

CLERGY CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

Elkins Park, PA, May 5, 2000

1) YOUTH:

Moderator: Rev. Fr. Untzag Nalbandian

Secretary: Dn. Aren Jebejian

Group A:

- Translate the theology, dogmas and teachings of the Armenian Church and post them on our website.
- Review the clergy / youth statement of the Diocesan Assembly, which was held in Boca Raton, Fla.
- Youth Sunday.
- Clergy must spend time with the youth.
- Efforts must be made to create service-oriented programs, which are short: soup kitchen, etc.
- Clergy participation at the ACYOA Sports Weekend to not only give direction but also to listen to youth.

Group B:

- Have the input of the DYM, Camps, St. Nersess Summer Program, and DRE.
- Worship in English.
- Evangelize to non-Armenians.
- Regional youth retreats by the Diocesan Departments.
- Have a youth website, including software.
- Have mission projects/ missionary work on a local focus.
- "Fun with Faith" program (2-12 year old children) that focuses on a biblical story and Arts & crafts.

Group C:

- Parish level full-time youth director.
- Diocesan level field workers and outreach to students in colleges.
- The diocese incur all expenses for youth program.
- Organize pilgrimages to Jerusalem and Armenia for one month to increase their faith and national feelings - free.
- Bring youth from Armenia to ACYOA Sports Weekends. This way interest is increased.
- To have paid day-care centers.
- Get educational grants from the Gulbenkian foundation for Armenian youth. Establish a fund for needy families.
- Offer parish level programs, i.e. leadership seminars.
- Re-thinking an educational scheduling.
- Increase the children's' worship services within the parish content (in English).

- Group programs, i.e. Junior Choirs, Sport events, Soccer, culture.
- Appoint an ACYOA Executive Director in order to minister to the college students.
- Pamphlets on contemporary issues.
- Refer e-mails to area clergy to answer and establish a personal relationship.

Group D:

- The elders must allow the youth leadership roles, instead of expecting them to clean-up.
- Have a place of our own, i.e. campsite, retreat center...
- Department heads need proper support, i.e. regional youth advisors and spiritual advisors who are regional pastors.
- Involvement of the pastor.
- Sending the clergy regionally in the area of youth ministry or bringing a trainer to a region.
- Early participation in the life of the liturgy, then sending them to Sunday school after communion.
- Capture the children by the age of 10 years.
- Lay ministry needs to be included, a team effort needs to be made in the parish.
- We must begin youth ministry at 5 years old. We have to give special attention to the 5-10 years old. Joint effort by the DYM and DRE.
- Let the church offer what no one else can.

Group E:

- Emphasize the needs of youth "team ministry".
- Full time paid youth directors.
- Hire the director and go into debt and then let the parish and God take care of things.
- Target college level students and send them to "youth training" programs in order to prepare young people to get them to the point where they can be regional youth workers.
- Train our young people at St. Nersess prior to sending them to a "Protestant" youth seminars in order to have a foundation prior to being exposed to non-Armenian courses.
- Incorporate women in the diocese, youth ministry and college programs.
- Coordinate not only a person's desire to serve in youth ministry, but also find them work after their training.
- Put emphasis on the youth of the mission parishes and their education.
- Make the Armenian Church significant to immigrant mission parishes who have parents who work on Sundays and cannot take their children.
- Address the individual needs of the ages and contemporary issues from birth-30 years.

2) WORSHIP:

Moderator: Rev. Fr. Mardiros Chevian

Secretary: Dn. Vartan Garabedian

Group A:

Fr. Mardiros asked the present clergy about their feelings during the celebration of their first Badarak:

- Fear
- Responsibility
- Optimism
- Joy
- Happiness
- Terror
- Unworthiness
- Determination
- A new door opening towards mission
- Difficulty in uttering words during liturgy.

Then Der Hyre asked the clergy what they see today during liturgy:

- Half empty churches
- Mechanical behavior
- A group of faithful
- A full church
- Seasonal increase in attendance (Christmas, Easter)
- Devotion during certain parts of the Badarak
- Paying attention to the sermon
- Awe during communion
- Preoccupation from the part of the clergyman concerning the participation of the people.
- Presence of a number of faithful ranging from 10-100 (in mission parishes)
- Devotional approach to communion
- Empty seats because of the large size of the church.

Der Hyre also asked about the impact on everything in the event the participating number of faithful is doubled:

- A double joy / people and priest
- New acquaintances
- Double income to church
- Part and participation
- The number is not important
- An additional effort to attract even more faithful
- Spiritual fulfillment
- Wonderful feelings
- Find ways to keep them in the church
- Improvement in the life of the church as family
- Double responsibility to keep these faithful in the church.

Finally the present were asked how to convince their delegates and parish council members to make this dream come true:

- Ask their help
- Cooperation
- Educate them
- Convince them
- Enthusiast hem.

Group B:

Feelings during first Badarak:

- Awed, frightened
- Excited
- Happy
- Humility
- Self examination
- Closeness to God
- Unworthiness
- Privileged
- Cut-off oneself from the world
- Upliftedness
- Prayer through song

Increased attendance and participation:

- An increased obligation
- Enthusiasm
- Energy
- Feel better
- The congregation will feel better about itself / its church
- Enthusiasm of becoming a part of it
- Incredible joy
- Growth of mission
- Transformation.

Convince delegates about this:

- Educate them
- Personal witnessing

Group C:

Feelings during first Badarak:

- Pressure
- Consumed
- Enthusiasm
- Touched
- Inner fulfillment
- An encounter with Christ
- Responsibility
- Elevation

- Richness and humility
- Unworthiness
- Fear and awe.

How to pass those feelings to others:

- Through a spiritual message
- Through living it
- Through making others understand this

Group D:

Feelings during first Badarak:

- Preoccupation
- Awe and shaking
- Anxiety
- Touched
- Unworthiness

How to pass those feelings to others:

- Sharing with people those thoughts
- Motivating them.

The outcome of this:

- Energy
- It becomes an experience

Group E:

First Badarak:

- Filled with joy
- Gradual confidence
- Correctness
- Love toward Badarak
- Enthusiasm
- Fearfulness

Communicate to others:

- Sharing
- Focus on worship
- Stress commitment to Badarak
- Bring people into our worship.

3) LEADERSHIP:

Moderator:

Secretary: Dn. George Devejian

Note: Unfortunately Deacon George did not mention the different groups in his notes, therefore, I am not able to attribute the suggestions to any of the groups.

What to do:

- Double the number of the seminarians from 6 to 12.
- Double the number of leadership seminars for laity and clergy

Possibilities:

- Increase brotherhood
- Youth leaders
- Sacramental clergy
- Have enough clergy to serve
- Shepherds
- More faithful
- 2 clergy in large parishes
- Compensation
- Administrative ability
- Commitment and education
- Armenian culture and spiritual heritage
- Clergy to serve in diocesan departments
- Expand mission fields
- Lay ministers (deacons and deaconesses)
- Sensitivity
- Alleviate clergy burnout and provide time for writing and intellectual pursuits
- Increase in clergy
- Serve and develop mission parishes
- More efficiency (financial): Parish Council will be more efficient, clergy will have more time for pastoral work
- Productive church
- Deeper sense of mission
- Vibrancy / spiritual awareness
- Tapping of innate spiritual gift of laity

What is a Christian leader?

- Sense of discipleship
- Have love, ability and education
- Have vision
- Pious and humble
- Ability to delegate
- Good listener
- Slow to anger

- Experience
- Creativity and ability to lead
- Patience and foresight
- Accurate judgement
- Diplomacy
- Humility
- Care for the sheep
- Servanthood
- Wisdom, courage, and innocence
- Knowledgeable (appreciation of Armenian Church's witness)
- Committed - optimistic
- Love / passion
- Role model
- Charisma / understand people and innate talent
- Sense of mission

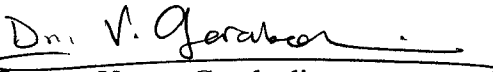
Attracting Leaders:

- Define tasks
- Convince
- Attract through: faith and dedication, sermon and conduct of clergy
- Explain need for leaders
- Education: Armenian tradition
- Polite conduct
- Evaluation
- Clergy must be positive and passionate about their calling
- Challenge youth

Pathways:

- Emphasis partnership between lay and ordained leaders
- Opportunities in camps - potential leaders.
- Statement of support for a new vision
- Standing united
- Spread the Word
- Enthusiastically proclaim our vision.

Respectfully submitted,


Deacon Vartan Garabedian