

HOLY CROSS CHURCH OF ARMENIA
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580 WEST 187 STREET • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10033 • (212) 927-4020

Rev. Fr. Vartan Megherian, Pastor

January 27, 1983

Mr. Zaven Dadekian, Chairman
Stipend Committee, Diocese of the Armenian Church
22 Yeoman Drive
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458

Dear Mr. Dadekian,

The directive of December 1, 1982, from the Executive Director of the Diocese on the subject of Clergy Stipend Resolutions was received and brought up in our Parish Council Meeting to be considered in connection with our annual budget.

The Parish Council, while preparing the annual budget of our church in its meeting of January 18, 1983, refused to consider the stipend guideline and disregarded the resolutions completely. Despite my protest to consider the guideline sent to us as resolved by the Diocesan Assembly, and even after I reminded them that in the event of non-compliance with this resolution I would be obliged to advise the Stipend Committee, the Parish Council did not care.

Therefore, upon Surpazan Hayr's suggestion, I appeal to your committee to look into this matter and see to it that the decisions of the Diocesan Assembly are carried out and that my rights are protected.

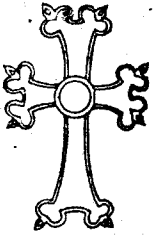
Thank You.

Yours in prayer,

Fr. Vartan Megherian

Rev. Fr. Vartan Megherian
Pastor, Holy Cross Church, New York

Copy to The Primate



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Rev. Fr. Vartan Megherian, Pastor

TO THE STIPEND COMMITTEE:

FOR YOUR INFORMATION - 1982

Expenses	Parish Gives	My Expenses (bills available)	
House Allowance	\$6,000.00	Mortgage	\$4,995.84
		Utilities	
		Electricity	1,234.83
		Gas Heating	2,406.82
		Telephone	
		($\frac{1}{2}$ personal)	418.75
			<u>4,060.40</u>
			\$9,056.24
Parish-owned Car	\$1,500.00	Gas per week	25.00
	(10,000 miles	Tolls " "	<u>12.50</u>
	@ 15¢ per mi.		37.50
	as agreed with		for 50 weeks
	Surpazan)		= \$1,875.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$7,500.00		\$10,931.24

FOR BASIC STIPEND
 (additional increment
 for 150-300 voting
 members, plus incre-
 ment for services of
 35 years)..... 13,500.00

TOTAL \$21,000.00

CLERGY MEDICAL INSURANCE: Full Payment
 CLERGY PENSION: \$750.00

Fr. Vartan Megherian

22 Yeoman Drive
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458

March 11, 1983

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
President, Diocesan Council
Diocese of the Armenian Church
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Grace:

A letter dated January 27, 1983 addressed to the undersigned as Chairman of the Stipend Committee was sent by Rev. Fr. Vartan Megherian, Pastor, Holy Cross Church, New York City. The letter asked the Stipend Committee to look into the matter of his total compensation package in the light of the mandatory "Guidelines" published by the Diocese. The letter included an attachment summarizing the compensation package from the parish.

The undersigned called a meeting through the Chairman of the Holy Cross Parish Council and met alone with the Parish Council members to discuss the situation on February 23, 1983. A determination was made as to the current total compensation received by Der Vartan which agreed in total with what Der Vartan claimed. There was some variation of how the income was split up between housing and stipend payments by mutual agreement between priest and parish relative to the Guidelines breakdown.

The essence of the facts appear to be as follows. Der Vartan's total compensation package is \$21,000.00 plus a car which is not required in the Guidelines and car allowance. The 1983 Guidelines call for a Stipend of \$14,070.00 base plus \$7,035.00 longevity increment plus \$1,005.00 parish size increment or a total of \$22,110.00. Since Der Vartan owns his own home, a housing allowance is due him. A reasonable allowance of \$6,000.00 per year has been accepted by both the Parish Council and Der Vartan as reflecting the spirit of the Guidelines. The total compensation package due under the Guidelines is then approximately \$28,000.00.

In discussions with the Parish Council the above facts were presented and acknowledged. Their position is that although they recognize the mandatory nature of the Guidelines, they believe they have a unique situation. The Guidelines contemplate duties of a parish priest covering the whole spectrum of normal parish activities. These include visitations, supervision of organizations such as A.C.Y.O.A., Armenian and

Sunday schools, Men's, Women's and Couples' organizations, etc. Many of these organizations do not even exist at Holy Cross because of the special sociological conditons in the neighborhood of the parish. Evening activities and visitations are curtailed also by these special conditions. The Parish Council feels that by virtue of the circumstances its priest is not required to and, in fact is not performing the normal full-time activities of a Parish Priest. They, therefore, feel that they should be exempt from the requirement to adhere strictly to the Guidelines.

On March 3, the undersigned met with Der Vartan and discussed all the facts presented above. While the facts were generally accepted including the Parish Council assertion that a full spectrum of parish priests' duties did not exist at Holy Cross, Der Vartan emphasized his own position. He felt that he was ready, able and willing to do a full-time priest's job in all aspects of a priest's duties. It was not his fault that the opportunities for service by a priest at Holy Cross were limited because of its unique nature. As a priest he was assigned by the Primate to this particular parish and he feels he is serving well. His long years of service in the Diocese including service in one of the largest, most active parishes in the Diocese proves his ability and willingness to serve. He does not feel he should be penalized financially because of the unique nature of his assignment over which he has no control.

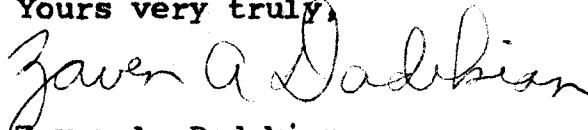
After due consideration of all the facts which are not in dispute and the positions of the two parties, the Stipend Committee feels there is merit to both positions. The Committee recommends the following:

1. The difference in compensation of \$7,000.00 between the Guidelines and the current payments to Der Vartan be split in half. Holy Cross should immediately and retroactively to January 1, 1983 increase the priest's compensation by \$3,500.00 annually.
2. In future years the \$3,500.00 differential from the minimum Gudelines schedule should be maintained. There should be no necessity for further discussions or negotiations to embarass either party in future years.
3. Since both parties agree that Der Vartan's time is not completely absorbed by his activities at Holy Cross, it is only fair to give him the opportunity to serve perhaps another parish in a limited way. Der Vartan feels he can be useful to St. Gregory's parish, which has no assigned priest at this time. A small stipend from this parish would bring his total compensation up to the level of the Guidelines. The

Stipend Committee urges the Primate to seriously consider this limited assignment.

The Stipend committee is sending this report and its recommendations to the parties involved. Further discussions will take place to implement these recommendations. A final report regarding the disposition of the matter will be sent to the Diocesan Council in due course.

Yours very truly,



Zaven A. Dadekian
Chairman, Stipend Committee

Copies to:
Rev. Fr. Vartan Megherian
Parish Council, Holy Cross Church

ZAD:abd