

PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT - FEB. 5, 1995

I greet to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and express my joy and gratitude to you for your constant support and service. Many things were accomplished in 1994 because of your understanding, cooperation and positive response.

Our church again was able to meet the spiritual, cultural, educational and social needs of our community, especially of all those who made the effort to be with us, attend, participate and be involved.

Yes, it takes more than mere words, eating Armenian food in this church, to experience the reality of God's loving presence.

God calls us to give Him real service and not lip service. Although one-third of our 300 families are actively involved in the life of our church, we still have to work very hard to bring the others too.

It is a shame to see that, one has to work hard to bring another person into this religion - especially another Armenian to the Armenian Church.

The early church leader, St. Augustine (5th century), once was confronted by a man who showed him his pagan idol and said,

"Here is my God,

Where is yours?"

St. Augustine replied,

"I cannot show you my God,

Because you have no eyes to see Him."

To which we might add, "we cannot show each other "our" God - God revealed to

us in the life and teachings and the ministry of Jesus Christ - If we have no eyes to see Him, it is because of our own misguided notions of whom God is.

No doubt, that the mission of the church is first of all to help you and me to find the true God and bring you and me closer to Him. All the other things that we do are secondary.

In 1994, I have performed my pastoral duties to the best of my ability. To name a few...

- **49 Badaraks were celebrated followed by a proper sermon.**
- **Sick visitations were made by me, whenever I was notified.**
- **I have attended almost all the meetings of our organizations and committees.**
- **Counseling and/or spiritual guidance was provided to those who needed it.**
- **Family visitations were continued.**
- **Special attention was given to our youth (calls, visits, written notice, etc.).**
- **Two days a week, I have tried my best to be here at the church to work with the secretary.**

In 1994, I have performed:

- 4 - Baptisms**
- 2- Weddings**
- 5- Funeral services in our church.**

Also, during this past year, I have attended many and different out-of-parish activities such as:

- 12 Diocesan Council meetings in NYC**
- 3 Cathedral Renovation Committee meetings in NYC**
- 2 Havad Committee meetings in NYC**
- 3 Regional Armenian Clergy meetings in NY and NJ**
- 1 Cooperation Committee meeting in NYC**
- 1 New England Regional meeting in Worcester, MA**
- 2 Trumbull Clergy meetings**
- 2 Trumbull Interfaith Committee meetings**
- 2 Meetings with Sacred Heart University's Global Studies Dean and some faculty**

whose intention is to bring students also from Yerevan State University.
2 Church/religion oriented lectures, one at Sacred Heart University, the other at St. Nersess.

I also attended St. Nersess' graduation ceremony, played the piano at Der Karekin's 20th anniversary of his ordination banquet, went twice to New York city to hear Armenia's president Levon Ter Petrossian's address; one at the United Nations and the other at the New York Marriott. I also attended ACYOA's annual assembly in New York at the Diocese.

If you add all these, you'll notice that I have attended, on the average, 10 out of state activities in a month.

1994 CHURCH ACTIVITIES

We had a very busy and very successful year in many ways. Here too, I would like to go over the main activities and hope that it won't be boring for you to listen.

JAN.

- Armenian Christmas was celebrated on the day.
- Annual Parish Assembly took place.

FEB.

- Church renovation (siding) started.
- Bought a new parish car.
- \$16,000 was collected from our generous parishioners within three months for the above two.
- Vartanantz Feast was celebrated.
- Mardi-Gras Mini-Bazaar.

MAR.

- Michink dinner.
- Mrs. Dorothy Bengoian-Ouligian, speaker.
- Formation of "The Twelve" auxiliary committee.
- Every Wednesday Lenten Service took place, followed by a lecture and discussion. I invited different speakers each week.
- Khachkar project was started.

APR.

- **Met for the first time with attorney Ehram to advise us about the possibilities of our back land.**
- **Church mortgage was refinanced.**
- **Choir, Palm Sunday dinner and program.**
- **Blessing of the Khachkar base.**

MAY

- **Met with Elise Griego upon her request to teach her the Deacon's part of our liturgical service.**
- **The siding of the church was completed.**
- **ACYOA Jrs. Mother's Day brunch.**
- **Schools closed.**
- **Parking lot was completed by adding extra gravel.**

JUNE

- **Primate visited our Parish, celebrated Badarak, preached, blessed the Khachkar and presided at the 63rd anniversary banquet at Liedel's.**
- **Over \$60,000.00 was pledged for the Khachkar project, over 125 parishioners participated either by donating \$1,000.00 or \$100.00. As of today, close to \$47,000.00 of that pledge is paid.**

JULY

- **We signed a new parish house contract with a new caretaker/tenant.**
- **Renovation of the parish house roof and replacement of the boiler, inside renovation, painting inside the house was started just prior to my annual vacation.**

AUG.

- **Annual Picnic took place in front of the Khachkar. We had a live band and over 200 people attended.**

SEPT.

- **I held a special three hour conference with the parish council members one Saturday.**
- **"Land" Committee was formed.**
- **Opening of the schools.**
- **Maral Nalbandian (age 12) became a church organist.**
- **An evening of Jazz, with 70 people attending.**
- **Once a month English Badarak started for our non-Armenian speaking parishioners.**
- **Special and first class invitation was mailed to our youth to attend the English liturgy.**

OCT.

- **Pre-Bazaar dinner, Charles Goorhigian, speaker.**
- **Beginning of Sunday messages given by parishioners on the topic of "1994, Year of the Family and the Mission of the Armenian Church"**

Here and Now."

- **My 40th Birthday Surprise party.**
- **Special Parish Assembly to discuss the future fate of our four acres of back land.**

NOV.

- **Mt. Ararat annual bazaar. Close to \$14,000.00 was raised of which \$7,700.00 came from the Ad book.**
- **Conference with women on a Saturday.**
- **Painting of the church dome and front columns was done.**
- **Sixteen new choir robes were made. All donated.**
- **We hosted the Thanksgiving Eve Interfaith Service of TIC.**

DEC.

- **Women's Guild Annual Assembly.**
- **Christmas caroling with ACYOA Jrs.**
- **Painting of the Narthex.**
- **A used baby grand piano was donated to our church.**
- **Five thousand Khachkar post cards were printed. Printing cost was all donated.**

1994 PLEDGES

In 1994, our Pledge Committee, Richard Najarian, Sara Der Megerdichian and Nicky Taraian, with your generosity were able to raise over \$20,000.00 in pledges. This was the first time in my eleven years here, that I witnessed us reaching that figure.

Our 1995 Pledge Committee members are:

Sara Der Megerdichian, Nicky Taraian, Elsie Chaghatzbanian.

Their goal will be to encourage each and every family to pledge a minimum of \$300.00 annually to the church so that our church becomes financially self-sufficient.

IN 1995

I would like to concentrate and pay attention to the following.

- **Bible study and special education, gatherings, events (lectures/dialogues).**
- **Training of altar servers.**
- **Strengthen choir and schools with new members and teachers.**

- Continue paying attention to the needs of our youth and teenagers and involve them.
- Lenten service and talk with each organization.

IN 1995

- 1) No major fund-raising.
- 2) Only start the \$300.00 Pledge Club.
- 3) No major renovations.
- 4) No money-spending projects.
- 5) Fr. Oshagan's Chorale - April 30th. 80th anniversary of Genocide.
- 6) Primate's visit and Sen. Lieberman, June 11, 1995.

In short, pay more attention to the spiritual growth than physical-financial.

Armenia

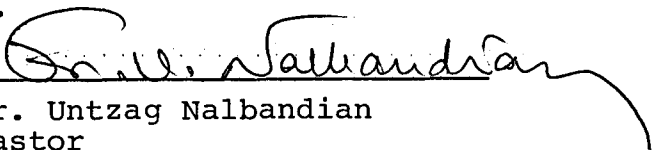
Continue adopting those five families and send our Etchmiadzin Looma. In addition, we have the special winter Olympics coming here this June. Armenia will participate and we will be asked to help.

I thank all our parish council members for providing the leadership with the Pastor and I particularly thank the outgoing members, Richard Najarian (6 years) and Carmen Fuchs (two years).

In accordance with our tradition on behalf of our community I would like to present Richard Najarian with a gift - New Armenian church edition of the English Bible - for his six years of unselfish and true Christian service.

I also thank all those who served in organizations, committees, in the church, on the altar, at the organ, in the kitchen or classrooms.

May God bless you all and your loved ones.


Fr. Untzag Nalbandian
Pastor