



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 Tenth Anniversary of the Sts. Joachim and Anne Armenian Church. A single decade of life makes you a relatively young parish; nevertheless, the activities and achievements of your sons and daughters have already contributed to the rich experience of the flock of the Armenian Church in America.

From the vantage of this Tenth Anniversary, you can look back on your accomplishments with satisfaction. Two or three generations ago, who would have predicted that Armenians living in the American heartland would not only cling to their Old World heritage, but see it grow and prosper? Today, through your energy and drive, the Palos Heights parish has become a vital and vibrant church, the hub of a thriving community of Armenians. This is testimony to the power and truth of the Armenian Christian spirit, and each parishioner may take justifiable pride in the role he or she played in this achievement.

Of course, some who were active in the early days of your church have since departed this world, and anniversaries are the proper time to remember them, and to commit ourselves to carry on the work to which they devoted so much effort 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 Sts. Joachim and Anne parish in the coming years?

This is a crucial question for the entire Armenian Church to consider. Above all, our mission as a Church is to save souls, 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 Sts. Joachim and Anne Church have happily accepted and nobly executed that obligation for ten years—a worthy beginning. May God bless you as you continue that legacy in the years to come.

With prayers,

Abp. Khajag Barsamian
Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
Primate

November, 1993