

August 9, 1973

Mr. Russell Kaishian
3616 Third Avenue
South Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53172

Dear Mr. Kaishian:

Your letter of August 1 is a recitation of sad events which require prompt resolution, and we will address ourselves to the issue without any preliminaries.

The deacons of a church are under the direction and authority of the pastor. Article 48 of our Diocesan By-laws may be cited in support. Deacons, choirmasters, sacristans, and office workers may be appointed by the Parish Priest, with the consent of the Parish Council, and shall be subject to the authority of the Parish Priest, and may be discharged by the latter with the consent of the Parish Council.

No deacon has an automatic right to perform sacraments, or even to recite prayers during service. In the absence of the pastor, it is only by special permission of the Primate that a deacon may perform certain church services, and such permission will also be made known to the parish council which is the only responsible body in the absence of the pastor.

If the examples cited in your letter are true, it would be impossible to justify the acts of your deacons who have by such actions assumed rights deacons do not have.

If any deacon cannot comply with the rule referred to above, he will be deprived of the privileges given to him through ordination.

- more -

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We must stress that the parish council is the executive body of the parish, and charged with the arrangement of all religious affairs also when the pastor is absent. No one, least of all a deacon, can reasonably operate in the environment of our church without acknowledging and respecting this.

It remains for the parish council to assert this prerogative and restore order to the relationships of your parish government.

We hope and pray that your authority will not be further flouted, so that we may not be constrained to intervene with formal action.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

cc: The Very Rev. Arshag Khatchadourian

copy to Fr. Arshag

~~Joe and ... 1922????~~

Dear Mr. Kaishian:

Your letter of August 1 is a recitation of sad events which require prompt resolution, and we will address ourselves to the issue without any preliminaries.

The deacons of a church are under the direction and authority of the pastor. Article 48 of our Diocesan By-laws may be cited in support.

Insert quote here

No deacon has an automatic right to perform sacraments, ~~or celebrate~~ the Liturgy, or even to ~~read~~ recite prayers during service. In the absence of the pastor, it is only by special permission of the Primate that a deacon may perform certain church services, and such permission will also be made known to the parish council which is the only responsible body in the absence of the pastor.

If the examples cited in your letter are true, it would be impossible to justify the acts of your deacons who have by such actions assumed rights deacons do not have.

If any deacon cannot comply with the rules referred to above, he will be deprived of the privileges given to him through ordination.

We must stress that the parish council is the executive body of the parish, and charged with the arrangement of all religious affairs ~~and~~ *also* ~~well~~ when the pastor is absent. No one, least of all a deacon, can reasonably operate in the environment of our church without acknowledging and respecting this.

It remains for the parish council to assert this prerogative and restore order to the relationships of your parish government.

~~Your authority is being flouted~~

We hope and pray that your authority will not be further flouted, so that we may not be constrained to intervene ~~formally~~.

with formal action.

Primate

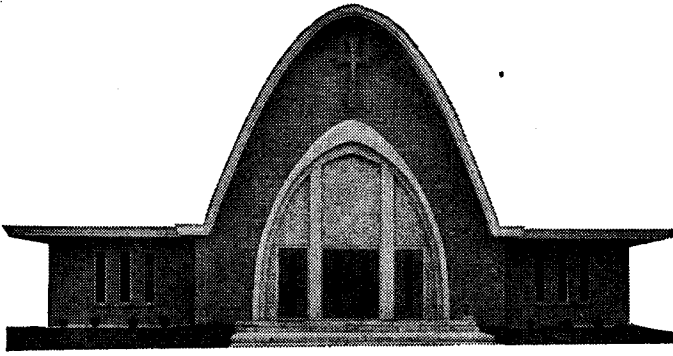
OK

1 - Unlawful to perform sacraments except in
(Bylaws art. 4-8 -

2 - Unlawful performance of sacraments ^{automatically} except baptism (Sacrament)
and Eucharist of performing to any one who is not a member of the
Church or performing same unlawfully, Unlawful
performance of sacraments shall constitute a breach of the
Bylaws and constitute a breach of the Bylaws (church services) performance,
to any one who is not a member of the Church or performing same
unlawfully or performing same in violation of the Bylaws to
breach of the Bylaws.

* (Unlawful to perform sacraments except in
baptism, and Eucharist of performing to any one who is not a member of the
Church or performing same unlawfully, Unlawful performance of sacraments
shall constitute a breach of the Bylaws and constitute a breach of the Bylaws
(church services) performance, to any one who is not a member of the Church
or performing same unlawfully or performing same in violation of the Bylaws to
breach of the Bylaws.)

3. - If any deacon cannot comply with the above mentioned
rules, he will be deprived of his privileges given
to him through ordination.



Holy Resurrection Armenian Apostolic Church

909 Michigan Avenue - (P.O. Box 143)

South Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53172

Office: 762-7460

August 1, 1973

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Diocese of the Armenian Church
630 Second Avenue
New York, N.Y.

Dear Surpazan Hayr:

This letter is in response to your telephone request to Father Arshag on July 24th. The Parish Council of Holy Resurrection wants to state here emphatically that they protest these past occurrences, and are looking for your immediate action to dispose of this problem that is disturbing Father Arshag.

11/1/72. Hayr Soorp was not present in the city at this time, and Father Paree performed a marriage in our Church with his Deacon (at the request of the wedding party). When Father Paree asked for the Crown and whereabouts of the wine, Parsegh refused to cooperate. He was insubordinate due to the fact that Parsegh felt he should have been asked to serve inasmuch as our Parish Priest ~~was~~ not present.

11/15/72. Parsegh said he felt whenever Father Arshag was not in the city, a note should be placed in the Bulletin to call Parsegh if a priest is needed.

Joe said he did not believe the Deacons should be treated as "rags", and they would not hold his "pesha". He said he felt when the priest is away, any religious matters should come to the Deacons. Joe also said he did not feel the priest had long enough office hours, and the Parish Council should ask him to spend more time at the Church. Parish Council told Joe that they were satisfied with the office hours of the priest.

11/4/72. Weekend of the Consecration of St. Mesrob Church. Joe and Parsegh made ruthless remarks about the existing parish council in Surpazan's presence, and how they planned to run for election the next term and change things in the Church. They made statements that they have the confidence and vote of the people, and they will not let the Church to be run the way it has been run in the past.

4/10/73. During parish council meeting, Parsegh asked through Vice-Chairman Sarkis Tchejeyan whether he could perform marriages. Sarkis told him he had asked the Primate, and Parsegh was told he could not perform any Sacraments. He also asked Father Arshag if he could perform funerals, or give communion, and he told a long story about a deacon who had performed a funeral service in Racine. Father Arshag told he could not.

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian

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4/24/73. Martyrs' Day Program. Parsegh was a speaker, and in his prepared speech, he said he was against changes in our Church, i.e. having services in English, and he stated he shared the feelings of the Parish Council Chairman.

Lenten Services. Parsegh, as Deacon, did not cooperate with the following of the published textbook for Lenten Services in English, and walked out of Church on two occasions. Joe and Parsegh twisted the words of the priest whenever given instructions, making accusations that the priest was desirous of using them as "Peshas" in the Church.

5/20/73. Mothers' Day Program. Joe was a speaker at the program, and he made a statement that there are young priests that are changing the Armenian Church service and that he would do everything in his power to see that this does not happen. Later, he denied that his statement referred to our priest.

Later the same day, Parsegh, in Hayr Soorp's office, made a statement directed to Hayr Soorp that he was ashamed of him because he was not letting him say the prayer that is normally said by a priest. He claimed Hayr Soorp was not giving him a chance.

5/30/73. Ordination papers. Parish Council wrote a letter to Joe requesting his certificate of ordination, which he has not been able to produce. He did have a paper signed by the now Catholicos Khoren I, but it indicates that he has received only the four elementary degrees. He claimed the Catholicos said if we could find a better person for a Deacon, we should replace him.

Vacation. This year Parsegh indicated he wanted two months' vacation. Every other year he asked for one month, and since July 1st, he has not participated in Church services, although he has participated in other Church functions.

All of the above mentioned problems were continually brought to the attention of the Board by Father Arshag, and the Parish Council did try to compromise by refereeing between the Priest and the Deacons.

Surpazan Hayr, we are looking desperately to you now for your advice and immediate action, as we, the Parish Council members, congregation, and in fact, the entire Midwest, do not want to see Father Arshag disturbed to the point that he is thinking of resigning from our Parish and Diocese.

Meyer Jandigian
Meyer Jandigian, Secretary
Parish Council



Sincerely,

Russell Kaishian
Russell Kaishian, Chairman
Parish Council
HOLY RESURRECTION ARMENIAN CHURCH

46. A Priest who is under the jurisdiction of this Diocese may leave this Diocese for another only when he has obtained permission from the Primate to do so.

47. When there is a vacancy in the priest's office, the Primate shall appoint a priest to take charge of the parish, with the agreement of the Parish Council.

48. Deacons, choirmasters, sacristans, and office workers may be appointed by the Parish Priest, with the consent of the Parish Council, and shall be subject to the authority of the Parish Priest, and may be discharged by the latter with the consent of the Parish Council.

DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY

49. The Diocesan Assembly is the representative body of the Parishes of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, and shall exercise supervision and control over all ecclesiastical-administrative bodies within the jurisdiction of the Diocese, and is under the Supreme Ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Armenians at Holy Etchmiadzin.

50. The Diocesan Assembly is a permanent body and shall consist of elected lay delegates and all the priests and clergy of higher ranks holding office in the Diocese.

51. Delegates shall be elected for a four-year term, only by their respective parish. Each year the term of office of one-fourth of the lay delegates of the Diocesan Assembly shall expire. The respective parishes shall be instructed by the Primate and the Diocesan Council to hold new elections to fill vacancies.