



DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA
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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRIMATE

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on the fiftieth anniversary of the St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Church. Through its activities and achievements, and through the deeds of its sons and daughters, the Armenian community of Haverhill has made many fine contributions to the experience of Armenians in America.

From the vantage of this fiftieth anniversary, you can look back on your accomplishments with pride—and perhaps with a little sadness, as you remember those who are no longer here to share in these joyous occasions, but who worked so hard, served so diligently and sacrificed so selflessly to bring you to this point. Their spirits will reside in this sanctuary—and in your hearts—as long as there are people who remember them, and carry on the work to which they devoted so much energy and love.

But anniversaries also compel us to look forward, to plan for the challenges that lie ahead. Having come so far already, what should be the priorities and objectives of the St. Gregory Church in the years to come?

This is an important question for the entire Armenian Church to consider. Above all, our mission as a Church is to do the work of Christ on earth, and it is truly *our* mission—we *all* must take part in it, because *we* are the Church.

That mission is one that our Armenian forebears have cherished for centuries; it falls to us to preserve and embellish the heritage they forged. We are all guardians and teachers of the Armenian spirit and the Armenian traditions, we are all responsible for instilling in our children that sense of belonging to the family of the Armenian Church.

The parishioners of the St. Gregory the Illuminator Church have happily accepted and nobly executed that obligation for a full half-century. May God bless you as you continue that legacy in the generations to come.

With prayers,

Abp. Khajag Barsamian

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
Primate

October 29, 1995