

September 28, 1990

Ms. Janis V. Nazarian, Secretary  
St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church  
678 Richmond Road  
Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143

Dear Ms. Nazarian:

Thank you for your letter of September 17, concerning changes in Parish Council membership.

You probably are not aware that any such letter must come signed by the pastor and parish council chairman. It would be appreciated if another letter could be forwarded to the Very Reverend Father Khajag Barsamian with the necessary signatures.

Thank you for your kind attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Syraun Palvetzian  
Executive Director



September 17, 1990

Diocese of the Armenian Church of America  
ATTN: Very Reverend Father Khajag  
630 Second Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10016-4885

Dear Father Khajag,

The Parish Council of St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church of Cleveland wishes to inform you of the resignation of one of our members, Krikor Yessayan, for personal reasons. The alternate is David Andonian. We are also seeking your confirmation of his reappointment to our Parish Council.

Sincerely,

*Janis V. Nazarian*  
Janis V. Nazarian  
Secretary

*Parish Council, Church*

ST. GREGORY OF NAREK ARMENIAN CHURCH  
678 Richmond Road  
Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143  
(216) 381-6590

October 16, 1990

The Very Reverend Father Sooren Chinchinian, Pastor  
St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church  
678 Richmond Road  
Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143

Dear Father Sooren:

I extend my warmest gratitude to you, the parish council and parishioners of St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church, for your good wishes on the occasion of my consecration as bishop. To receive such kind expressions of prayer and support is truly a great gift of God.

I pray that with God's help and the goodwill of all the faithful, the grace of this new rank will strengthen me ever more in the Lord's service and in service to the Armenian Church.

God bless you and may His Spirit guide us to new energy in His Way, to new paths to His Word.

With prayers,

Bishop Khajag Barsamian  
Primate



October 8, 1990

His Eminence Bishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate  
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America  
630 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10016

Your Grace:

On behalf of the entire parish of St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church of Cleveland, we would like to take this opportunity to extend our most heartfelt congratulations on your recent consecration as bishop.

The Parish of St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church is looking forward to a bright future for our Diocese under your capable and dedicated leadership. We feel fortunate to have a Diocesan Primate, such as yourself; with the qualities and commitment you possess.

Those of us here in Cleveland, who have already had the good fortune to work with you, anticipate doing so for many years. . .

Wishing you continued success as you carry out the mission of our beloved Mother church.

Respectfully yours,

*Very Rev. Fr. Sooren Chinchinian*

Very Rev. Fr. Sooren Chinchinian  
Pastor

*Florence Karoghlanian*

Florence Karoghlanian  
Chairman  
Parish Council

/mtk

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DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA, 630 SECOND AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016-4885 212 686-0710

February 15, 1991

Ms. Florence Karoghlanian  
Chairman, Parish Council  
St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church  
678 Richmond Road  
Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143

Dear Ms. Karoghlanian:

Thank you and the St. Gregory of Narek Parish Council for your letter of January 20 and for the very great love and concern you expressed for the health of your parish.

The quality and character of the ACYOA Sports Weekend sponsored by Cleveland last September was very impressive. While there, I was reminded of what a committed, energetic community you have and what great numbers of young people are there, eager to learn and to serve.

I am anxious to resolve the urgent need for a permanent pastor in Cleveland and am doing my utmost to see this realized. Not only are short-term solutions being explored, but great priority is being given to St. Nersess Armenian Seminary where young people are and will continue to be trained for the priesthood.

In any event, I have your deeply-felt request in my heart and look forward to being in touch with you as we make progress.

God bless all of you, His devout servants, and may His Spirit continue to grace the Cleveland community with strength, faith and dedication.

With prayers,

*Bp. K. Barsamian*

Bishop Khajag Barsamian  
Primate



January 20, 1991

His Eminence Bishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate  
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America  
630 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10016

Your Grace:

Over the past 6 months, our parish was hopeful that we would have the opportunity to interview Fr. Yeghighe Hirabedian, Fr. Krikor Hirabedian, Deacon Serop Aljian, and most recently Deacon Norman Odabashian. In each case, we were deeply disappointed and frustrated when you informed us that they had been reassigned to other parishes.

We have tried to be a patient community. Over the past 20 years we have had a full-time priest for only 4 years (see attached). Even though the parish has held together, we feel that now more than ever a full-time priest is needed to strengthen our community and reverse the decline in membership, especially among our young people.

At the 1990 Diocesan Assembly and the recent ACYOA Assembly & Sports Weekend hosted here in Cleveland, you stated in your addresses that the youth was your "priority" for the Armenian church. The largest ACYOA chapter in your Eastern Diocese (60 members) is here in Cleveland and is without a priest to provide guidance and leadership. As a result, we are gravely concerned about the problem of parishioners, especially young adults, drifting away from the church.

In light of your recent decision to reassign Deacon Norman to Worcester, we ask for your personal commitment on the following 2 items:

1. At the expiration of Deacon Norman Odabashian's 1 year apprenticeship in Worcester (January '92), Cleveland is given the first opportunity to interview him for the position of full-time pastor.
2. When any clergy become available in 1991, Cleveland is given first priority to interview them for the position of full-time pastor.

ST. GREGORY OF NAREK ARMENIAN CHURCH  
678 Richmond Road  
Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143  
(216) 381-6590



We hope and pray that with your support, we will be able to grow and flourish as a Christian Armenian community. Please help us ensure the survival of our parish.

We look forward to your guidance in this important matter.

Respectfully yours,

St. Gregory of Narek Armenian  
Church Parish Council

*Our G. Bagdasarian*  
*David A. Andonian*  
*Hovhsep Zoharyan*  
*Florence Karaghlanian*  
*John A. Zein*  
*Amis V. Nazarian*  
*Nelson Snop Kemjian*

St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church  
Brief Pastoral History for the Past 20 Years:

1972-1985 Fr. Diran Papazian (Part-time, resided in Detroit, MI)  
1985-1987 Fr. Terenig Kondralian (Resigned from Priesthood)  
1987-1989 No Priest (Visiting Clergy)  
1989-1991 Fr. Sooren Chinchinian

ST. GREGORY OF NAREK ARMENIAN CHURCH  
678 Richmond Road  
Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143  
(216) 381-6590

January 3, 1991

Mr. George R. Sakian  
954 Dalewood Road  
Lyndhurst, Ohio 44124

Dear Mr. Sakian:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter concerning the future of the St. Gregory parish of Cleveland.

I am very sympathetic to the difficulties that arise in establishing a productive relationship between clergy and parishioners in any community. I am sure there are unique circumstances as well in Cleveland and am grateful for your comments and suggestions. They will certainly be considered as we attempt to resolve the matter of pastoral leadership in the Cleveland parish.

God bless you and may He grace you and the parishioners of St. Gregory's with all the blessings of this miraculous season.

With prayers,

Bishop Khajag Barsamian  
Primate



October 15, 1990

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian  
Diocese of the Armenian Church  
630 Second Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10016

Your Eminence:

It was an honor and pleasure to speak with you initially as the Primate of our diocese with wishes of endless success in your future endeavors.

As I had stated during our telephone conversation on October 12, 1990, I am writing to you in detail what I had generalized concerning the present status and situation with a historical background after learning of the current position of our pastor, Very Rev. Fr. Sooren Chinchinian and any future considerations.

I have, with many of our fine parishioners here at St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church in Cleveland, Ohio been strongly engaged in all of its church organizations since its actual origin the past twenty-five years or so.

During this period, we have experienced the departure of five clergymen who lived on the premises from 1964 to the present, namely in order, in respect to their past or present titles.

Vasken Kebreslian  
Arshag Katchadourian  
Diran Papazian  
Terenig Kondralian  
Sooren Chinchinian

Prior to 1964, helping to arrange the parish was deacon Nersess, now Rev. Fr. Nersess Jebejian.

I had along with others experienced the dismissal of these clergymen through the disrespectful behavior of certain individual/individuals whose character is to initially offer a warm welcome and after a year reject their services in search of a replacement.

Your approach to these clergymen mentioned along with Archbishop Torkom Manoogian will confirm their unfavorable experiences and tenures here, who may even go so far as to mention those individuals responsible.

The Cleveland parish and community members, though innocent, are unjustly taking the blame and having their reputation blemished, in the eyes of the other parishes.

The intent of this letter is to suggestively discourage your thoughts of bringing a full time pastor to this Cleveland parish for the following reasons.

- I. The Cleveland parish is a small community spread thinly over a radius of 25 miles with an inactive dues paying membership of approximately 100. Weekly church attendance averages 20 to 25 persons.
- II. Sacraments are few and far between.
- III. In reality, the cost of supporting a full time pastor with so little administrative and clerical responsibilities does not warrant and is not financially affordable toward such a full time position.
- IV. The most important point is the behavior and past record of those clergymen who were dismissed at the hands of a certain individual/ individuals whose personality and erratic character would only result in adding another name to the list of victims.

To avoid this from happening, I am again requesting that you delay any thoughts of bringing another pastor of residence to this parish.

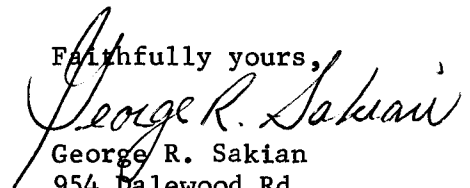
My strong suggestion to you as a temporary solution is a visiting pastor (retired-semi-retired) to perform Badarak the first Sunday of each month. The following Sundays can be handled with morning services by our two very dependable deacons, Serop Demirjian and Haig Arpajian, who have served in this capacity and concept previously.

I would suggest this practice be in existence until such time that the proper members with respect, intelligence and above all dedicated christian attitude toward each other and all organizations constitute a parish council. Presently there is an atmosphere of disarray, confusion and definitely a lack of harmony. No resident full-time pastor.

I am hopeful and appreciative that you will at least accept my correspondence as a confidential, but strong suggestive measure towards avoiding anymore unfavorable moves, but to improve the condition on a gradual trend toward a harmonious community in the Cleveland area.

Please feel free to call me at 216/381-8844 if I can answer any questions or further explain mu suggestions toward the betterment of our church.

Faithfully yours,

  
George R. Sakian  
954 Dalewood Rd.  
Lyndhurst, Ohio 44124