

THE 93RD DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY REPORT

The Assembly was hosted by the St. Vartanantz Armenian church, in Chelmsford, Massachusetts, on May 4,5,&6, 1995. His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, the Primate of the Eastern Diocese, led the Assembly in the opening worship service at 2:30 pm.

Present were 132 delegates out of 194. The assembly officers were elected, chairman, Arthur S. Mardigian, second chairman, Daniel K. Dorian, Armenian secretary, Rev. Fr. Garen Gdanian and English secretary Anna Marie Norhad. The 92nd Diocesan assembly minutes were accepted as amended.

A message from His Holiness, Karekin I, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of all Armenians was presented on video tape.

CLERGY CONFERENCE REPORT was presented by Dn. Gorge Devejian . The retreat was attended by 32 priests and deacons. The following are the three areas the clergy expressed concern regarding the importance of the role of the priest in regard to the parish council:

1. The by-laws need to state and define the priest's executive authority in the parish council.
2. The by-laws need to articulate the importance of the Christian preparation of parish council members.
3. The by-laws need to clarify the procedure by which the annual Reports are reported to and approved by the Diocese.

ST. NERSESS ARMENIAN SEMINARY REPORT was presented by Rev. Fr. Arakel Aljalian, Administrator. Renovations of the seminary include an extension of the library dedicated to the memory of the late Archbishop Tiran Nerssoian. There are four full-time students and one part time. There are five students attending the Pre-Theological studies at the Concordia college, and one deacon studying in Jerusalem. The 1993-1994 actual budget was \$295,651. Some of the seminary's activities are the St. Nersess California Recruitment Mission, Parish Network, Outreach programs , Summer Programs and five regular publications.

Armenian Church Endowment Fund (ACEF) Report was presented by Col. Victor Arzoomanian. The ACEF has gained over \$8,000,000 since January 1, 1995, allowing the assets to pass \$30,000,000 with more than 700 donors.

The report showed in 1980, the number of donors were 51 with assets of \$1,500,000. In 1994 the number of donors were 680 with assets equal to \$30,000,000.

FUND FOR ARMENIAN RELIEF (FAR) REPORT was presented by the director Simon Y. Balian. Far represents the humanitarian service of the Armenian church. It is well respected in the United States and in Armenia. Goods and services worth \$39 million were furnished to Armenia in 1994. FAR was established as a private voluntary organization because the United states government does not give grants to religiously affiliated groups.

UNITY COMMITTEE REPORT was presented by Zavin Kasparian. The Prelacy had not responded to a letter dated February 1, 1995. they were waiting for the elections to be held in Armenia for the new Catholicos.

PRIMATES ADDRESS: The primate stated that 1995 was the year of the Holy Bible . Each delegate received one as a gift. The Primate spoke of the strength of Catholicos Vasken I who kept the Christian spirit in Armenia under the rule of the Soviet Union. The Primate spoke of the excitement of the newly elected Catholicos Karekin I , who will bring new excitement and energy to All Armenians.

ARMENIAN CHURCH YOUTH ORGANIZATION (ACYOA) was presented by Meline Kasparian, chairperson. The following are activities of the ACYOA, the Armenia Service Program (ASP) and the Sorts weekend . Ms. Kasparian stated that there was the need to increase membership.

ASSOCIATION OF ARMENIAN CHURCH CHOIRS ASSOCIATION will celebrate their 50th anniversary.

WOMEN'S GUILD CENTRAL COUNCIL (WGCC) REPORT was presented by Margaret Atamian, chairperson. They consist of 50 Women's Guilds with over 2500 members. Their most successful project is the CASP program directed by Julie Ashekian. Casp has raised over \$500,000 with only 7% overhead cost. Casp sponsors four orphanages in Armenia which house about 1,000 children.

PROPOSALS:

1. The following amendment proposal was passed to be voted on next year: Change numbering of Article 56 to Article 56A and add the following: Article 56B.(NEW): Any parish delinquent in its Diocesan assessments for two fiscal years preceding the annual Assembly shall not have representation at the Assembly unless arrangements for payment have been made by the Assembly.

The following proposed Bylaw was accepted: Revised Article 61 G : To elect an Auditing committee composed of three members for three year terms, with the duty of examining the accounts of the Diocesan Council and Diocesan Board of Trustees as well as of bodies created by Diocesan authority, and to submit the results of their examination to the Diocesan Assembly.

The following proposal #2 was passed. The Primate stated that he will bring it to The attention of the Catholicos, Karekin I to be discussed at the Bishops meeting. Be it resolved that this Diocesan Assembly respectfully petition His Eminence Archbishop Barsamian , the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, in the discretionary exercise of his hierarchical authority, to ordain qualified women to the Diaconate.

NEW BUSINESS: The Assembly voted in favor of a proposal to prepare a written report of the Restricted Funds .

FINANCIAL REPORT: The 1995 Budget was passed with \$3,616,270 in revenues and \$3,552,575 in expenditures.

THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS:

AUDITING COMMITTEE: Karen Dederyan , Arthur Simonian, Sr. and Ann Devejian. Alternates, Charles Guleserian and Gregory Manuelian.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Rev. Fr. Diran Boyajian, George Devletian, Rev. Parea Metjian, Rose Najarian and Ara Nersesian . Papken Megerian as alternate.

PROPOSALS COMMITTEE: Rev. Fr. Haik Donikian, Kai Kazarian, George Marafian, George Nahabedian and Rev. Fr. Diran Papazian. V.Rev. Fr. Varoujan Kabarajian as alternate.

DIOCESAN BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Daniel Dorian

DIOCESAN COUNCIL CLERGY: Rev. Fr. Yeprem Kelegian, and V.Rev. Fr. Haigazoun Melkonian.

DIOCESAN COUNCIL LAY: Haig Dadourian, Vincent Gurahian and Dennis Papazian.

Respectfully submitted,

Azniv Amirkhanian, Delegate