

DIOCESAN DELEGATES' REPORT

The 83rd annual Diocesan Assembly was held on May 2-4, 1985 at the Church of the Holy Martyrs in Bayside, New York. One hundred and thirty seven delegates had registered by the morning of May 4, with clergymen accounting for about one-third of those present. Representing St. Mary's were Rev. Vertanes Kalayjian and its two diocesan delegates, Edward Onanian and Dr. Ohannes Sahakian.

Dr. Dennis Papazian and Dr. Raffi Hovanessian were elected Assembly chairman and vice-chairman, respectively. Dr. Garo Garibian was elected English secretary. In the absence of nominees for the post of Armenian secretary, it was agreed that the minutes would be kept in English and translated into Armenian by the Diocesan staff.

Actions taken during the business sessions are described briefly below.

Proposals. The Assembly approved proposals calling for (1) the appointment by the Primate of representatives to serve as liaisons between the Diocese and parishes without full-time clergy; (2) the inclusion in each regional grouping of a parish with at least two elected delegates; and (3) financial (\$1,000), educational, and religious support for the Hye Camp Summer Project in Wisconsin.

A proposal by our parish to reorganize the Women's Guilds of the Diocese with an elected central council was defeated when presented. However, the Assembly later agreed to reconsider the proposal, at which time it was tabled.

By-laws. For the second time, the Assembly approved changes in Article 62 (pertaining to the filling of vacancies on the Diocesan Council) and Article 97 (dealing with the rights of the Diocesan Council and the Diocesan Board of Trustees with regard to the sale of real property). These amendments were then forwarded to the Vehapar for approval.

Approved for the first time was an amendment to Article 97 which corrects a deficiency pertaining to the authority of the Armenian Church Endowment Fund to sell real property.

Elections. There were eight positions to be filled on the Diocesan Council. Elected to the lay positions were: Sarkis Bedevian\*, Dan Dorian\*, Zarvin Kasparian\*, Arthur Mardigian, and Edward Onanian\*; Mr. Kasparian will serve a two-year term, while the others will serve for four years. Elected to the clergy positions were Rev. Karekin Kasparian\*, Very Rev. Ghevont Samoorian, and Very Rev. Baret Yeretzian; Fr. Samoorian will serve for two years, while the others will serve four-year terms. (Asterisks indicate incumbents.)

Elected to a ten-year term on the Diocesan Board of Trustees was George Mekenian. It bears noting that Col. George Juskalian is a member of the Board of Trustees.

Financial. A Diocesan budget of \$1.648 million was approved for 1985 and one of \$1.906 million for 1986. These budgets included about a three percent increase in the amount of revenue derived from parish dues. More than a third of the budgetary increase between 1985 and 1986 is to finance work on the Sunday School curriculum project.

Reports. Following a presentation on the proposed High Rise project, the Assembly approved a motion that the Committee "continue its work in investigating the feasibility of the High Rise Project on the Diocesan ground and report back to the following Assembly."

In presenting the Unity Committee report, Edward Chapien explained that no real progress was made during the past year. The Assembly approved the Committee's recommendation that it be authorized "at its discretion to continue discussions and writing By-laws with our counterparts as soon as the Prelacy Unity Committee is empowered to do so, to extend any and all Guideline deadlines without date, and to report to the next Diocesan Assembly."

In other actions, the Assembly approved the transmittal of a letter to President Reagan urging his support of Congressional resolutions pertaining to the genocide and to the President of Turkey urging that he grant amnesty to Fr. Manuel Yergatian.

The 1986 Diocesan Assembly will be held at the St. Mesrob Church in Racine, Wisconsin. One of the principal agenda items will be the election for Diocesan Primate.

Respectfully submitted,  
Edward Onanian  
Dr. Ohannes Sahakian