

March 23, 79

Primate's Message for 50th Anniversary of the Choir of
Holy Trinity Armenian Church, Cheltenham, Pa.

It is with great joy that we offer our congratulations on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Cheltenham Choir.

Music has a traditional importance in the prayer and worship of the Armenian Church and the beloved hymns of Gomidas and Ekmalian are embedded in the hearts of our people. Our Churches' liturgical lives in this country have always focused on the commitment and energy of their choirs. It is through hours of rehearsal, the participation in worship services, and their exemplary role as the core of a church community, that our choirs express their essential mission.

Beyond a vital liturgical function, a choir also has a unique membership in the parish community. The Cheltenham Choir is an eloquent illustration of faith expressed in music. In the fifty years since its formation, it has borne many of the difficult burdens of a growing parish. Even in periods of difficulty or flux, the choir has remained steadfast in its concern and love for church life. Educated in the hymns of an ancient and enduring people, it has been able to train its sights on the matters of primary importance, the joyous worship of God and cooperative effort in His service.

We are deeply grateful for all of this, and pray that the many years ahead will be characterized by the faith, vigor, and musical commitment of the past 50 years.

May God bless you and guide you in your Spirit-filled work.

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate, Diocese of the Armenian
Church of America

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