



DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA
ԱՌԱՋՆՈՐԴՈՒԹԻՒՆ ՀԱՅՈՑ ԱՄԵՐԻԿԱՅԻ ԱՐԵՒԵԼԵԱՆ ԹԵՍԻ

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 27, 2000

Dr. Serop S. Demirjian
540 Sandal Wood Drive
Bay Village, OH 44140

Dear Dr. Demirjian:

On behalf of H. E. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, allow me to thank you for accepting to serve on the 2001 Pilgrimage Committee "In the Footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlighthener" from 4-18 June, 2001. Your support is appreciated.

As discussed, the next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, November 30, 2000, at 5:00 p.m. at which time we will arrange to have you teleconferenced from your office telephone number 440-826-4211.

Sincerely yours,

George Kassis
Director of Communication and Development

cc: H.E., Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
cc: Mr. Vahakn Hovnanian
cc: Mr. Kevork Toroyan



DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA
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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 26, 2000

Mr. Jim Jones
Chief of Approval Office
DHM-32
U. S. DOT/RSPA
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Dear Mr. Jones,

The year 2001 will mark the 1700th Anniversary of the Conversion of Armenia to Christianity. The Diocese of the Armenian Church of America is planning a Diocesan-wide celebration, which will begin with a very exciting and visually impressive Opening Ceremony.

At the stroke of midnight on December 31, 2000 - New Year's Eve - the Catholicos of All Armenians, His Holiness Karekin II, will light a torch at Khor Virab in Armenia: site of St. Gregory the Enlightener's imprisonment. The Catholicos will then travel in procession to Holy Etchmiadzin, where he will light a lantern on the Altar of Descent.

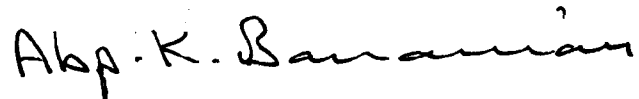
Around His Holiness will be the diocesan primates of the worldwide Armenian Church, each accompanied by a pair of youth representatives from their own diocese. After lighting the lantern with the flame from Khor Virab, His Holiness will light a similar lantern for each diocese; these in turn will be transported back to the various home dioceses by the primates and their youth representatives.

The idea is to have the symbolic "light of St. Gregory" passed from the source of our faith and heritage - Holy Etchmiadzin - to each diocesan center, and finally to every local Armenian parish and home, to inaugurate the 1700th jubilee year. In our own Diocese, the opening ceremony will take place on Saturday, January 6, 2001 at New York's St. Vartan Cathedral.

My request to you is to provide my office with the procedure we need to follow to allow me to bring this lit flame from Armenia to New York. I will be traveling on a commercial airline and I was informed that we should apply to the Department of Transportation for a special dispensation to allow me to carry this flame on the airplane. As I was also informed, such a special dispensation was last granted for the Olympic flame to be brought to Atlanta. We would also need information on where we can obtain the special container in which I can carry the flame.

As time is of the essence, I would appreciate your assistance as soon as possible.

With prayers,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Abp. K. Barsamian". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
Primate



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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

Թի 3882
Հոկտեմբեր 24, 2000

Գերաշնորհ
Տ. Օշական Արք. Չորյեան
Նիւ Եորք

Սիրելի Արքագան Եղբայր,

Ինչպէս գիտէք՝ Հայաստանի մէջ Բրիտանացիները որպէս պետական կրօնք հռչակման 1700-ամեակին առիթով ծրագրուած է կազմակերպել «Ս. Գրիգոր Լուսաւորչի հետքերով - Կեսարիայէն Էջմիածին» ուխտագնացութիւն մը:

Այս ուխտագնացութիւնը կը կազմակերպուի հրաւերովը Կ. Պոլսոյ Պատրիարք Ամեն. Տ. Մեսրոպ Արք. Մութաֆեանի, եւ տեղի պիտի ունենայ 2001 թուականի Յունիս 4-18 օրերուն:

Այս գրութեամբ կը դիմենք ձեզի՝ որպէսզի ձեր կողմէ մէկը նշանակէք անդամակցելու 1700-ամեակի ուխտագնացութեան յանձնախումբին՝ որպէսզի իր մասնակցութիւնը բերէ ուխտագնացութեան կազմակերպման աշխատանքներուն:

Շնորհակալ պիտի ըլլանք եթէ յիշեալ անձին անունը, հասցէն եւ հեռաձայնի թիւը մեզի տեղեկացնէք առաջին առիթով, որպէսզի կարելի ըլլայ զինք հրաւիրել յանձնախումբի յաջորդ ժողովին:

Հաճեցէք կցեալ գտնել օրինակները Ամեն. Տ. Մեսրոպ Պատրիարքի Օգոստոս 31, 2000 թուակիր հրատրին եւ ուխտագնացութեան առժամեայ յայտագրին:

Եղբայրական սիրով եւ աղօթակից՝

Խաժակ Արք. Պարսամեան



ՊԱՏՐԻԱՐԻՈՒԹԻՒՆ ՀԱՅՈՑ
ARMENIAN PATRIARCHATE * ERMENİ PATRIKLİĞİ

August 31st, 2000

To all the faithful of the Holy Apostolic Armenian Church throughout the world from our Patriarchal See of Istanbul: Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Bi-Millennial Jubilee of the Birth of our Lord has truly been an invitation to deepen our knowledge of the mystery of God, Who is the Sovereign of history, and the mystery of Jesus Christ, Who entered into history. We also have had the chance to contemplate the spreading of the Gospel amongst the peoples of the Roman Empire during the First Century A.D. by the group of Apostles who were filled with the Holy Spirit.

And now, as the year 2001 draws near, we Armenians, responding to the encyclicals of Catholicos Vazgen I and Catholicos Karekin I, both of beloved memory, are preparing ourselves for the 1700th Anniversary of the recognition of the Armenian Apostolic Church by the Arsacid King Tiridates III, traditionally in the year 301 A.D., following the tireless efforts of Saint Gregory the Enlightener.

Therefore the year 2001 is an exceptional year of conversion and of grace for all Armenians. Precisely for this reason, we hereby extend our personal invitation to all who would like to follow us in a special jubilee pilgrimage from Istanbul to Caesarea Cappadocia (Gesarya, Kayseri) where Saint Gregory grew, studied, formed his family and was ordained bishop, and finally on to Holy Etchmiadzin where he saw his vision. This pilgrimage, in the footsteps of the Holy Apostles and Saint Gregory the Enlightener, will culminate with a solemn Divine Liturgy presided over by His Holiness Catholicos Karekin II of All Armenians.

From June 4 to June 18, 2001, we invite you to embark on a double journey with us: a *return* to the origins of Armenian Christianity on the paths of the lands of the Apostles and of our beloved father in the Lord Saint Gregory, and also a *commitment* to the future of our spiritual lives at the very beginning of the Third Millennium. We must all remember that the 1700th Anniversary is not just a ceremonial occasion. It is an unprecedented and unrepeatable time of grace and calling in each and every one of our lives.

Therefore let us exclaim with the Psalmist, *"Happy are the people whose strength is in You, whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way! No good thing will the Lord withhold from those who walk with integrity" (Psalm 84).*

I look forward to welcoming you in person at the holy site of the ordination of Saint Gregory the Enlightener in Caesarea Cappadocia.

Prayerfully yours,

MESROB II
Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul

**In the Footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener
From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin
June 4 to June 18, 2001**

On the occasion of the 1700 Anniversary Celebration of the adoption of Christianity as the religion of the state, and at the invitation of His Beatitude Archbishop Mesrob Mutafyan, Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America plans to organize a pilgrimage in June, 2001.

This pilgrimage, entitled "In the Footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener: From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin" will take the participants on the journey of St. Gregory from his birthplace in Cappadocea to Etchmiadzin where became the first Catholicos of All Armenians.

It is scheduled to take place from June 3 to June 19, 2001 per attached itinerary. These dates are basically fixed as they involve participation in the celebration of the 1700th anniversary of Christianity in Armenia which takes place on June 17, 2001 in Etchmiadzin , which is also the day of remembrance of St. Gregory.

The plan is for 600 to 1,000 persons to participate, all doing this trip in unison (breaking the pilgrimage into smaller groups that come one after the other is *not* an option).

Following the visit to Kayseri (Caesarea), the group will divide into 4 subgroups, each to visit that part of the country from which their ancestors came, as follows:

- A. Adana, Tarsus, Mersin, Iskanderun, & Sis.
- B. Aintab, Marash, Kilis, Zeitun & Urfa
- C. Sebastia, Yozgat, Tokat, & Amasia.
- D. Malatia, Kharput, Arabgir, Diarbekir, Mush & Van

Some of the details as to the towns to be visited by each group is subject to adjustment.

To be successful, the tour operator must have a strong presence and proven track record of the highest level in Turkey, Armenia and the United States. Given this requirement, tour operators with complimentary strengths may choose to bid jointly. Tour operator must have bank surety, preferably through USTA.

**Proposed Itinerary for the Pilgrimage
In the Footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener:
From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin
4 to 18 June 2001**

Monday, 4 June	Departure from the United States to Istanbul
Tuesday, 5 June	Arrival in Istanbul; afternoon free time
Wednesday, 6 June	Visits and tours of the Armenian Patriarchate & Istanbul
Thursday, 7 June	Flights to Caesarea
Friday, 8 June	Worship service and tour of Caesarea & Capadocea; Group splits into 4, one each traveling by bus to Adana, Aintab, Sebastia and Malatia
Saturday, 9 June	Each group spends two full days making daylong visits to the major cities and towns around, and one full day free for shopping and independent travel
Tuesday, 12 June	Groups reconvene in Erzeroum, Kars and Sarighamish arriving there by plane from Adana and Aintab, and by bus from Malatia and Sebastia.
Wednesday, 13 June	Visit and service at Ani, and surrounding areas & travel to Yerevan either by land through Igdir or by plane from Erzrooum.
Thursday, 14 June	Tour of Yerevan
Friday, 15 June	Visit to Khor Virab and back to Yerevan
Saturday, 16 June	Visit to Oshagan and back to Yerevan
Sunday, 17 June	Visit Etchmaidzin
Monday, 18 June	Flights from Yerevan to Istanbul & on to the United States



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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 19, 2000

Ms. Sylva Torosian
315 Bolz Street
Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632

Dear Ms. Torosian:

2001 marks the 1700th anniversary of Armenia becoming the first Christian nation. To celebrate this important landmark in the history of the Armenian Church, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America is planning a whole series of important activities.

One of the most important of these is a pilgrimage, "In the footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener: From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin," which is planned to take place from June 4 to 18, 2001. This is a major undertaking, which will take our collective efforts to succeed.

As a leader of the Armenian community, and a person dedicated to the Armenian Church and heritage, I would like to invite you to be a member of this committee, which will be co-chaired by Mr. Vahakn Hovnanian and Mr. Kevork Toroyan. The first meeting of this committee will take place on Thursday, October 26, at 5 p.m. in the Tahlj at the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. If you will not be able to attend this meeting in person, kindly call Ms. Anahid Piloyan at the Diocese, 212-686-0710 Ext. 20, so we may arrange for you to join the meeting by telephone.

With prayers,

Abp. K. Barsamian

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
Primate

cc: Mr. Vahakn Hovnanian
Mr. Kevork Toroyan



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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 19, 2000

Mr. Sarkis Tokat
3049 Central Street
Evanston, IL 60201

Dear Mr. Tokat:

2001 marks the 1700th anniversary of Armenia becoming the first Christian nation. To celebrate this important landmark in the history of the Armenian Church, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America is planning a whole series of important activities.

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cc: Mr. Vahakn Hovnanian
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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 19, 2000

Mr. Berc Araz
66 Stephenville Parkway
Edison, NJ 08820

Dear Mr. Araz:

2001 marks the 1700th anniversary of Armenia becoming the first Christian nation. To celebrate this important landmark in the history of the Armenian Church, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America is planning a whole series of important activities.

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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 19, 2000

Mrs. Seta Baldadian
20353 Monteverdi Circle
Boca Raton, FL 33498-6784

Dear Mrs. Baldadian:

2001 marks the 1700th anniversary of Armenia becoming the first Christian nation. To celebrate this important landmark in the history of the Armenian Church, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America is planning a whole series of important activities.

One of the most important of these is a pilgrimage, "In the footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener: From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin," which is planned to take place from June 4 to 18, 2001. This is a major undertaking, which will take our collective efforts to succeed.

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With prayers,

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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
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cc: Mr. Vahakn Hovnanian
Mr. Kevork Toroyan



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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 19, 2000

Mr. Nishan Atinizian
3 Thoreau Circle
Winchester, MA 01890

Dear Mr. Atinizian:

2001 marks the 1700th anniversary of Armenia becoming the first Christian nation. To celebrate this important landmark in the history of the Armenian Church, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America is planning a whole series of important activities.

One of the most important of these is a pilgrimage, "In the footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener: From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin," which is planned to take place from June 4 to 18, 2001. This is a major undertaking, which will take our collective efforts to succeed.

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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 19, 2000

Mrs. Zivart Balikjian
1032 Woodland Ave.
Oradell, NJ 07649

Dear Mrs. Balikjian:

2001 marks the 1700th anniversary of Armenia becoming the first Christian nation. To celebrate this important landmark in the history of the Armenian Church, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America is planning a whole series of important activities.

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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 19, 2000

Yn. Anahid Kalayjian
5024 Baltic Ave.
Rockville, MD 20853

Dear Yn. Kalayjian:

2001 marks the 1700th anniversary of Armenia becoming the first Christian nation. To celebrate this important landmark in the history of the Armenian Church, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America is planning a whole series of important activities.

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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 19, 2000

Mrs. Nuvart Ipekoglu
1735 York Ave. Apt. 25A
New York, NY 10128

Dear Mrs. Ipekoglu:

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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

October 19, 2000

Mrs. Hilda Melconian
12 Nelson Ridge Rd.
Princeton, NJ 08540

Dear Mrs. Melconian:

2001 marks the 1700th anniversary of Armenia becoming the first Christian nation. To celebrate this important landmark in the history of the Armenian Church, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America is planning a whole series of important activities.

One of the most important of these is a pilgrimage, "In the footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener: From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin," which is planned to take place from June 4 to 18, 2001. This is a major undertaking, which will take our collective efforts to succeed.

As a leader of the Armenian community, and a person dedicated to the Armenian Church and heritage, I would like to invite you to be a member of this committee, which will be co-chaired by Mr. Vahakn Hovnanian and Mr. Kevork Toroyan. The first meeting of this committee will take place on Thursday, October 26, at 5 p.m. in the Tahlij at the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. If you will not be able to attend this meeting in person, kindly call Ms. Anahid Piloyan at the Diocese, 212-686-0710 Ext. 20, so we may arrange for you to join the meeting by telephone.

With prayers,

Abp. K. Barsamian

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
Primate

cc: Mr. Vahakn Hovnanian
Mr. Kevork Toroyan

Agenda
**“In the footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener Pilgrimage:
From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin” Meeting**
October 26, 2000, 5:00 to 6:15 p.m.

1. Opening Prayer
2. Introduction of members of the committee
3. Presentation of the plan for the pilgrimage
4. Steps taken to-date
5. Next steps
6. Other matters
7. Closing prayer

LIST OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**“In the footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener
Pilgrimage: From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin”**

**Mr. Vahakn Hovnanian (co-chairman)
Mr. Kevork Toroyan (co-chairman)**

**Mr. Berc Araz
Mr. Nishan Atinizian
Mrs. Seta Baldadian
Mrs. Zivart Balikjian
Mrs. Hasmig Hovnanian
Mrs. Nuvart Ipekoglu
Yn. Anahid Kalayjian
Mrs. Hilda Melconian
Mr. Sarkis Tokat
Mrs. Sylva Torosian**



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ARMENIAN PATRIARCHATE

December 31st, 1998

Greetings & Blessings from the Holy Apostolic See of the Saint James Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem;

To the entire faithful people of the Holy Apostolic Armenian Church, living in Armenia, Artzakh and the communities of the Diaspora throughout the world.

In one year's time, the world will celebrate the second millennium of the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. What a special occasion, and what a profound opportunity for the faithful of the Armenian Church to come on pilgrimage to the land of Christ's birth!

We have extended our invitation to His Holiness Karekin I, the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians; to His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia; and to His Beatitude Archbishop Mesrob Mutafian, the Patriarch of Constantinople, to join us in this auspicious celebration of Bethlehem 2000.

We hereby extend our personal invitation to all the faithful Armenians around the globe, to the Eminent Archbishops of the world-wide dioceses, and to our worthy monks and priests. We invite you all to journey as pilgrims to Jerusalem, and to partake in a remarkable milestone in Christian history.

The Holy City has been profoundly influenced by its centuries-long, unique Armenian presence, and every living Armenian should see, at least once in his or her lifetime, the wonders of the Holy Apostolic See of Saint James and the Armenian Patriarchate.

On January 18 of 2000 — the very date of Christ's birth, according to the Old Calendar used in Jerusalem — we will celebrate the event that changed the world at the site of the Nativity. We pray that every Armenian will make every effort to be with us at that time, as we join our hearts together in praise of the Only Begotten Son of God.

As the Psalmist sang:

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Let us remember the Holy City as a people, bound together in faith and love. The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem looks forward to welcoming you.

Prayerfully,

Abp. Torkom Manoogian

*Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem*

**In the Footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener
From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin
June 4 to June 18, 2001**

On the occasion of the 1700 Anniversary Celebration of the adoption of Christianity as the religion of the state, and at the invitation of His Beatitude Archbishop Mesrob Mutafyan, Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America plans to organize a pilgrimage in June, 2001.

This pilgrimage, entitled "In the Footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener: From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin" will take the participants on the journey of St. Gregory from his birthplace in Cappadocea to Etchmiadzin where he became the first Catholicos of All Armenians.

It is scheduled to take place from June 3 to June 19, 2001 per attached itinerary. These dates are basically fixed as they involve participation in the celebration of the 1700th anniversary of Christianity in Armenia which takes place on June 17, 2001 in Etchmiadzin, which is also the day of remembrance of St. Gregory.

The plan is for 600 to 1,000 persons to participate, all doing this trip in unison (breaking the pilgrimage into smaller groups that come one after the other is *not* an option).

- Following the visit to Kayseri (Caesarea), the group will divide into 4 subgroups, each to visit that part of the country from which their ancestors came, as follows:
 - A. Adana, Tarsus, Mersin, Iskanderun, & Sis.
 - B. Aintab, Marash, Kilis, Zeitun & Urfa
 - C. Sebastia, Yozgat, Tokat, & Amasia.
 - D. Malatia, Kharput, Arabgir, Diarbekir, Mush & Van

Some of the details as to the towns to be visited by each group is subject to adjustment.


To be successful, the tour operator must have a strong presence and proven track record of the highest level in Turkey, Armenia and the United States. Given this requirement, tour operators with complimentary strengths may choose to bid jointly. Tour operator must have bank surety, preferably through USTA.

**Proposed Itinerary for the Pilgrimage
In the Footsteps of St. Gregory the Enlightener:
From Caesarea to Etchmiadzin
4 to 18 June 2001**

Monday, 4 June	Departure from the United States to Istanbul
Tuesday, 5 June	Arrival in Istanbul; afternoon free time
Wednesday, 6 June	Visits and tours of the Armenian Patriarchate & Istanbul
Thursday, 7 June	Flights to Caesarea
Friday, 8 June	Worship service and tour of Caesarea & Capadocea; Group splits into 4, one each traveling by bus to Adana, Aintab, Sebastia and Malatia
Saturday, 9 June	Each group spends two full days making daylong visits to the major cities and towns around, and one full day free for shopping and independent travel
Tuesday, 12 June	Groups reconvene in Erzeroum, Kars and Sarighamish arriving there by plane from Adana and Aintab, and by bus from Malatia and Sebastia.
Wednesday, 13 June	Visit and service at Ani, and surrounding areas & travel to Yerevan either by land through Igdir or by plane from Erzrooom.
Thursday, 14 June	Tour of Yerevan
Friday, 15 June	Visit to Khor Virab and back to Yerevan
Saturday, 16 June	Visit to Oshagan and back to Yerevan
Sunday, 17 June	Visit Etchmaidzin
Monday, 18 June	Flights from Yerevan to Istanbul & on to the United States

September 19, 2000

To: Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
Mr. Vahakn Hovnanian
Mr. Kevork Toroyan

From: George Kassis 
Arto Vorperian

Subject: Decision regarding travel agency for 1700 pilgrimage

Following our meeting on September 14, we have continued to negotiate with the two finalist travel agencies, namely, VIP Travel and Pasha/Miltur Travel. It is clear on all fronts that Pasha/Miltur would be the most cost effective and has the best management setup to handle this pilgrimage.

Pasha/Miltur also provided the larger volume discount and commission on the extras.

Per your decision, we will now proceed with the preparation of the contract, which we will share with you for your review prior signature.

Issues:

1. There are slight differences in price for each of the four options, resulting in price differences of up to \$200 depending on which group the person wishes to join. It is our recommendation that we have one standard price irrespective of options. The base price therefore will be \$3,240. This does not include any provision for the Diocese to cover promotional and other costs.
2. Not knowing how many people will participate and estimating an expenditure of up to \$130,000 for mailings, advertisements, guide to pilgrims, and other costs, it is recommended that the total package cost from New York be \$3,695. This price includes air travel (economy), visas to Turkey and Armenia (\$75), accommodation (semi-private room), two meals a day, all inland and trans-country travel by air or land, every 20th person from America free, one representative from the Patriarchate on each bus free, and all entrance fees for museums and historical sites. This calculation will make sure we break even at 300 passengers.

We will keep you informed of developments.