

June 13, 1983

Mrs. Florence Geokjian  
18301 South Woodland Road  
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120

Dear Mrs. Geokjian:

We thank you for your letter dated May 16th 1983, and are glad to hear about the activities of Greg and his wife in Oregon. It is most gratifying to learn about the Armenian community life in Oregon and Gretchen's keen interest and active involvement to keep the Armenian mailing list and mailings up to date.

We would like to take this opportunity to commend Greg for his initiative to respond to a letter to the Editor of the "Oregonian", that a Turkish massacre of the one and a half million Armenians did not occur in 1915. We, the children and grandchildren of those who walked the darker paths of human experience, should never forget the atrocities committed, and every effort should be made to bring to the notice of the world this tragic episode. It is true, we have survived the holocaust and have risen from our ashes. We are very much alive today, replanted and reborn. Our tools are our glorious Christian faith and our great cultural heritage.

As you know, it has always been a tradition for Armenians whenever a few are in the same area, to come together to enjoy community life and fellowship. We are glad that several Armenian families have contacted Greg to form a local organization to perpetuate Armenian culture, customs and to transmit our great heritage to their children.

Incidentally, in the clipping which you sent us, it was quoted that the estimated number of Armenians living in the United States is 200,000. In fact the number of Armenians living in the United States is over 600,000.

May the Lord bless you and your loved ones always.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian  
Primate

# Armenians pool cultural heritage

By DIANE LUND

Correspondent, The Oregonian

Gregory Geokjian was only responding to a letter to the editor last summer, but his action led to formation of a formal Armenian Community of Oregon.

The original letter, printed in The Oregonian, asserted that a Turkish massacre of 1½ million Armenians in 1915 did not occur.

"I had to respond; you cannot say that history never happened," said Geokjian, whose father survived a death march through the Turkish desert before emigrating to the United States. "That would have been like saying my father's life was a lie."

Several Armenian families contacted Geokjian after his response was printed. They agreed to form a local organization to perpetuate Armenian culture, customs, language and education.

"We decided to pool our knowledge," said Geokjian, 40, who serves on the board of the new group. "We'd like to establish the sense of community, which many of us grew up with, for our children, letting them know where we came from and giving them an opportunity to preserve their cultural heritage."

The group plans a memorial service at 10 a.m. Sunday, April 24, at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church on behalf of Armenians who died in Turkey between 1915 and 1922. It was on April 24, 1915, that Armenian intellectuals were rounded up and killed, Geokjian said.

"This is the first time such a memorial service will have been held in Portland," said Geokjian, for 13 years an associate professor of English literature at Portland State University.

"Part of our role is remembering our history," he said. "We need to remember what we lost. Flag-waving is a thing of the past. It's important that we remember our heritage and who we are."

Since organizing last October, the group has published a directory of its 92 members, held a potluck and a dinner dance, and shown films at its bimonthly meetings.

The group hopes to begin a language school for Armenian children, as well as hold musical, artistic and other cultural events. The group eventually may organize a church, said Suzi Karakashian, a board member.

Officers are Yerchi Arakelian, president; John Manougian, vice president; Kathy Arakelian, secretary; and Melene Sakouyan, treasurer.

"The Armenians are a fun-loving and a non-violent people," Karakashian said. "We've tried in the past to get an organization going, but it's never gotten off the ground. This time we have. Even though we're operating on a shoestring budget, we have plans."

Geokjian estimates there are 200,000 Armenians living in the United States. He said that similar organizations exist in Seattle; Los Angeles; Detroit; Chicago; Fresno, Calif.; and Vancouver, British Columbia.

APRIL 24 - 30, 1983

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SUNDAY, APRIL 24th.  
ST. ELIZABETH THE  
WONDER WORKER  
EPISTLE: HEBREWS 9:11-14  
GOSPEL: MARK 10:32-4

ALTAR: GROUP 4 - PETER COUROGEN

USHERS: PANOS VLAHOS RICHARD SLY MARY MALETIS

CHURCH OFFICE: PANOS VLAHOS

MEMORIAL: COMMEMORATION ARMENIAN MARTYRS DAY - APRIL 24, 1915

MONDAY, APRIL 25th.  
ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST  
7:00 P.M. GREAT COMPLINE - CONFESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27th.  
ST. JOHN THE CONFESSOR  
5:30 P.M. - PAN ORTHODOX PRE SANCTIFIED LITURGY - ST. GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN  
11510 S.E. Holgate St.  
6:30 P.M. - LENTEN SUPPER

SATURDAY, APRIL 30th.  
LAZAROS SATURDAY  
9:00 A.M. ORTHROS & DIVINE LITURGY

PARISH PROGRAM

SUNDAY - APRIL 24 - DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE COFFEE  
SUNDAY - APRIL 24 - G.O.Y.A. BIBLE STUDY - 7:00 P.M.  
TUESDAY - APRIL 26 - GREEK SCHOOL - 4:30-5:30 P.M.  
WEDNESDAY - APRIL 27 - PAN ORTHODOX PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY - 5:30 P.M.  
ST. GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN - 6:30 P.M. LENTEN SUPPER  
WEDNESDAY - APRIL 27 - CHOIR PRACTICE - 8:00 P.M.  
FRIDAY - APRIL 29 - GREEK SCHOOL - 4:30-5:30 P.M.

SPECIAL LITURGY, BRUNCH TO SERVE CHILDREN:

April 30, the Saturday of Lazaros, will be emphasized as the day when parents are encouraged to bring their infants and nursery school age children to the Divine Liturgy for communion. Following the Liturgy the Philoptochos will sponsor a light brunch for parents and young children during which time ~~Fr. Elias~~ will hold a question and answer session and Stephanie Whalen will explain the Sunday Nursery School Program. Child care will be provided during the discussion period. The Saturday of Lazaros is the day before Palm Sunday.

*This memorial service was held at the Greek church on Apr. 24. Fr. Elias conducted the service and many of the Greek parishioners joined about 65 people.*

*He is Father Roberts brother Fr. Poulos in charge of the National Council of Churches*

*23 emigration you attended in Cleveland 2 yrs ago. Fr. Elias is the same kind of firecracker!*

ARMENIAN MEMORIAL DAY:

April 24 has been designated as Memorial Day by the Armenian people. On this day, 68 years ago, the massacre of 1,500,000 Armenians began, and two out of three Armenians living under Ottoman rule died as a result of this event.

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate of the Armenian Church of America, has said: "We pray that the world may know that Armenians grieve for the families they lost, but we still live with a sustaining faith in the goodness of man, in his ability to survive the degradation of evil, learn from his tragic experiences and emerge into the glory of new understanding, new acceptance, new love of all people, new consciousness that we are all children of God."

We invite you to join in this commemoration of our Armenian ancestors and loved ones.

9th. ANNUAL MIDDLE EAST FESTIVAL:

The Middle East comes to Portland - spend a day of Fantasy - Church tours, delicious Pastries - Exotic Foods - Falafil Sandwiches Complete Dinners, Arabic Costumes & Jewelry, Coffee House, Middle East Artifacts, Take Out Food, Door Prizes, Raffles and Games.

MAY 14 & 15, 1983 - 12:00 to 8:00 P.M. 254-1230  
St. George Orthodox Church - 11510 S E Holgate St. 761-7292  
Adult Dinners - \$6.00 Children's Dinners (under 12) \$3.00

G.O.Y.A. NEWS:

We thank all of you who supported us in our effort to feed the hungry of the world. Our Planned Famine was very successful and we raised a total of \$467.71. Thank You and God Bless You.

Bible Study tonight at 7:00 P.M., at the home of Rena and Jim Belesiotis - 12735 N.E. MORRIS CT.

75TH. ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ALBUM: (SECOND REMINDER)

Sponsorships are urgently needed. There are approximately 130 pages of pictorial material that can be sponsored by our parishioners, businesses and professionals. This Commemorative Album will focus on the life of our parish over the last 75 years. The net proceeds from the sponsorships and sales of this historic album will be used for the Senior Citizens Housing Fund. Send in completed forms today. No one should be left out.

*Fr. Robert is now at the Cathedral in Wash, D.C. as you may know.*

Florence Goekjian

5/16/83

Dear Srparau,

I thought you might like to know a little about Greg's life in Portland, Oregon.

He his wife and children are very actively involved in the lively Greek church there, but Gretchen (née Brown) keeps the Armenian mailing list and mailings up-to-date.

There are now 135 Armenians and assorted-nationality spouses on the list.

It was good to see you at the Assembly.

As always,  
Florence G.

Mother's Day missive,  
with inserts.

Dear Mom,

This is the first thing I've written on the new machine, and I have no idea how it will work out, so hold on. I'm not really sure that I'm ready for the age of electronics, and if I didn't have Gretchen around to bail me out periodically, I think this thing would drive me nuts.

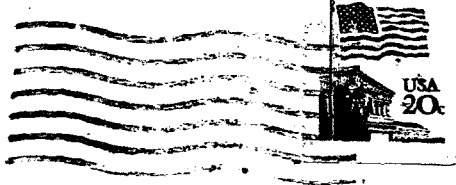
See what I mean? One of these days I'll figure out how to avoid things like that.

I'm really delighted to hear that you plan (?) to go to Alaska this summer, and I know that my mother-in-law is really eager to have you. I'm enclosing the Armenian article (complete with editorial interpolations by the yo-yo Oregonian (oops, I don't know how to italicize yet) stringer. It should be amusing, at least.

We are all fine, all recovered from a nasty flu that lasted for about two weeks. Now I'm ready to start the dining room addition as soon as I learn how to control this computer. I'm going to try to print now, so wish me luck.

love,

Greg



The Most Reverend  
Archbishop Torkom Manoukian  
Diocese of the Armenian Church  
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