

By the Grace of God which has sustained your Pastor physically, spiritually, and emotionally, he has been able to meet some of the major exigencies and demands which has been placed on his shoulders.

Our parishioners, young and old, men and women have offered their services and have given us assurances that we could call on them if we needed help. Our church organizations, the Parish Council, special committees, have been cooperative and supportive. At this time, I would avoid mentioning names of special people who have gone out of their way to be of utmost help, encouragement and reward to us. They are always in my heart and prayers.

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XXXXX I shall also eliminate the accounting of my routine chores as they are an integral part of a Pastor's daily life, responsibility and obligation. Administrative conscientious work has kept our church in progress and in an honorable position. Your pastor as a priest has responded to every spiritual need of the congregation, performed sacraments, conducted services, preached in both languages without fail. Has attended all meetings, took active part in the execution of decisions and plans and enjoyed the results of carefully planned and presented functions.

With one word, a glance around around at progress made in various levels of achievements answers for itself, and I feel it unnecessary for me to enumerate specifically the different phases of work which I have endeavored to fulfill.

What criteria do we use to judge a successful year, a successful parish? Can we claim success when the bills are paid, the budget supported, dinner menus deliciously prepared, bazaar profits doubled - with one word the physical aspect is proven to be healthy - but is this a reasonable criteria to pass judgement on and say: "We are great, we have accomplished the task."

This may satisfy our eyes, our minds, but cannot satisfy the ever-thirsty soul of a conscientious Christian. One great question remains to be answered and that is "have we been faithful to the call of God?" I cannot pass judgement on your behalf but I can admit from my observance that the past year has been a failure.

We need to learn the real purpose of the church. We need more kneeling and praying people; we need more volunteers to become associated with the life of the church, we need more people in the choir, more children in the Sunday School, more boys and girls in the Youth Group; more women in the Guild. We need dreamers and people of vision to remind us that we are one world and one people, and remind us of the different areas that need an investment of time, talent and treasure.

As a family of work and worship, we need to be aware that pews without people is sadness to God, the classrooms without children is a scene which is disrespectful to our martyred forefathers - just the fantasy of having a beautiful church and surroundings only breeds vanity.

Always and forever we need to be aware of the purpose for which this parish was gathered and established 50 years ago. We exist to worship God, to be a friend to each other, to be ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ virtuous and charitable, to be faithful to our national heritage and to be one under God. To me this is the strongest criteria of success, progress and achievement.

We have come a long way physically. How much ground we have covered spiritually - that question remains unanswered.

We must be aware of these and resolve to meet the challenges ahead with determination, confidence and faith. Herein our challenges will not be physical as they were in the past years. ~~xxxx~~ That is all behind us now.

The new challenges will be more spiritual and emotional ones. I am referring to our resolve to rise to the occasion and relate to 300 Armenian families in our area who must be won to the church and made part of the on going life and leadership of this church.

I am referring to more than 150 children and youth who must be won to the church, given identity and help them to find their roots and be proud of it.

As good as @the old days@ may have been, we will need new vision and new programs to make the Gospel, the church, the reality of being a wonderful HYE, relevant to our people in the 1980's.

With this enthusiasm I maintain that the following areas have to be considered and initiated:

1. A forceful movement to spread "The Word" and make our community conscious of regular church attendance, as well as ~~xxxxxx~~ church-related functions.
2. A renewal of commitments concerning our first priority - that of educating our children in the faith of our forefathers and subscribing to the ideals and obligations of the Sunday School.
3. Once youth is lost it can rarely be recovered! And to mourn the loss of our children once it is too late is useless. As parents we must do our utmost to acquaint and encourage our offsprings to participate in youth activities. Ultimately it will be to the benefit of both the children as well as you their parents.
4. It is obvious that mixed marriages have exceeded all previous records to an alarming degree. With due respect to all our "edar harsuss and pessah"s, this has to be a public relations issue to indoctrinate and educate our youth that the best way is the Armenian way.
5. An awakening to the truth that a family who prays and works together in the church is a healthy, happy family. We strongly impress upon you to take active part in all organizations, support their affairs and their endeavors for the good of all concerned.
6. This magnificent church and property cannot be considered ours, yet! The bank owns it! Special effort and plans must be formulated to raise funds and at least partially pay the remaining \$235,000.00 mortgage.
7. ~~xxxxxx~~ Reviewing the conditions in which all our churches are struggling for survival I have come to the conclusion that we should seriously think about establishing an endowment fund for future support and sustenance of our church.
8. It is imperative that we subscribe to the weekly pledge system for the sound support of the budget as a main and steady source of income. The yearly bazaar and pledge ~~xx~~ system should almost cover the budgets set for coming years.

We now look forward to the year ahead with the anticipation that God has even greater blessings in store for us in 1981. Let us all be realistic and optimistic and continue to worship, serve, love and sacrifice faithfully and regularly.

Glorious prospects and great challenges are ahead, and we shall overcome. Remember, there is nothing that God, you, and us together, cannot accomplish.

Thank you and God bless you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rev. L. Arakelian".

Rev. L. Arakelian