

May 15, 1975

Mr. Leon Hojegan
101 Beverley Road
Upper Montclair, N.J. 07043

Dear Leon:

We have received your letter of April 28, together with copies of your letter to the Fair Lawn parish council and the questionnaire sent out to some parishioners. We agree that the questionnaire, no matter what its nature, and if it was to be distributed at all, should have been done with the authority of the parish council, and the Parish Priest.

With regard to the pastor, it is not always possible to announce news of reassignments as promptly as might be desired. And we all know how difficult it is to still rumors.

We had contemplated a reassignment of pastors for some time, but a decision had to wait on the resolution of various factors. And it would not have been proper to make an official announcement regarding merely the prospect of a reassignment which might not have materialized or might have been delayed a considerable time.

We appreciate your concern and the trouble you took to so write us and send us the relevant material. We pray that all parishioners will make St. Leon's a warm and enlightened center of the spiritual and community life of the Fair Lawn parish.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

LEON & ROSALIE HOJEGIAN
101 Beverley Road
Upper Montclair, N.J. 07043

April 28, 1975

Dear Surpazan,

I hate to bother you but the situation at St. Leon's is serious and a number of us are quite concerned.

There has been no announcement of anything that has transpired recently but one hears through the grapevine that Fr. Arden has resigned and that several clergy have been approached as his successor. The latest is Fr. Free.

Last Sunday a questionnaire was given limited distribution without Fr. Arden's knowledge. Many of us found the questions unanswerable and refused to respond.

We are concerned that portions of the questionnaire may be brought up at the Diocesan Assembly. Please be aware that the questionnaire does not represent a true picture of our parish.

I've enclosed a copy of the questionnaire and my letter to the Parish Council

Within the next several weeks a number of us will be getting together and drawing up a petition for a Special Membership Meeting at which time all the facts may be brought out into the open. Our response is somewhat late in coming but we're going to make every attempt to clear up the fog that is obscuring the facts involved in the recent events in our parish.

Cordially
Jon Hojega

101 Beverley Road
Upper Montclair, N. J. 07043
April 28, 1975

Members of the Parish Council,
St. Leon's Armenian Church
Fair Lawn, New Jersey

Gentlemen:

On Sunday, April 20 I received a copy of a questionnaire which I found highly objectionable.

Aside from the fact that the questionnaire was not given to all parish members and did not indicate who originated it and for what purpose, my objections are aimed at the questions themselves.

Most of the questions as presented are unanswerable and indicate a complete lack of basic Church knowledge on the part of the writer(s).

I would strongly suggest that if you are truly concerned with the welfare of the Church, parish and parishioners that you begin with an honest self-appraisal. Are your actions in the best interest of the members or are they designed to serve self-serving purposes?

I find it most objectionable that there is still no public announcement of Father Arten's pending resignation although it was submitted over two months ago. If you want people to get involved you must see that they are informed.

Keeping people informed also extends to the search for a new priest. I have heard from many friends that some parish council members have been actively soliciting clergymen for the better part of the year. Even worse, non-parish council members are involved in these actions.

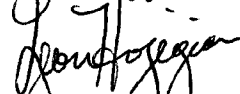
The Diocesan By-Laws provides for the election of a parish priest for a term of five years by a Special Parish Assembly. The nomination is submitted to the members by the search committee and the entire membership decides. I understand this procedure was not followed when Father Arten came to Fair Lawn.

What I am getting to is that one of the problems faced by our parish (and, incidently, many others) is that cliques form and deprive members of their right to know of Church affairs which in turn leads to a loss of interest on their part.

The Parish publishes a monthly newsletter which must be used to inform people of matters affecting the parish. Why wasn't mention made of Der Arten's resignation? Why no announcement of the questionnaire?

The Church is people united in the Body of Christ! Many of us ^{are} getting sick and tired of all the back room politicing that is going on. Let's return to basics and work together.

Cordially,


Leon Hojseghian

Parish Opinion Survey Questionnaire

Note: Rate the answers from 1 (the most important) to 8 (least important), according to how well it meets the conditions of the statement. There are no right or wrong answers, just your opinion.

1) Why people lose interest in the church. (Rate 1 to 8)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No time for church | <input type="checkbox"/> Because no one cares |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More interested in non-church organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Programs & activities not appealing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dislike pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> Family members no longer involv. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lost faith in God | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2) The most important functions a local church provides.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Win others to Christ | <input type="checkbox"/> Support the Diocese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide religious instruction for <u>all</u> ages. | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide ministerial services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Perpetuate Armenian Culture and traditions. | <input type="checkbox"/> Raise money |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide worship service | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3) Important reasons for giving to the church

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude to God | <input type="checkbox"/> Social pressure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church needs money | <input type="checkbox"/> Makes me feel good |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proud of my church | <input type="checkbox"/> Duty of a member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approve of Church's programs | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4) What are some problems Armenian church faces:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership (lay & clergy) | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of concern |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disunity or schism | <input type="checkbox"/> Too much culture & tradition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of spiritual growth | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Undefined priorities | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5) Effective parish priest, must demonstrate following qualifications:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing & administrative ability | <input type="checkbox"/> A pleasing personality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to preach acceptably | <input type="checkbox"/> Qualities of leadership that inspires action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Receptivity to new ideas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A helpful wife | <input type="checkbox"/> |

()

6) A parish leader must demonstrate following qualifications:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Receptivity to new ideas | <input type="checkbox"/> Willingness to learn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genuine Christian concern for people | <input type="checkbox"/> Faithfulness in worship and prayer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Qualities that inspire action | <input type="checkbox"/> Willing to make positive contribution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helpful wife/husband | <input type="checkbox"/> |

()

7) A Christian Congregation is growing when members experience:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desire for learning | <input type="checkbox"/> A sou-winning members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A praying members | <input type="checkbox"/> Showing their love to the world |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A paying members | <input type="checkbox"/> Live by faith |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A sealous members | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8) These are some widely accepted tasks of a parish priest. Scale them in order of "importance" and "time given."

Rank by "importance"

Rank in "time given."

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> Pastor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizer | <input type="checkbox"/> Preacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9) It has been said that the church is (Choose one)

- A building A Harbor Symphony Orchestra Beehive
 A country club A Colony A new creation

10) Aside from conducting religious services, how do you think a parish priest can promote the spiritual welfare of his parishioners?

11) Beside existing programs what new programs must be initiated for the good and welfare of the parish.

12) What the Church must do to deepen the spiritual life of its members.

13) What do you think the church's priorities must be.

14) What goal(s) the church is seeking to reach?

15) What we have to do to awaken the Armenian Church.

16) What criteria God uses to measure the success of an congregation.

I would like to make some observations:

Please complete and return to any Parish Council Member.
DO NOT SIGN.

Thank you.