

July 19, 1983

The Reverend Father Arsen Barsamian
Pastor, St. James Armenian Church
834 Pepper Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23226

Dear Father Arsen:

With reference to our letter dated July 13th 1983, and your query regarding your participation on Sunday, September 11th 1983, the Canon Sacrist will make the necessary arrangements. He may ask you to celebrate the Divine Liturgy and to preach the sermon in English and Armenian.

As you are aware, Mrs. Dervishian-Smith will present the relic of the Cross to St. Vartan Cathedral on that day, and she considers it a personal favor if you participate in the ceremony.

It would be appreciated if you could let us know whether you would be able to be in New York City on Sunday, September 11th 1983, so that the necessary arrangements be made.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

July 6, 1983

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate
Diocese of The Armenian Church
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Eminence:

Thank you for your letter of May 26, 1983, concurring in the date of September 11, 1983, for the presentation of the Relic of the True Cross to St. Vartan Cathedral. Your Eminence's generous remarks are much appreciated.

In thinking about the presentation, I find I will need guidance as to how the actual presentation will be made, and when in the Sunday service it will take place. The trip to New York will be difficult for me, as I am on crutches, and must have an attendant to help me in travelling. Our plans are to arrive on the afternoon of Friday, September 9, and return to Richmond Sunday afternoon. We have a reservation at the Hotel Statler.

✓ We understand the One World Festival will be held September 10-11 at the Cathedral, and if someone could send me information regarding this event, we would like to attend.

done ✓ Inasmuch as our Der Hayr, the Reverend Arsen Barsamian, was instrumental in my decision to give this Relic to the Cathedral, I would consider it a personal favor if Your Eminence could find it possible to invite him to participate in the ceremony. If this is possible, it would need a letter to our Parish Council requesting Der Hayr's presence in New York on the 11th.

✓ Also, would Your Eminence deem it necessary to write Etchmiadzin giving the details of the proposed gift, so that it may be inscribed in the history of the Church.

✓ I am also concerned with the publicity attendant to this gift. I sincerely hope that whatever press stories may emanate from New York will also be directed to the Richmond newspapers. For the purposes of this presentation, I would appreciate your using my legal name, Virginia Dervishian Smith. The Relic is to be given in memory of my parents, Hagop and Mary Dervishian; my deceased brother, Harold H. Dervishian; and all deceased generations of Dervishians.

I have talked via phone with my mother's cousin, George Juskalian, of Vienna, Virginia, and he is much interested in attending the ceremony. At this writing we are uncertain who may be able to attend from Richmond.

If further questions arise, I will contact Your Eminence for guidance.

Respectfully,

Virginia Dervishian Smith

Copies: Dervishian Family
The Reverend Arsen Barsamian

May 26, 1983

Mrs. Floyd David Smith
6816 Edmonstone Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23226

Dear Mrs. Smith:

We have received your letter dated May 20th 1983, and wish to express our thanks for your thoughtfulness and generosity in wishing to donate to St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral the Relic of the Cross which has been handed to your generation from your family.

This sacred heirloom will be a valuable addition to our Cathedral treasury, and we thank you for allowing it to have a permanent home in our Cathedral. It is through the generosity of donors such as yourself that we can preserve our history and culture while allowing us the privilege of sharing it with others.

We will be pleased to welcome the members of your family who wish to attend the Feast of the Holy Cross in September. We would appreciate if you will let us know the names of those who will attend the church services.

May the Lord bless you and your loved ones always for the generosity of your spirit.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

May 20, 1983

Archbishop Torkom Manougian, Primate
Diocese of The Armenian Church
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Eminence:

Through word of mouth authority in the Dervishian family, we have a Relic of the Cross, which has been handed to my generation. I remember my father's mother asserting this to be an established fact. In my childhood I remember local Armenians coming to our home to drink a glass of water into which the Relic had been dropped and making a silent confession.

Due to the massacres of the Armenians by the Turks beginning at the end of the nineteenth century, our ancestors fled first to England and later to the United States. If there was any authentication in writing, it has been lost in the flight from Turkey. My father's great uncle was Hagopos Chuknavorian, Archbishop of Tokat (1874-1880).

We accept. ✓
I would like to present this Relic through Your Eminence to the Diocese and the Cathedral, if the Church will accept it as authentic, and if I may be so informed by letter from Your Eminence.

This matter is rather urgent, as I have been in deteriorating health for several years, and do not know what disposition my heirs have in mind. If the letter of acceptance is received, I or someone from my family can come to New York in September, just before the feast day of The Holy Cross, and stay through Sunday service. At this writing my one remaining brother is hospitalized, and I would want to give him sufficient time to recover to make the trip. I intend to ask all other Dervishian descendants if they would like to attend the dedication (or whatever ceremony may be appropriate).

My phone number is (804) 282-5145.

Respectfully,

Virginia Dervishian Smith

Mrs. Floyd David Smith
6816 Edmonstone Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23226

COPY:

All Dervishians
The Reverend Arsen Barsamian

July 13, 1983

The Reverend Father Arsen Barsamian
President of the Parish Council
Pastor, St. James Armenian Church
834 Pepper Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23226

Dear Father Arsen:

A few months ago, we received a letter from Mrs. Virginia Dervishian Smith from Richmond, Virginia, informing us that she wished to donate to St. Vartan Cathedral the relic of the True Cross which was handed to her generation from her family.

Mrs. Dervishian Smith has now made arrangements for the presentation of this relic, and will be in New York City from September 9th through Sunday afternoon, September 11, 1983.

We would be pleased if you will make the necessary arrangements with your parish council to be present at this presentation on Sunday, September 11, 1983. Kindly, therefore, let us know whether you will be able to attend this ceremony.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Torkom Mancoogian
Primate

cc. Parish Council Chairman