

REPORT ON A.C.Y.O.A. FIELD WORK IN CAMBRIDGE

The field work for Boston A.C.Y.O.A. Chapter started on Sunday, November 13, with a sermon by the field worker in both languages about the importance and the place of the youth in the church and the necessity of missionary spirit and work in the community.

I participated in the regional Jr. A.C.Y.O.A. conference held in Watertown church hall. Immediately following, I met with Robert Goshgarian, the co-chairman of the Jrs. and Srs. to go over the planned activities of the week.

Met with the Sr. and Jr. Executives, some of the members of which were unable to attend. Had discussion on local problems and conditions which were repeatedly summed up as "lack of spirit, lack of interest, lack of communication, lack of co-operation". Soon these "lacks" became evident with the very poor attendance of both Sr. membership (only 8 came) and Jr. group (just 4 showed up), despite my contacts with about 38 members and prospectives.

My meeting with the parish council seemed to be the most useful, in terms of making the members more concerned and even worried about the situation of the A.C.Y.O.A. in particular and the youth in general. Indications of willingness and interest to take more action to be of assistance were apparent.

The following were recommendations to the Parish Council meeting, presided over by the pastor: 1. Have a brainstorming session with the representatives of both branches of the chapter and the Central Council representative; 2. Based on practical suggestions offered by them as well as the field worker, conduct an all out membership drive structuring the activities of the church to match the theme of "Youth Week"; 3. Appoint a liaison officer; 4. Find a promising and capable young person and sponsor his training to become a part-time or full-time youth director; 5. Attend the A.C.Y.O.A. functions more than ever before; 6. Be receptive to the mission program by starting a mission project on local level like the Worcester A.C.Y.O.A. mission group, even before the Central Council approaches

your chapter for a mission program next summer.

The members of the chapter who attended the meetings with me seemed sufficiently motivated, distressed by the lack of leadership and eager to reorganize the chapter. After showing the slides on the accomplishments of the A.C.Y.O.A. and having a stimulating discussion on local problems and potentialities, I presented to them a full and varied program of activities and projects in all five directions: sports, social, cultural, religious and service.

It should be stated that there was no sufficient ground work done before the field work started. Members had received a notice from Deacon Megerditch. Locally, however, no flyer was sent or phone calls made, despite the direction given by the Executive Secretary. The chairman of the Sps. has the desire to be of assistance, but he seems to lack leadership qualities and time. Unless more competent leadership is offered, I am afraid the chapter does not look too healthy to me.

The priest has pastoral good-will in terms of assisting the young people, but the "great gap of ages" between him and the members, as he puts it, the huge parish which takes up his time for everything else and the lack of a trained youth director or an assistant have virtually left the A.C.Y.O.A. without any meaningful leadership.

The Central Council representative, Robert Goshgarian, made it a point to be with me at all meetings with the chapter and was helpful not only in noting the needs and problems discussed at all gatherings but also by way of providing useful information about the condition of the church as a parish, as well as in terms of evaluating the whole situation in the Boston church. I see a great responsibility placed on him to revive the chapter. I have left the names of members and prospectives with him.

It seems to me that there is a competent and colossal job to be done to reorganize both branches of the chapter in Boston and real soon, if we will salvage the chapter and build up the membership.

D.N.K.

Nov. 19, 1966

Primate

BEFORE THE VISIT:

The pastor, Rev. Fr. Michael Buttero, had announced the gathering three times on Sundays, had sent two announcements to the parish and the perspective members (attached) and had placed an article in the local paper (attached).

THE VISIT:

When I met with the group, there were nine youngsters present, ages 13-15, in addition to three boys in their late teens. There were also three parents present and an advisor.

The boys in their late teens do not seem to be motivated to belong in the same group with the younger youth. Attempt was made to present them with a program geared to their interests, at the same time to motivate the younger boys to plan programs that would appeal to other youngsters as well.

There was very little discussion after the explanation of the true and complete functions and goals of the ACYOA, but the slides were viewed with much interest.

The pastor and the advisor, Mrs. Queenie Hovannesian, seem to have things well under control and are offering the necessary guidance to these newly beginning boys. So far, the group has met five times.

A copy of the suggested projects and activities was left with the pastor and one with the advisor. The Yeretzgin also is playing a contributive and supportive role here.

As in other parishes, here too parents need to take more interest in their children and encourage their youngsters to belong to the ACYOA group. The need is now for a special motivating program for parents. A carefully prepared pamphlet could be prepared to be mailed to those parents in communities who have youngsters and maturing children, making them aware of the goals and functions of the ACYOA in terms of fulfilling their needs in five major realms, stressing the need for their support, encouragement, and guidance, and, at the same time, pointing out some of the possible basic dangers and problems with which the youth of this culture are faced.

On December 17, a regional conference was held. Only two members from Hartford were able to attend, in addition to 12 from New Britain. Michael Simonian and Deacon Mugrditch conducted the business portion of the conference at which time a report was given on Central Council activities, followed by a panel presentation, during which Very Rev. Fr. Mesrob Semerjian gave a talk on "The Maturing Teenager" and I participated in a lively group discussion on the subject "Do Our Parents Understand Us?" Following the discussion, a short vesper service was held with the participation of the pastor, Fr. Mesrob, Fr. Arshag, Deacon Mugrditch, and myself.

My comment on the regional conference is that outstanding speakers from other youth leadership groups, showing of pictures, and interesting panel or group discussion, or even a debate should be included on the agenda in order to liven up the group and to induce more participation.

L.H. Kasparian

Primate

ACYOA FIELD WORK - SPRINGFIELD - DEC. 7 & 14, 1966

BEFORE THE VISIT

In addition to the Primate's letter to the pastor as well as Deacon Mergerditch's contact with the Very Rev. Fr. Mesrob Semerjian, the latter had announced the schedule of the field worker in Church and mailed out 15 post cards for 24 individuals (in some families 2-3 young people).

THE VISIT

I learned ⁱⁿ meeting with the members of the group, that they have a total of 24 names on their prospectives' list. 15 attended on Dec. 7th. Most of the interested youngsters are 14-15 yrs. of age, except a few who are 13 years old and will be accepted as "members in training". ~~Sr.~~ 2 individuals on the list of 24 are 18 & 19 yrs. of age. They were encouraged to get a few more young people in their age bracket in order to form a senior chapter. It is expected that by next year several more interested individuals will turn 18 and there will be a minimum of 10 Sr. age members to form a chapter. In the meantime the group will function as a mixed group of Sr. and Jr. age.

Fr. Mesrob, who has initiated the group, will keep a close watch and control over the group in guiding their activities. He will see that a executive committee is elected soon.

I spoke to the group about the goals and purposes of the Organization, gave them ideas as to various activities to be planned, and showed them the slides on the accomplishments of the ACYOA.

I came away from this meeting with the impression that Fr. Mesrob will play a strong part in directing the programs and the activities of the group. I am not sure to what extent the parish council or other adult persons will be brought in or given an opportunity to guide the group.

On the 14th of Dec. an open house was held in the church hall. Parishioners had been invited to attend. There were 22 adults and 9 Jr. ACYOA age boys and girls. Showing of the slides and explaining the true function and the goals of the ACYOA were received very well by all. A little bit of singing was also thrown in with the presentation of the pictures. There was an apparent interest on the part of parents toward the ACYOA which was very encouraging.

Disappointing was the fact that the parish council members were not present for a meeting with the field worker, with the exception of two members. I got the impression that after an obligation to change the date of a scheduled parish council meeting 2 weeks ago, no more effort was made to ~~be~~ schedule another one.

Furthermore, the pastor did also discourage the field worker in his plan to contact the few names of late teenagers he was given as prospectives, on the basis that it would be useless to contact them. The pastor also thought ~~it would be useless to contact the~~ that at the present ^{there are} enough members to work with!

A follow up is needed here by a member of the Central Council in a month or two, to make sure that the pace of progress is not kept down to the point that the members might lose interest.

D. H. Kasparian

BEFORE THE VISIT

In addition to the Primate's letter to the Pastor, Deacon Mergerditch had explained the field work's nature and scope to the Pastor. Michael Simonian and Leo Hojagian along with the Executive Secretary attended the initiation ceremony on Dec. 4th and spoke to both parent and members about the ACYOA's goals and the purpose of the field work.

Fr. Arshag Khatchadourian had sent out notices to the entire parish, keeping them informed of the schedule of the field work and announced the same in church.

THE VISIT

On Thursday, Dec. 8th, I met with the parish council and the pastor, and had a stimulating discussion on the different ways and methods of supporting and guiding the ACYOA, as suggested in previous chapters, in addition to a very interesting discussion on the problems and potentialities of the youth in general.

It became apparent that transportation is a problem with some ACYOA members as they live quite a distance away from the church, also lack of experience on the part of the executive in addition to lack of experienced leadership to be offered from the pastor, who is a recent arrival in this country, already faced with some problems of communication with the parish.

While request was made by the parish council for specific programs and materials to be sent from the Central Council, nevertheless they showed genuine interest to offer the guidance and leadership needed on local level, by taking note of the suggestions offered by me. Despite the absence of support between the pastor and parish council, the latter seemed to be willing and anxious to take the necessary steps toward organizing the group.

Meeting with the executive Committee the following evening, I learned that the total membership is 18, with an average attendance of about 13. The group also has 5 "associate members" of 13 years of age. Meetings are held twice a month, but not much is accomplished, particularly because of the lack of leadership. It seems that the chairman also lacks competence and smooth communication with the members. In fact he was unable to attend the meeting. However, the rest of the Executive Committee, as well as some other regular members who had attended the meeting, seemed to respond enthusiastically to suggestions made by me regarding various programs and projects they might undertake.

On Dec. 16th the membership meeting was attended by 13 members and one senior advisor and one adult advisor. A group discussion revealed that "not much of a program" has taken place for a long time. Members seemed to be anxious for and responsive to a well-rounded full program of activities. There was an extensive discussion followed by the presentation of the full program, with specific arrangements on the spot regarding some programs in the directions of sports, social, cultural and religious. There seemed to be some enthusiasm and interest generated. The response was very satisfying. They were encouraged to attend the regional conference to take place on the morrow in New Britain. Definite plans were made with their participation to attend this conference.

It seems that more than the clergyman, it is a few parish council members who will be able to offer some guidance. Members seem to be responsive and responsible. All they need is more leadership.

A follow up from the Central ^{Council} will be necessary in the near future.

L.H. Kasparian

PREPARATORY WORK BEFORE THE VISIT (See separate sheet)

Notices were not sent from New York to the members because their name list was not sent to the Executive Secretary in time for mailing, however the pastor had mailed a notice to all members. A copy is attached herewith.

THE VISIT

1. I participated in the Divine Liturgy on Sunday Dec. 4, when I also gave the sermon in both languages on the theme "I am my brother's Keeper", developing the idea of corporate concern for the indifferent and disinterested, and the need for missionary outreach within the Church, stressing the thought that the Armenian youth can find fulfillment to their needs in the Armenian Church in terms of growth and communication.
2. Had a meeting with the Executive Committee, attended also by the priest, Fr. Guregh Kalfayan. I learned that they have about 15 regular members, about 8-9 of whom attend regularly their monthly meetings, held on the 3rd Thursday of the month.
3. Learned that some social and fund-raising functions have been held with satisfactory success but the chapter has not had much cultural and educational programs
4. In an effort to make the business meeting short and interesting I outlined for them what can be considered a near model meeting. In addition I gave them pointers for projects and programs in the five major realms of activities (social, sport, cultural, religious service) which will help increase interest and motivation in not only the actual members, but even the prospective will be further induced to attend and join. A copy of this material was left with the chairman (Deacon Megerdich has received one too).
5. Went over the list of the prospectives, consisting of 19 names. I promoted the idea of forming a separate branch of Seniors, which would not only help the present few seniors find more in common with people of their age, but it will also induce the Sr. age prospectives to join.
6. Attended with Bob Goshgarian the New England Regional Anniversary Ball Committee meeting in Lawrence and following that a spaghetti dinner given in Lowell for about 25 Jrs. from Watertown, Worcester & Lowell, who had just had a Basketball tournament.
7. Met with the Parish Council, of whom only 4 members and the priest were present. The Central Council representative also attended this meeting, where the five major specific suggestions were made, as in the other parish councils. In addition here the possibility was suggested that perhaps the 3 Chapters in the Merrimac Valley area could look into the possibility of finding a part time or even full time regional youth director.
8. It became app^arent that much guidance is not offered to the members of the chapter, that there are not that many young people to draw from, people whose parents also might be active members of the church, and that, worst of all, parents of the young people in particular and the parish in general are not too sensitive to the needs and problems of the youth, and so far have not ~~done anything to help them progress~~. There seems to be a general

9. The members of the Parish Council who attended the meeting with me, seemed to be sincere in their willingness to take positive and practical steps towards implementing the points brought to their attention, namely: a/ Find a prospective youth director for volunteer service, b/ Start a library of English books, c/ Organize a youth week program, d/ Sponsor attendance of AYOYA members at St. Nerses religious study conferences and e/ Give the chapter maximum publicity in the parish paper.
10. Of the 19 young people I contacted to attend the special program/ the following day, only two said they would attend and only one of them actually did attend. There were only 9 regular members present and two adult visitors.
11. After a brief group discussion, I presented the full program and showed them the slides. Major complaint here also can be summed up as "lack of interest, enthusiasm and guidance."
12. There seems to be a strong feeling for not being considered a regular chapter, even though several of the members are almost 18 now. The Central Council should look into this situation.
13. A lengthy discussion followed the membership gathering with two(2) parish council members present, an adult Sunday School teacher and the priest. There was a general impression that the parish needed a spiritual reawakening and a rejuvenation of educational interest.

D. H. Kasparian

REPORT ON A.C.T.O. A . FIELD WORK IN HAVERHILL, MASS.

DEC. 1 and 2, 1966

BEFORE THE VISIT- (See separate sheet under same heading).

In addition , the article on the field work did appear in the local paper, on Dec. 1, ~~A~~ copy is attached.

THE VISIT

- 1- Because of the illness of the pastor and the chairman of the AGTOA, and the inability of two other members of the executive committee to attend, the initial meeting with the executives was postponed from Wed. Nov. 30~~th~~ Thursday, Dec. 1, at 7 P.M.
- 2- The Chairman, still sick, couldn't attend the meeting. The Pastor, Fr. Vartan Der Assadoorian, did. The local problems were summed up as " lack of interest and enthusiasm". The pastor seemed to be sensitive to the negative tone of descriptions and dissatisfactions regarding the AGTOA meeting, functions and the lack of responsible participation in both.
- 3- Mrs. Chillingrian, the advisor to this combined group of about 20 members (about 12- 14 attend regularly), finds herself doing the work for the negligent and delinquent members, instead of awakening in them stronger sense of responsibility to do their share. She is a very fine and dedicated woman, the mother of the recording Secretary of the chapter and pitches in only because if she doesn't, the members won't. ~~A~~ few ^{well} ~~well~~ programs and functions were executed almost solely by her, because " no one would do it." It became necessary for me to point out to her privately some of the basic methods and principles involved in guidance and leadership with the youth. I found her to be responsive ^{to} suggestions/cooperative in trying new ways. *le*
- 4- I sensed some dissatisfaction with the Chairman, who evidently cannot make the meetings interesting and enjoyable.
- 5- I suggested that the executive Committee practice their regular meeting by having a bit of role-playing at the executive meeting. Then I gave the pointers on how to conduct an interesting business meeting and what varied programs to plan.
- 6- Stressed the importance and desirability of having more tri-chapter functions.
- 7- I was given a list of about 26 prospectives, most of whom are of Sr. age.

8- Following the Executive Committee meeting I met with the Parish Council. After discussing with them the gravity of the situation regarding the interest and the participation of the youth in the Church, we went over the list of the prospectives. Several names were stricken out because they are away at school. I left a copy of the suggestions I had made to the executive of the chapter with the Priest. In addition, I was asked to make specific suggestions for the Parish Council to follow. I presented to them the same 5 suggestions I have included in my report. as I didn't see any one making note of them. Excuses were given about their own lack of time at first, then two of the Council members volunteered to show interest in the Chapter. Suggestion was made to form a Committee of 3 people to take more active interest in the youth. Nevertheless I came away from this meeting with the feeling that there was a lack of sense eagerness to do something about the situation with an all out effort. I became with dismay that the weakness of the Chapter is only a minor indication of an unhealthy atmosphere prevailing in the parish.

9- Of the 19 people whom I contacted as prospectives, only two attended. One of them Senior age, to be a responsible person and is determined to take more active part in the activities of the chapter. The problem here is that there are but a few seniors age members and their interests and expectations are at variance with the rest of the members, who are in Junior age bracketed.

10- The membership gathering was attended by only 12 members and the advisor. Discussion revealed once again that functions are planned but they do not get done. There seems to be a strong feeling of lack of regard toward the chairman of the Chapter. Effort was made to create among the members more cooperation in order to carry out some of the projects and programs outlined for them.

11. There seems to be sufficient motivation in the members to put on a skid. They have written the Central Council for one and are eagerly waiting to receive a suitable skid.

12- The Central Council representative, Bob Goshgarian also attended this meeting taking active contributive part in the discussions. He and I later had a long session of evaluation considering our observations.

13- I feel that the effort of the field worker should be evaluated in the light of the impressions and reaction of the chapters visited. Thus a questionnaire should be sent out to the pastors and executive bodies asking their comments on the effect and possible results of;

1. Membership meeting.
2. Executive meeting
3. Slides on the accomplishments
4. Efforts contacting and recruiting new members
5. the full program suggestions presented by the field worker
6. How many new members might likely join your chapter as a result of this venture?

7. When would you like the next visit of the field worker to be ?

8. How would you rate the field worker's visit to Your Chapter ⁱⁿ terms of rejuvenating interest and enthusiasm?

9. Any suggestions for improvement with regard to the field worker's ~~visit~~ visit ?

10. In What ways can the Central Council ~~be~~ be of assistance to ~~Your~~ Chapter.

L. H. Kasparian
Deacon H. Kasparian

LAWRENCE

REPORT ON A.C.Y.S.A. FIELD WORK IN LAWRENCE, MASS.

NOV. 27, 28, 29, 1966

BEFORE THE VISIT- (see separate sheet under the same heading).

The Visit

1. I participated in the Divine Liturgy on Sunday Nov. 27, when I also gave the sermon in both languages on the theme " I am my brother's keeper", developing the idea of corporate concern for the indifferent and disinterested, and the need for missionary *outreach* within the Church, stressing the thought that the Armenian youth can find fulfillment to their needs in the Armenian church in terms of growth and communication.
2. Had a meeting with the executive Committee, attended also by the Priest. I learned that the Chapter has a total of 27 members, Sr. and Jr. age combined. The average attendance is about 15 members.
3. Learned that some social and fundraising functions have been held with satisfactory success but the chapter has not had much cultural and educational programs.
4. In an effort to make the business meeting short and interesting I outlined for them what can be considered a near model meeting. In addition I gave them pointers for projects and programs in the five major realms of activities (social, sport, cultural, religious service) which will help increase interest and motivation in not only the actual members, but even the prospectives will be further induced to attend and join. A copy of this material was left with the chairman (Deacon Megerdich has now received one too).
5. Went over the list of the prospectives, consisting of 7 Srs and 12 Jrs. I promoted the idea of ~~Seniors~~ which forming a separate branch of Seniors, which would not only help the present few seniors find more in common with people of their age, but it will also induce the Sr. age prospectives to join.
6. Contacted the prospectives, many of whom expressed interest and promised to attend the " special program", as we call the membership gathering, telling them that pictures will be shown, with an open discussion to follow and to be concluded with the presentation of a full program of great interest to all.
7. On Monday evening, Nov. 28th the membership gathering was held, when a discussion was held on the desirability of a more interesting and a fuller program, which was followed by my presentation of outline of such a program, and then the showing of the slides on " The Accomplishments of the ACYOA". There were about six prospectives present.

8. One of the points, needed to be stressed at this gathering, was the importance and necessity of an interested, warm and cordial attitude on the part of members toward guests or potentials.

9. the Possibility and desirability of tri- chapter (Merrimac Valley) functions was pointed out. It seemed that such a gathering had taken place once or twice before during last year and most attendants ~~have~~ enjoyed it, even though the educational program, consisting of quizzes and question- answer period, conducted by the pastors of these chapters, has ~~lacked~~ lacked superior quality. It was suggested to them to consider out of town speakers as well and select topics of debated and discussions ~~interest~~ interesting to all.

10. The Central Council representative, Bob Goshgarian, also attended this meeting and made a few remarks at the conclusion. Both of us ~~after~~ spent a considerable amount of time evaluating the evening's program, the response and the atmosphere, as well as the peculiar problems existing in the church.

11. On Tuesday, Nov. 29th, I met with the Parish Council and found the members quite receptive as I tried to make them aware of and concerned about the lack of members in the A.C.Y.O.A. and the necessity of fuller support and assistance on behalf of the Parish Council.

12. It was pointed out that principle among the reasons for lack of membership of Sr. age boys and girls are college, service and marriage.

13. After a helpful discussion they wished to know in what specific and tangible way can they be of further assistance. The following suggestions were made by me: a. Find a prospective and promising youth director from the Parish and pay for a few courses to be taken in the field of youth work, so that with more qualification this person may be able to offer the leadership they need, even if it is on part time basis.

b. Start a library of English books on Armenians to be made available to the youth of the Church. To ~~can~~ encourage reading of these books, they can start with one book by members taking turn in presenting a summary of one chapter ^{at each monthly meeting.}

c. Organize and conduct a Youth week with the executive and the advisor of the A.C.Y.O.A., in addition to the representatives of the Parish Council and the priest. The aim of this week will be to promote the A.C.Y.O.A. and recruit new members by concentrating all the activities of the Parish on the theme of the YOUTH OF THE CHURCH.

d. Sponsor members of the A.C.Y.O.A. to attend the religious study conference to be held in Framingham, Mass. The weekend of March 10-12, 1967 intended for the Churches in New England.

e. Start a parish paper, allowing a column for each church organization. These suggestions were taken down with much interest and enthusiasm.

14. I left the parish stressing to the pastor and the A.C.Y.O.A. chairman that progress report should be sent to the Central Council periodically.

15. Since good will and disposition is about all that the pastor can offer, the need definitely is for discovering and developing local lay leadership.

D. H. Kasparian
Deacon H. Kasparian

REPORT TO THE CENTRAL COUNCIL RE. FIELD WORK IN PROVIDENCE

In accordance with a resolution passed at the recent ACYOA Assembly, I was notified with a letter from the Central Council dated October 6, 1966, that I was appointed as field worker to conduct a pilot project aimed at rejuvenating and strengthening a few of the ACYOA Chapters in our Diocese. Accordingly, the sites chosen for this purpose were:

Providence, R. I.	November 6-12, 1966
Cambridge, Mass.	November 13-19, 1966
Springfield, Mass.	November 27-December 3, 1966
Hartford, Conn.	December 4-10, 1966
New Britain, Conn.	December 11-17, 1966

Since then two more chapters have been added on the list as a result of a discussion among the primate, the Executive Secretary, the chairman of the Central Council and myself on October 27, 1966. *They are Richmond, Va. & Washington, D.C.*

On October 15, I notified Deacon Megerditch of the need for field work in the Merrimac Valley Chapters (Lawrence, Haverhill, Lowell), and agreed to devote time to them during the weeks I am to meet with Springfield, Hartford, New Britain Chapters, thus bringing the number of the Chapters to be visited up to ten.

To plan the details and the responsibilities involved I have had considerable discussion with the Executive Secretary and the Chairman of the Central Council. I spent the week before starting the project to study the material provided by the Executive Secretary and to outline my plan of action. I have consented to undertake this responsibility with awareness and concern for the needs involved.

PROVIDENCE:

Communications were mailed by Deacon Megerditch to the Pastor, and the general membership of both Jr. and Sr. Chapters. In addition, a schedule of the week's activities, along with a cover letter had been mailed to the members by Deacon Sarkis Sarkissian, assistant to the pastor of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Church.

My work started Sunday morning and ended Saturday afternoon. The following is a listing of responsibilities performed:

- 1) Sermon in church in both languages about the role of the youth in the community, and the purpose of the pilot project.
- 2) Conference with Fr. Haik and Deacon Sarkis regarding some details of the program.
- 3) Conference with Kenneth Bedrossian, the Chairman of the Junior Chapter and Robert Kaloostyan, the chairman of the Senior Chapter, to discuss the importance, intent and scope of the program and some of their needs and problems. The Central Council Chairman was also present at these conferences.

- 4) Contacted teenage members of the choir to attend the membership meeting in the program.
- 5) Prepared and gave news item about the program for broadcast on the Armenian Radio Program.
- 6) Conference with Ara Dostourian regarding the project and his share in it.
- 7) Conference with executive committees of both Jr. and Sr. Chapters, discussing respective problems and needs, the intent of the project and possible steps to be taken to strengthen the organization and to increase the membership.
- 8) Consultation with a Parish Council representative and a few past members who are familiar with the local problems and conditions.
- 9) Met with a representative of an agency that administers tests and analyses, dealing with smooth functioning of groups, in order to learn more effective methods that would help the corporate functioning of the ACYOA members.
- 10) Prepared song booklets consisting of twenty Armenian church and folk songs to be used at the open house for the congregation.
- 11) Contacted about 40 young people, some of whom are weak members of either Jr. or Sr. Chapter and others who could be considered prospective members, some of whom have been members of the Sr. Chapter at one time or another.
- 12) Had an interview with the religious news editor of Providence Journal, for an article and picture, which appeared in the November 11 issue. (copy attached, glossy photo will be sent to the Armenian Guardian.)
- 13) Found a suitable filmstrip on the role of the youth in the audio-visual library of the local Congregational Conference and rented it for use at the Open House.
- 14) Had a combined meeting with Juniors and Seniors, and after hearing their problems regarding the lack of interest in the organization, presented them a full and varied program consisting of many ideas and suggestions for a well rounded program that will prove interesting, enjoyable and meaningful to all members. Showed slides of accomplishments of the ACYOA prepared by Deacon Megerditch. Discussion followed. Five teenagers joined the Jr. Chapter. Their application forms have been given to Deacon Megerditch.
- 15) Met with the Parish Council and had a lengthy discussion on the ways in which they can help and support the youth. A member of the Council, capable and motivated, volunteered to be the liaison officer.
- 16) Had open house. Showed slides of accomplishments of the ACYOA and the filmstrip "We Have This Fellowship."
- 17) Wrote letters of thanks for their cooperation to: the Pastor, Parish Council, the Deacon and the Chairman of ACYOA. (copy attached)

SOME OBSERVATIONS:

- 1) The Priest and the Deacon were very helpful and cooperative and extended their assistance when needed.
- 2) The Parish Council also showed a willing and cooperative attitude by appointing a liaison officer from the Council.
- 3) Mid-term exams prevented some members from attending the membership meeting.
- 4) The open house intended for the general public had a poor attendance. Unless it is widely publicized, it is not essential to have an open house, particularly when the field worker has explained the purpose of this project and the role of the youth in the sermon on Sunday.
- 5) The parish was not kept informed of the program prior to the arrival of the field worker.
- 6) College students don't find the local ACYOA program sufficiently appealing and interesting. Older youths or adults find a big age gap with the younger members. Because of these two reasons, these two groups of people have drifted away.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Executive committees should have a guidebook in their hands and be urged to practice smooth conducting of membership meetings by role-playing among themselves, to be followed by an evaluation session.
- 2) When new members join the organization, they should be given a pin or a book as a gift to serve as a token of initiation.
- 3) There is more need for cultural and religious programs and service projects which should be explained more fully and presented to members as possible avenues of meaningful activities. Such a list is compiled and will be passed out to chapters where the pilot project will be conducted.
- 4) Standing committees should be given full explanation and guidance regarding their responsibilities. Guide sheets should be made available to them.
- 5) It should be impressed upon Priest, Parish Council and other lay leaders that local leadership should be developed to carry the work after the spark of the rejuvenation program.
- 6) The Central Council should send follow-up questionnaire and survey forms to determine to what extent the rejuvenation program is being implemented locally.
- 7) In order to disseminate authentic Armenian folk music for popular singing and playing by our young bands, the Central Council can look into the possibility of either finding (possibly from Armenia) or ordering the harmonized texts of popular folk melodies in order to make them available to our youth and replace Turkish sounding music which is so often part of their repertoire.

- 8) In order to create a constant source of income for the Juniors, the Central Council could make an arrangement with a jewelry firm to sell name-chains, which have a large sale consumption with Juniors. Profits approximately twice the price of the merchandise, could be divided between the Central Council and the local chapter. This fund raising project can be discussed more fully with Mr. Martin Bolodian, the Parish Council liaison officer of Providence ACYOA. It promises to be a profitable venture to increase income for both Chapters and the Central Council.

Nov. 12, 1966

J. H. Kasparian