

SIXTY - SEVENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

EASTERN DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA

May 2-3, 1969

Saint James Armenian Church

Watertown, Massachusetts

The first session of the 67th annual assembly of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America began on Friday, May 2, at 2:15 P.M., in the Saint James Armenian Church of Watertown, Massachusetts. One hundred four of the 143 lay and clerical delegates were present. After the reading of the blessing of His Holiness, Vasken I, Catholicos of All Armenians, the Primate, Archbishop Tor-Kom Manoogian, gave his annual report, as did the Diocesan Council. The remainder of the session was devoted to various reports and clarifications.

The second session of the assembly was held the same day, at 7:45 P.M. The following actions were taken:

1. It was decided to authorize the Diocesan Council to appoint a consultant in religious education at a <sup>annual</sup> salary not to exceed \$9,000. The function of this consultant will be to organize an effective Diocesan Department of Religious Education.
2. Two amendments were passed making it possible for 18 year-olders to become members of the church and to vote at parish assemblies. According to the amendment, they can hold office only after they reach the age of 21.

These amendments must be approved at this year's assembly also in order to be operative.

3. The assembly called to the attention of the Primate the erroneous use of the word "Orthodox" in referring to our church.
4. A uniform scale of payments to the clergy was approved. The scale is based upon the division of our parishes into large, medium, and small parishes and provides the following guidelines for minimum payment:

	married priests	celibates
small parishes	\$5,600	\$5,000
medium parishes	\$6,200	\$5,600
large parishes	\$7,000	\$6,200

Parishes are expected, in addition, to provide housing to their clergy, or in the absence of such housing an annual allowance of \$1,600 for married priests and at least \$1,200 for celibates. If a clergyman chooses not to live in a parish house that may be available, the parish is expected to provide at least one-half of the stipulated minimum housing allowance. Clergymen are expected to have 3 weeks' continuous vacation annually (to involve only two Sundays). Attendance at the Diocesan Assembly, the ACYOA Assembly, and the Diocesan Clergy Conference, does not fall into the vacation period. Parishes are expected to pay the expenses of the clergy for attendance at the diocesan assemblies.

The third session was held on Saturday, May 3, at 10:25 A.M. The actions taken were the following:

1. Elections were held for the Diocesan Council, and the results were as follows:

Clergy

Very Rev. Zaven Arzoomanian  
Rev. Dajad Davidian  
Rev. Levon Arakelian

Laymen

Edward Bashian  
James Etmekjian  
Crosby Goshgarian

Rev. Arakelian was elected to a term of two years. All others were for four years.

The fourth session took place the same day, at 2:45 P.M. The following actions were taken:

1. Father Arnak Kasparian's article in Hayasdanyayts Yegeghetsi was discussed at length, and the following resolution was adopted:

"This assembly takes cognizance of the article entitled, 'One or Two Armenian Communities in America', by Rev. Arnak Kasparian, which appeared in the January, 1969 issue of Hay Yegeghetzy. Since this article has raised controversial questions, this Assembly wishes to reaffirm its position that the Armenian Diocese of America is under the direct authority of His Holiness, Lord Vasken I, Catholicos and Supreme Patriarch of all Armenians, and will always remain in this proper canonical relationship to the Supreme Mother See at Holy Etchmiadzin.

"While the Assembly affirms Rev. Arnak's right to present alternative ideas in an earnest effort to find a solution to the problem of division within the church, the Assembly declares that the appearance of the article in the official organ of this Diocese must not be interpreted as in any way having represented the official view of the Diocese."

2. The Assembly decided to ask His Holiness, Catholicos Vasken, to codify the canons of the Armenian Church and to prepare

a constitution to assure the <sup>uniform</sup> religious and administrative governance of the <sup>Assembly</sup> church throughout the world.

3. The Assembly approved a reply to an article in the Boston Globe, which contained a number of errors concerning the Armenian Church.

After the adoption of a number of resolutions of a routine character, the Assembly adjourned until next year.

Respectfully submitted,

*James Etmekjian*

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March 8, 1970