

National Committee for the
Visit of His Holiness
Vasken I
Catholicos of All Armenians



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Armenian Church of America
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HIS HOLINESS VASKEN I AND ARMENIAN ART TREASURES
FROM ETCHMIADZIN ARE SUBJECTS OF
SPECIAL HOLIDAY GREETING CARDS PUBLISHED BY
DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA**

To commemorate the Holiday Season, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America has published six magnificent Holiday Greeting Cards in full color.

The cover of the first is a photograph of His Holiness Vasken I, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, taken during the Catholicos' historic 1987 visit to the United States. The covers of the other five are illustrations of art treasures from the Holy See at Etchmiadzin in Armenia.

The photograph of the Catholicos was made for inclusion in a book which will be published in 1988 on the Pontifical visit to America. His Holiness is seen during the Divine Liturgy at St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral in New York City with the Boys Choir in the background.

The other illustrations include "The Cross from the East," a page from a 14th Century illuminated manuscript; two Vagas' (liturgical collars) of the 18th Century; and three unique representations of The Virgin and Child: on a 16th Century "Khatchkar" (cross stone sculpture) and in two paintings. In the first, created by an unknown 18th Century Armenian artist, the Virgin and the Infant Jesus are seen with St. John the Baptist and St. Gregory the Illuminator. The second is entitled "The Virgin Enthroned" by Vardges Soureniantz (1860-1921), one of the greatest figures in Armenian classical painting.

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The treasures of Etchmiadzin are rare and unusual in that they are generally the offerings of individuals and communities to the Holy See. They represent testimonials of deep faith and attachment to the Motherland from Armenians throughout the world.

All of the cards carry this Holiday message in English and Armenian: "Happy New Year and a Blessed Christmas." They are available from the Diocese as a complete set with six matching envelopes for \$5.50.

The cards are on sale in the Diocesan Bookstore at 630 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10016-4885. Tel: (212) 686-0710.

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