

PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT - 1973

Dear Parishioners:

One of the duties of the Pastor according to our By-Laws is to present annually a report of his activities to the Parish Assembly and to the Diocese.

Herewith I submit to our Parish Assembly for review a resume of my pastoral activities for the year 1973.

LITURGICAL LIFE

Divine Liturgy was celebrated and a Sermon was delivered in both languages on every Sunday throughout the year, with the exception of the Diocesan Convention weekend and my annual vacation. The very Rev. Fr. Mesrob Semerjian celebrated Divine Liturgy twice in our church as visiting pastor.

Special ceremonies and rituals were performed whenever the occasion arose, such as Armenian Christmas, "Jur-Orhnek"- Blessing of Water, prayer service for Our Pontiff (twice).

Vartanantz feast day, as an Armenian National holiday, at which time a program was performed after the Services in the Church.

Lenten period was observed with "closed liturgy" and Sunrise Service (Arevakal) every Sunday - March 11-April 8.

Palm Sunday observance, with Palm and Olive branches (specially sent to us from Fresno by a friend).

Holy week Services, on Maundy Thursday, with "Feet-washing" ceremony, Good Friday services.

Easter eve Liturgy (April 21) and Easter celebration (April 22).

Observance of other Feast days, Pentecost, Transfiguration - "Grape blessing" Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

Requiem Services (Hokehankist) were performed on different occasions, upon request of our parishioners; also, whenever directives were received from The Diocese.

The Sacraments and rites were performed with care, since they are intended as Services for individual needs of the families involved. These services have been totalled 14 in number and have been duly recorded in our Parish Registry.

Baptisms-Confirmations 7; Confirmation 1; Weddings 4; Burials 2.

PASTORAL CALLS AND VISITATIONS

Pastoral calls include Sick Calls in hospitals; Home Blessings whenever the faithful requested, family counseling in case of request and Spiritual guidance and Pastoral Counseling to young couples prior to their marriage, and to the Godfathers before the baptisms.

I wish our parish council could appoint a visitation and pledge membership committee, to make home visitations more systematic.

All Sacraments are recorded in one voluminous Record Book. Vital Statistics were completed. For each family of the Parish we have a separate sheet of information. This information helps us to remember and to congratulate them on their anniversaries and birthdays with letters or cards.

Our Primate Archbishop Torkom Manoogian informed us that we shall receive a directive from him concerning our future ecclesiastical activities and Liturgical plans for the Armenian Community of Baltimore.

CHURCH PUBLICATIONS

"SHNORHALI" is our parish paper, 8½ x 5½" in size, published monthly, (except the months of July and August). We commend the valuable work of Dr. S. Essefian, also our former and present secretaries as the typists.

During past and last years our office published booklets containing Special Services at 1) prayer for Etchmiadzin and the Pontiff. 2) Sunrise Services (Arevakal). 3) Palm Sunday service of opening of The Door. 4) St. Mary's Feast-Blessing of the Grapes. 5) Feast of The Holy Cross (Exaltation-KHACH-VERATZ).

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Throughout the year of 1973 there were occasions for our church to contact other churches and people. Most of the contacts took place in other churches or at meeting places. On October 14, 1973, our church was the host of Chevy Chase clergy meeting. On this occasion Mrs. M. Satian and Mrs. P. Hananian prepared the lunch.

The Pastor participated or attended by special invitation in various capacities the following meetings and affairs. We would like to mention some of them.

- 1) Monthly luncheon and meeting of Chevy Chase Clergy Association.
- 2) Orthodox-Episcopal Fellowship joint Church Services and lecture, (twice, May 7 and October 17).
- 3) Lecture to Hyattsville businessmen's group, arranged by Mr. H. Balukjian. (April 5).
- 4) Preaching at Chevy Chase Methodist Church - (Good Friday).
- 5) Lecture to St. Paul Lutheran Church Women's Build.
- 6) Symposium at Walter Reed Hospital (May 24).
- 7) Two receptions in honor of Abouna Theophilos, patriarch of Ethiopia (May 25 and 26).
- 8) Testimonial Service and reception in honor of Rev. Fr. J. Murphy of the Smithsonian Institution.

NEW MEMBERS

46 new members joined the church during the past year. Shnorhali published the list of these new members. We all welcome them.

EPILOGUE

We continuously pray to God to pour His rich blessings upon this community so that our church may continue her sacred historic mission for the Armenian people. My thanks to all of you, to the officers of our organization and committees for their diligence and cooperation.

We sincerely extend our heartfelt gratitude to all church volunteers for their devotion and sacrifices to the Glory of God and for the benefit of our church. Our mother church needs further strengthening by our people with dedication, cooperation, and benevolent offerings.

Asking Lord's Blessings upon all and each one of you.

Prayerfully,

Bishop Papken
Pastor

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1-27-1974