary works of Saints Thaddeus and Bartholomew in Armenia, to the time when St. Gregory was consecrated the first Catholicos (also known as the Supreme Patriarch) of All Armenians in 302 AD in Etchmiadzin, the role of the Catholicos has remained steadfast—overseeing the spiritual and national needs of the Armenian people. On April 4, 1995, in the holy city of Etchmiadzin, Armenia, His Holiness Karekin Sarkissian II, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, was elected as the 131st Catholicos of All Armenians to sit on this supreme, illustrious, unceasing, apostolic throne originated by St. Gregory the Illuminator. The throne of the Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians is a chain link unbroken through the test of time, with its origins based on the Apostolic mission of Thaddeus and Bartholomew.

We, as baptized members of the Armenian Church, also feel the direct connection to this Apostolic family tree. Trace it as such:

- a) Jesus Christ commanded the eleven Apostles to "go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you..." (Matthew 28:18-20)
- b) Following the crucifixion of our Lord and the beginning of the Apostolic mission, chief Bishops and Catholicos were consecrated for Armenia
- c) St. Gregory the Illuminator, originally from Parthia, was consecrated Catholicos of All Armenians and he established the Supreme Episcopal throne in Etchmiadzin, Armenia
- d) Subsequent Catholicos were then consecrated
- e) Each Catholicos consecrated a number of bishops
- f) Those bishops ordained a number of priests
- g) These priests baptized members of the Armenian Church—which include all of us. This is our family tree and our direct chain link to the Catholicos of All Armenians.

Just as the blood line that runs through our veins is vital to our existence, the role of the Catholicos is essential to the existence of the Armenian Church. Without a Catholicos occupying the throne of St. Gregory the Illuminator, the Church is without a leader, without direction and without a

spiritual father. Likewise, we, without a family tree or without roots are unconnected, lifeless and lost.

Soon after Catholicos Karekin I consecrates his first bishop of the Armenian Church (which is a distinct liturgical rite reserved only for the Supreme Patriarch) and that newly consecrated bishop ordains a priest, and the priest baptizes children—the blood line of the Armenian Church continues... How do you fit in?

For further information regarding the position of the Catholicos in the Armenian Church or its electoral process, please see the following material:

**CHOSEN OF GOD:**

**The Election of the Catholicos of All Armenians**  
by Krikor Vardapet Maksoudian

**THE CATHOLICOI OF ETCHMIADZIN:  
An Overview of the Electoral Process**  
by Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian

*Window Quarterly* Vol IV, No. 2  
His Holiness Vazken I Catholicos of All Armenians,  
1908-1994.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- June 2-4 **Archbishop Torkom Manoogian  
Invitational Tournament**  
The Armenian Church of Our Savior,  
Worcester, MA  
Contact: Ed Kachjian (508) 791-0161
- Jun 11-Jul 21 **Diocesan Summer Internship**
- June 17 **Youth Worker's Training Seminar  
Mid-West Region**
- Jul 12-Aug 10 **ACYOA ASP**  
(Armenian Service Program)
- September 1-4 **ACYOA National Sports Weekend**  
St. Leon Armenian Church, Fair Lawn,  
NJ Contact: Susan Chagachbanian  
(201) 891-3026

*A special Thank You to Peter Mabakian, the graphic designer at the Diocese of the Armenian Church and a CF supporter. He has done a spectacular job with the graphics for The Circular File. Many hours have been devoted to the contemplation process for the sake of creativity. Your efforts are appreciated—Thank you Peter!*

## \*\* TRIVIA BOX WINNERS \*\*

The following are the answers to the  
Trivia Box Questions:

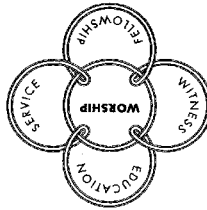
- #1 What 5 Churches constitute the Oriental Orthodox Family**  
1. Armenian 2. Ethiopian 3. Indian  
4. Assyrian 5. Coptic
- #2 Name the Twelve Apostles**  
1. Simon Peter 2. Andrew 3. Philip  
4. Matthew 5. Simon 6. Bartholomew  
7. John 8. James, son of Zebedee  
9. James, son of Alphaeus 10. Judas Iscariot  
11. Thaddeus 12. Thomas  
*\*Matthias was elected to fill the void left by the  
suicide of Judas*
- #3 When is the first day of Great Lent in the Armenian Church**  
*The Monday immediately following the Sunday  
of Poon Paregentian*
- #4 What are the seven sacraments of the Armenian Church**  
1. Baptism 2. Chrismation 3. Communion  
4. Marriage 5. Holy Orders 6. Penance  
7. Unction (special service for the sick)
- #5 How can I receive The Circular File again next year?**  
*Next Fall, during your first week of classes, mail  
your college address to Diocesan Department of  
Youth Ministry, 630 Second Avenue, New York,  
New York 10016-4885*

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS!

Please contact the Department of Youth Ministry immediately to receive your special prize—please inform us of your summer address so we can mail the gift to you.

Stephen Arakelian  
Mibran Toumajian  
Christa Chalekian  
Haig Tebeurekdjian  
Nadine Perry Arzumian  
Alice Pakhtigian  
Robert D. Coffin  
Tom Kasparian  
Chris Zakian  
Jacqueline Metjian





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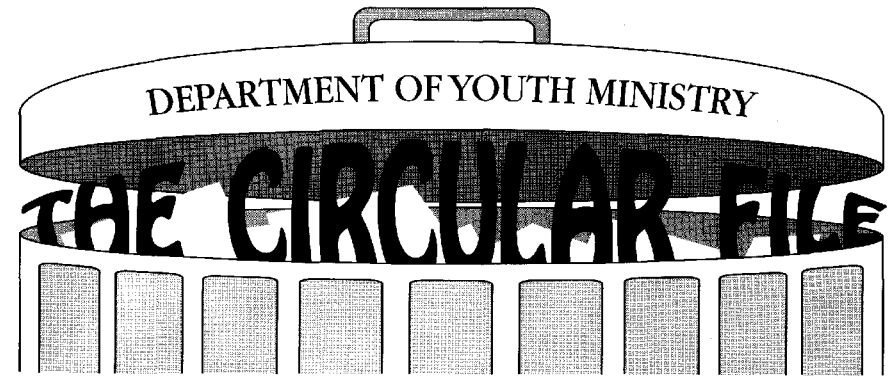
*What are the seven sacraments of the Armenian Church?*

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 COLLEGE \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PARISH \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_



THE CIRCULAR FILE • FEBRUARY/MARCH 1995 • VOLUME I, NUMBER 4



### I HEAR IT ALL THE TIME.

"Our worship services in the Armenian Church are too long." "The service on Sunday is in a strange language and I can't understand what's going on." "I can't relate to it." "It's not relevant to my everyday life." "I don't have time."

From a consumer point of view, who can fault the critics? In this day and age of limited resources, no one has time for tedious, archaic, drawn-out church services. The churches that are thriving in America are those offering a palatable, user friendly worship experience, churches that provide an attractive,

Submitted by  
**Dr. Michael Findikyan**,  
 who is currently pursuing  
 a Ph.D in Liturgical  
 studies at the Pontifical  
 Oriental Institute  
 in the Vatican, Rome, Italy.  
 He is a graduate of  
 St. Nersess Armenian  
 Seminary.

immediately relevant, succinct Sunday morning service. On the other hand, should the Church really design her worship using the same marketing strategy as McDonald's? At that venerable American institution the emphasis is on convenience. You are in and out in less time it would take you to be seated in another restaurant. The menu is clear, colorful and concise. The product is attractively packaged and distributed, and the whole process of ordering, receiving and eating your lunch requires little or no thought, time or effort. This is exactly what is going on in many contemporary American religious circles nowadays. Everything is simple, attractive and nice: Jesus loves you, be happy. Their Sunday worship is just agreeable, convenient and effortless: sit in the pew, listen and reflect a while, then go home inspired.

But our worship in the Armenian Church is different. It seems to go out of its way to be obscure, indirect, abstract.

It's hard. But then so is the Church. So is being a Christian. Faith doesn't come easily. Believing is tough. Things don't make sense. There are contradictions. Anybody who tells you that it's easy to be a Christian, to accept the Gospel,

to believe in God, to understand the Bible, and to really integrate it all into your daily life obviously doesn't know the first thing about what real faith and Christianity are all about. Look at the history of the Armenians and ask yourself if their more than 1500 years of bloody struggle to preserve the Christian faith was easy or convenient. Martyrdom and crucifixion aren't pretty.

Part of the reason, of course, is that God is hard to nail down. Being almighty, infinite, invisible and everywhere, he is outside our usual categories of perception, apprehension and understanding. That makes worshipping Him, or finding Him for that matter, a fairly ambitious undertaking. Things would certainly be easier if God had an e-mail address.



*continues on page 2*

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

Dear CF Readers:

Long time no see...It has been a few months since we last communicated. Hope you are all well. In the midst of your crazy schedules—to and from Spring Break—to and from classes and mid-terms—yet another issue of *The Circular File* comes your way, another insertion of the Armenian Church in your busy, hectic, changing lives.

The DYM has been very busy taking programs on the road and visiting you—Armenian college students. Visitations have been made to the following places: Michigan, Boston, Washington DC, and Wisconsin. It is a pleasure to see many college students involved in our church communities.

The response to *The Circular File* has been overwhelmingly positive and the number of college students in our data base has reached close to 500. We hope you enjoy this special double issue.

FYI...*The Circular File* is a publication designed especially for Armenian college students, but as you will see from a letter to the editor, not all readers are college age students. The more the merrier. Until next time...

Sincerely,

*Dn. Greg Doudoukjian*  
Dn. Greg Doudoukjian

Jacqueline Feb. 12 1995  
Metjian 115 Standish rd.  
I am seven years old. I go to Sunday School every week at St. James church Watertown Ma. I learned the twelve apostles in first grade last year.

1. Andrew 11. Thomas  
2. Bartholomew 12. Thaddeus  
3. James  
4. James  
5. John  
6. Matthew  
7. Matthias  
8. Peter  
9. Philip  
10. Simon

**Some Assembly Required**

*continued from the front page*



No, real Christian faith was never intended to be easy. Jesus never claimed that following Him would be effortless and "nice." No sooner had he called his disciples around him than he began to tell them what was really in store for them: wolves, swords, rejection, condemnation, flogging, hate, murder [Mt. 10:16-39]. The travesty of our day is the wildly popular fantasy that Christian faith and worship is all about feeling good, sitting back for a Sunday religious high to get you through the week. Too few people realize that real Christian worship demands a sizable investment of effort and energy and a considerable dose of endurance and perseverance.

The word "liturgy," in fact, comes from a Greek root that means "work" or "energy." So liturgy is actually all about people WORKING for God. It is a process that involves intellectual, spiritual and even physical SWEAT. It is not intended for the mindless, the brainless, the gutless, or anyone who wants to squeak by with the least possible amount of effort and energy. There is no easy way out, sorry.

In the Armenian Church, we don't sit back and contemplate our faith. We DO it. We worship the Lord as Jesus told us, "with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength" [Mark 12:30]. We throw ourselves totally into worshipping God, using our bodies and all our senses to dynamically affirm and celebrate our faith. Thoughts and intentions are abstract, personal, easily misunderstood. Actions, movements, gestures and deeds are concrete, public, bold and in-your-face. We don't wait for God to read our minds. We affirm to him and to the world (not to mention ourselves) the Christian faith that we believe. This is the kind of worship that the Armenian Church and all of the ancient Christian churches insist on.

Our liturgy is not brief and to the point. We say what we have to say once, twice, again and again. Our goal is not economy, it is thoroughness and public proclamation of our faith beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Our liturgy is not provided for you, much less to meet your "spiritual needs." It is not for your listening pleasure. The focus is not you, it is God. We gather together to give thanks actively and dynamically to Him who meets all of our needs.

We don't sit in cushioned pews and think about our Christian faith, we stand on our feet, for hours, proud and tall in our God-given status as adopted brothers of Christ, God's precious children [Gal 4:25-27].

We don't just read the gospel and talk about it, we sing it, loud, with complicated melodies passed down from our ancestors.

We don't just think about the saving mystery of Christ's crucifixion, we imprint it on our bodies and souls by making the sign of the cross, dozens of times in each Divine Liturgy, clearly and plainly for all to see.



**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

- APR 9 Palm Sunday (ACYOA Day)
- APR 16 Easter Sunday
- APR 23 Armenian Martyrs Day Times Square Commemoration, NYC, 2:00pm  
Contact: DYM (212) 686-0710
- APR 24 Armenian Martyrs Day Service & Concert, St. Patrick's Cathedral 6:45pm  
Contact: DYM (212) 686-0710
- JUN 2-4 Archbishop Torkom Manoogian Invitational Tournament  
The Armenian Church of Our Savior, Worcester, MA  
Contact: Ed Kachjian (508) 791-0161
- JUN 11-JUL 21 Diocesan Summer Internship
- JUL 12-AUG 10 ACYOA ASP (Armenian Service Program)
- SEP 1-4 ACYOA National Sports Weekend  
St. Leon Armenian Church, Fair Lawn, NJ  
Contact: Susan Chagachbanian (201) 891-3026

**HELP WANTED  
SUMMER  
OPPORTUNITIES**

**St. Vartan Camp**  
July 2-15, 1995

St. Vartan Camp is looking for a sports director to coordinate their sports program this summer for children and youth between the ages of 8 and 15. Salary commensurate with experience. If interested, contact Nancy Basmajian at (212) 686-0710.

**St. Nersess Summer Conferences**  
July 23-August 5, 1995

Counselors are needed to work with junior high school and high school students. Learn about the Armenian Church, faith and culture. Stipend available. If interested, contact Dn. Greg Doudoukjian at (212) 686-0710.

**The only thing missing from  
the Armenian Church this Sunday is  
U.**

**YOUNG ADULTS COMMUNITY NETWORK**

*Important people, places & numbers at your fingertips*

- Boston**  
Lisa Sarkisian—CPA - Accountant  
(508) 392-9721
- NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY**  
Levon Altiparmakian—Culinary Specialist  
(201) 944-7485  
Meline Kasparian—Banking  
(212) 622-0045
- Detroit**  
Sara Andonian—Tax Specialist & legal advice  
(810) 827-1894

- IMPORTANT NUMBERS**  
Youth Crisis Hotline  
(800) 422-0009
- National AIDS Hotline**  
(800) 342-2437
- Environmental Protection Agency**  
(202) 260-4700
- The White House—President Bill Clinton**  
(202) 456-1414



## NEW RELEASE

## The Armenian Church Hits Fifth Gear on Mass Pike

*...traveling east on Interstate 84...continue to Mass Pike-exit 14*

"God should give us more credit for believing in Him, after all the disciples witnessed signs and miracles firsthand, we do not that advantage," stated a faithful Armenian college student from Bentley College. Another student from the same college expressed the following; "I am surprisingly delighted to see the Armenian Church come to my campus to perform a church service and hold an informal discussion such as this, I know other denominations come to this campus but never has the Armenian Church." These are just a few of the comments proclaimed by Armenian college students during the successful Diocesan Department of Youth Ministry (DYM) New England College Campus Tour, held in conjunction with the Holy Trinity Senior ACYOA chapter of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The New England College Campus Tour was held on President's Day weekend, February 17-19, 1995, and attracted over 50 Armenian college students. The College Tour weekend, organized by the Department of Youth Ministry was led by Deacon Greg Doudoukjian, DYM Young Adults Coordinator and Reverend Father Vasken Kouzouian, newly ordained clergyman from the Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge. The two talented and pastoral clergymen, working together as a team and in the spirit of campus ministry, brought the faith and doctrines of the Armenian Church and the Gospel of Jesus Christ to four different Armenian clubs in the state of Massachusetts.

One of the many college students, who participated in the weekend, summed up the DYM visitations by expressing his appreciation to the Armenian Church for becoming involved in the lives of the Armenian college students. He concluded by saying, "the work of the DYM is appreciated."

The Campus Tour officially began on Saturday afternoon at 12:00pm with the two clergymen being enthusiastically greeted by the members of the Boston University Armenian Club. The program included a short worship service, an introduction about the Armenian Church, and a question and answer period. The students reacted favorably to the format of the afternoon. Yeretzgin Arpi Kouzouian and Paulette



*Fr. Vasken, Dn. Greg and Boston University Armenian Club college students caught in a "Kodak moment".*

Doudoukjian, wives of the clergymen, also participated in the traveling programs, offering their experience and viewpoints on the Church.

On that same Saturday afternoon at 2:00pm and 4:00pm, similar programs were conducted at Tufts University and Bentley College. The evening concluded with a free, delicious dinner for all Boston area Armenian college students at Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge. Early Saturday evening, Fr. Vasken, Yn. Arpi, Dn. Greg and Paulette were seen wearing aprons in the Holy Trinity kitchen, preparing the traditional chicken and pilaf dinner. Offering culinary expertise and a helping hand was Nevart Hamamjian, an employee of Bentley College and chairperson of the Holy Trinity Senior ACYOA. Following dinner, the students viewed the movie "With Honors" and participated in a lively discussion on the relevancy of the film in their daily lives.

On Sunday morning, the Campus Tour continued, as it traveled to exit 7 on the Mass Pike to St. Mark Armenian Church in Springfield, Massachusetts. Fr. Vasken, who is expected to serve as pastor of St. Mark, as of Easter Sunday, celebrated Divine Liturgy along with Dn. Greg serving as deacon. The Armenian Club from the University of Massachusetts (Amherst Campus) was invited to Divine Liturgy. Following liturgy, the students were greeted by the St. Mark community, then invited to a lunch and program at the parish house. At the conclusion of the program, "doggie" bags were prepared and given to all the students to take back to their dorms.

The Armenian college students who participated in the weekend activities were no different from typical college stu-

*continues on page 5*

## A Personal Reflection...

After two bus rides and walking for awhile in the wrong direction, I finally arrived. At least the trip had given me time to think. The past few days—college orientation—were a blur. Between registering for classes, meeting my roommate, attending all the orientation seminars and getting an ID, I was beginning to wonder when everything would fall into place. Would I ever feel like this place was my home—at least for four years? Would college be "the best years of my life," as I had been so often told?

When I saw the church in the distance, I immediately felt relieved. It was nearly 11:30, so I hurried up the front steps of St. James Armenian Church in Watertown, MA. When I entered the church, a calm, peaceful feeling came over me. The priest was beginning his sermon, so I took a seat in the balcony. I looked down over the congregation and recognized several familiar faces. I was amazed that I was feeling comfortable and at ease for the first time since I had left home. During coffee hour, I was welcomed by those whom I knew, and introduced to many of those unfamiliar to me. As I was leaving, I decided that church would be a regular part of my routine while at school.

Over the course of my four years there, many more of those faces became familiar, and I truly felt at home. I participated in the activities of the ACYOA, and co-taught a Sunday School class one year. I made many new friends, and I looked forward to going each week. While in college, I went through many changes, but the one thing that remained constant was my affiliation with the church. It was great to be able to get away from school once a week, to reflect and enjoy the Badarak, and return ready to face the academic and other challenges that awaited me. I reflect on those years and I realize that attending church was one of the most important things I did while I was at college, as it allowed me to maintain my connection with the Armenian community.

**Meliné Kasparian**  
ACYOA Central Council Chairman  
Graduate Tufts University, 1993  
BA International Relations

## Campus Tour...

*continued from page 4*

dents as a whole. They were open and welcomed the opportunity to discuss intimate issues pertinent to their lives. Contemporary issues such as abortion, teenage pregnancy, euthanasia, life after death, reincarnation, drugs and alcohol, and faith struggles were discussed with the position of the Armenian Church given as a source of direction and guidance for the students. Other issues included, "How do I become a member of the Armenian Church?"... "What does it mean to be a member of the Armenian Church?"... "What are the requirements for marriage in the Armenian Church?" Overall, the students were quite curious about the Armenian Church and Her teachings.

As independent thinkers, college students enter into the transitional process of adulthood, as they search for answers to many serious questions. What is the meaning of life? Who am I? Do I believe in God? Which faith do I follow? These are all natural and important questions all students ponder. This type of internal questioning places a big responsibility on Armenian clubs to answer the identity question and the Armenian Church to answer the questions about religion and faith. The campus college tour during President's weekend answered some of these questions for Armenian college students.

If anyone is interested in obtaining further information regarding college programs or other youth related activities, please contact the DYM at (212) 686-0710.



*Members of the Boston University Armenian Club participating in a discussion on contemporary issues.*



# ACYOA ASP (Armenia Service Program)



July 12 - August 10, 1995

Live in Armenia—Work in Armenia... **MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

This summer an exciting opportunity is being offered to the young adults of the Armenian Church. The Armenia Service Program (ASP) will take place from July 12 through August 10, 1995. Participants in this summer program will run a camp for young children in Yeghegnadzor. The group will spend time with the children on a daily basis teaching them, playing with them and learning from them. In addition to the camping program, participants will also assist with pre-renovation clean-up of a nearby ancient monastery "Hermone-vank" in the Siunik Diocese in southern Armenia.

Aside from the service project, participants will visit the major historical and religious sites of Armenia, spend time at Holy Etchmiadzin, attend bible-studies/worship services, as well as classes in language, music, dance and history. The participants will be immersed in Armenian culture and religion during their stay. Most importantly, and central to the program, is the hands-on experience they will have, truly contributing to the life of the church and the lives of the children they will be meeting. This is not a tourist trip. It is a unique chance for the young adults of our Diocese to not only live in Armenia for one month, but to assist the church in ministering to its young children and to participate in the exciting changes that are happening every day in the Republic of Armenia.

Participants in the ACYOA ASP, ages 19 and older, will experience first hand the changing political, religious and economic life of the Republic of Armenia, as well as the present difficulties of day to day living.

Interested individuals must complete an application form—space is limited to 20. Some knowledge of Armenian is helpful, but not required.

Deadline for applications: **June 1, 1995.**

# Diocesan Summer Internship Program



June 11 - July 21, 1995

Diocesan Headquarters, New York City

*Start spreading the news...I'm leaving today...I want to be a part of it...New York, New York*

The Diocesan Summer Internship Program will be offered once again by the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America for undergraduate and graduate students who are at least 19 years of age.

Four interns will be selected to work in the following departments of the Diocesan headquarters in New York City:

- The Department of Religious Education • The Zohrab Information Center • The Department of Public Relations
- The Armenian Language Lab and Resource Center • The Department of Social Services
- The Fund for Armenian Relief • The Department of Youth Ministry • St. Vartan Cathedral

The participants will have an opportunity to work on a variety of projects within their assigned departments.

The six-week program will also familiarize the students with Diocesan operations and include daily bible study/worship and Armenian language instruction. In addition, the interns will be exposed to the excitement and culture of New York City.

Accommodations at New York University and a weekly stipend will be provided. Students are encouraged to apply now and to discuss the possibility of an Independent Study with their advisors or instructors.

Deadline for Application: **May 1, 1995.**

For more information and application materials, contact:

Laura Gononian, Director of Youth Ministry, Diocese of the Armenian Church of America  
630 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10016 (212) 686-0710

Please send me:  an application for the **Armenia Service Program**  
 an application for the **Diocesan Summer Internship Program**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
College \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_



We don't just think about how great and powerful God is, we bow down to Him in worship, fifteen, twenty times in each Divine Liturgy, remembering that He is God and we are His creatures. We demonstrate our devotion to Him by a concrete, physical gesture.

We don't fondly remember Christ's last supper, we DO it, every Sunday, just as he told us to: "This is my body which is for you. *Do this in remembrance of me.* For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." [1 Cor 11:25-26]. And we don't waver when Christ says, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of this world is my flesh" [Jn 6:51]. We do what he said. Boldly, an act of hard-core, raw faith. Do we understand exactly, precisely, scientifically, mathematically, metaphysically, beyond the shadow of a doubt what he was talking about when he uttered those words? Of course not. But then, we know very well that if God is God, and we are not, then we probably shouldn't expect to be able to understand everything.

So we boldly approach the altar and receive holy communion, knowing that what we are receiving is not plain bread and wine anymore, but Christ himself, his body and blood, in a way that we readily admit, we don't completely understand. And that's OK. The greatest theologians, saints and fathers of the Armenian Church didn't understand it either; in the prayers and sermons that they wrote, they simply acknowledge this and call the whole thing a mystery. But it is a mystery which we know is life-giving and true.

Is all of this easy? Is it user-friendly? Will it fit conveniently into your schedule? No. You have to make the investment and do the work. That's how real, meaningful faith grows. When Christ called his disciples, He did not send them a professional video explaining the entire project, an 800 number to call for further information, a chauffeur-driven limousine, and a 90-day money-back guarantee. He said two words: "Follow me." They did. It wasn't easy and they had no guarantees except the Word of the Lord himself. We in the Armenian Church have the same Word plus a time-and-battle-tested tradition that reaches back to Christ's disciples themselves.

What does all of this mean? It means most importantly that you alone will decide how, if at all, to respond to God's call. There is certainly plenty of easy religion out there. Simple answers that require a minimal investment of your admittedly valuable time and energy. You are free to choose from any of them and hope that it will satisfy you for a while.

Or you can choose an even easier route. You can escape and simply ignore the issue. Ignore God, ignore the Bible, put out of your mind the faith which your Armenian ancestors—your blood relatives—sacrificed their lives to hand over to you. Pretend the whole thing is



a colorful fable, Jesus Christ, the early Church, the martyrs, the saints, the genocide. Go ahead and put out of your mind all those nagging human questions: good, evil, suffering, guilt, life, love, death... And by all means jump on the bandwagon with the critics and join their chorus of complaints about the Church, the priest, the hypocrites, the language, the politics, the male clergy. Don't worry, it doesn't take a genius to find faults, especially in the Church, which, like every other association of human beings in the history of civilization, is filled with a bunch of imperfect people, sometimes doing their best, often failing miserably.

Much more difficult is to refuse to fall prey to the stock condemnations; to go to church and to stubbornly seek Christ in the liturgy. Make the investment. Dig into the mystery of our salvation in Christ as it is proclaimed and celebrated in the Divine Liturgy.

Defy the supposed language barrier. Read the prayers. Pray them with the priest. Learn them by heart in English, Armenian, Japanese, or whatever, but know them—they are yours. Energize every prayer of the priest by following along and at the end loudly affirming, "Amen!"

Dare to publicly declare yourself a Christian by imprinting yourself with the sign of Christ's holy cross. Bow down and worship when the deacon invites you to do so. Recite the Nicene Creed and make the effort to understand and integrate that bold confession of faith into your own convictions. During the hymn "Der Voghormya [Lord, have mercy]" pray hard for every person in the Church, by name if you can, starting with the biggest hypocrite.

March forward and receive Jesus Christ physically, mystically, in his body and blood. Struggle to believe even without understanding every detail. Christ, the Son of God Himself has come into your life, into your body, in the most physical, real way. And you have received Him. You have become united to Him. He is with you.

Work to understand. Don't wait for someone to explain, ask, demand! And ask again and again if you're not satisfied with the answer. Read the Bible regularly, a chapter a day. It is the only text-book of the liturgy. Think, activate that brain God gave you, make the connections, make sense out of it all. Plow through the excuses and obstacles and find God. He is there, He is in the Armenian Church. He is waiting for you. He is calling you. But He will not send a limousine. You must first knock, and then He will open the door [Mt 7:7].

Here's the final exam. Your choice: take-home multiple guess, or three-hour oral in front of the entire faculty. Which one is easier? Which one will more truly gauge:

WHO YOU ARE and WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER?

*"For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few" [Mt 7:14].*

