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PASTOR'S REPORT - 1985

At the conclusion of the year 1985, I completed the ninth year of my service as the Pastor of St. Mary's Parish. In fact, this Easter is the tenth year of my association with St. Mary's. The following is a summary of my activities of the past year as your Parish Priest, which I humbly offer to God and to you.

1. Sacraments and Services

	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Total</u>
a. Baptisms	11	7	7	13	38
Weddings	3	9	9	9	30
Funerals	9	6	13	4	32
Engagements	-	-	-	2	2

In addition to the regular Sunday worship, special services were held: Washing of the Feet of the Survivors, April 23 Vigil commemorating the 1915 Genocide, Georgetown Ecumenical Service dedicated to the Holocaust and Genocide, The Service held at the Washington Cathedral for the 70th Anniversary of the Genocide.

Visiting Clergy. During the year we had several clergy visiting our community. They all had the opportunity to celebrate Holy Badarak and/or deliver the sermon.

- Three Seminarians from St. Nersess Theological School, N.Y.
- Archbishop Sion Manoogian, Former Primate and the Chairman of the Supreme Ecclesiastical Council, Holy Etchmiadzin, Armenia.
- Fr. Kevork Arakelian
- Fr. Vasken Tatoyan

In addition we had guest clergymen from Armenia and from the Mekhitarist orders of Vienna and Venice.

- The Primate paid a pastoral visit on December 8, and earlier in February presided over a Tribute Banquet given in honor of Gov. G. Deukmejian, and the Special Services for the 70th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, held at the Washington Cathedral.

b. Counselling and Social Services. The areas covered were Hospital and nursing homes, personal and family counseling, job placement, housing, immigration and naturalization, Armenian heritage research guidance, personal recommendations, scholarship applications, court appearances and translations, mediation marriage counselling, lectures etc. Except for home visitations and Home Blessing, the above cases involved over 100 personal attention involvement.

2. Office Activities.

- a. For the sixth year, we gratefully acknowledge the dedicated services of Mrs. P. Whitty as our part-time secretary. The office hours were 10:00-2:00P.M. which she graciously extended quite frequently. The afternoon office hours and most of the evenings, I personally use to carry on my responsibilities.

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- b. Publication. The parish newsletter, Shnorhali and full size special issues were published eight 8 (eight) times, totaling 250 pages (8.5x11) of information, concerning our parish activities, acknowledgements to our financial supporters, religious, cultural and historical articles etc. In the fall we mailed close to 15 thousand pieces of mail for the Rug Sale and the Annual Bazaar. We have started to sponsor a full page in "The Armenian Capital Journal" with a relevant message and Calendar of Events section. We wish Mr. Albert Kapikian, the Editor and Publisher of the paper goodluck and success. We had several of our parishioners who helped us to collate and prepare for these mailings. In addition, numerous special fliers, letters, reminders, questionnaires etc. were mailed for more direct and effective communication with the parishioners. Our general mailing list is over 1,150 and the Shnorhali was mailed to 750 addresses.

3. Organizational

I carried on a direct effort to solicit ideas and suggestions through private and group consultations on a variety of subjects.

- a. Parish Council. As the Pastor-President, I presided over and participated in the deliberations of the Parish Council at the regular and special meetings. Special thanks to all the Parish Council members and the Chairman, Mr. Mike Tashjian, who with concern and dedication carried on their duties.
- b. Auxiliary Organizations. I continued to work closely with the church organizations and presided over their regular and special meetings except when they were held on Sunday after church services. Women's Guild, Choir, Church School, Armenian School, ACYOA Jr. and Sr. groups, Ararat Avak Society and the Hye Club continued to function. My special thanks to all the Executive Committees, and their respective Chairmen, Principals, teachers and advisors for their diligence and dedication.

4. Educational-Charitable Activities

- a. Discussion Group on Christian Faith. We thank Mr. Dean Shahinian, who continued the program until the summer of 1985. When we adopted a new format of Sunday Worship Services, he decided to discontinue the program. After a proper assessment of the situation I hope we can resume the program.
- b. Our youth continued to benefit from the educational experiences provided by the St. Nersess Summer Study Conference. Six of our youth participated. Funds to encourage the participation of our youth were available from Hovaness and Marie Simonian Fund and Valentine Bostonian Stahl Fund in the amount of \$251.75 and \$87.44 respectively.
- c. Retreats. The first one was held here at St. Mary's with 15 young participants. The instructors included Deacon H. Tchilingirian, Mrs. C. Kapikian and Mrs. A. Derderian. The second was held in Pennsylvania where 25 of our youth participated. Mrs. Lucy Murad organized the trip.

- d. Lectures, meditations, Lenten Evening Services were held not only for worship but also for an opportunity to learn and mature in our Christian heritage. The Friday Night lenten meditations were offered by Katharine Derderian, Zaven and Berj Kalayjian, Roxanne Kumkumian and Jack Vartabedian. On Lenten Sundays we had Mrs. Cathy Kapikian, Mr. George Derderian, Mrs. Anna Derderian, Dr. Charles Kumkumian and Mr. Dean Shahinian who all offered inspirational and instructive meditations.
- e. The Charitable Fund. Needless to say we need to be sensitive and responsive to this most vital aspect of the church mission. During the year we attempted to respond to the Ethiopian Relief Fund, Mexican Earthquake Fund, Colombian Disaster Fund and to the local needs of the homeless and Armenian families. We were not always 100% successful but we are learning to respond and extend ourselves.

I take this opportunity to thank the Knights and Daughters of Vartan local organizations whose members individually and collectively channel their financial assistance to the local Armenian families through the Pastor. Similarly, Tenly Association through Mr. Richard Janigian extended a helping hand. My thanks to one and all.

I gratefully acknowledge that our other anonymous benefactor has again sent us \$1,000 for the Building Fund. May God bless and reward him/her/them manifold.

E. Miscellaneous

- 1. Spiritual Renewal. By the Primate's appointment I am now serving as the chairman of the Diocesan Spiritual Renewal Program. The program was in fact inspired by the "Project Reach-Out" which some years ago was developed by Mr. and Mrs. George Derderian. It is expected that the program will be implemented in 1986. Along with the clergy members, Anna and George Derderian are also part of the planning committee.
- 2. Continuous Education for the Clergy. It was this Assembly's proposal that was approved by the Diocesan Assembly and after protracted deliberations moved to be implemented.

By the Primate's appointment I am serving as the chairman of this project also. Upon my request the Primate appointed the following to the committee: Cathy Kapikian, George and Anna Derderian, George Juskalian, Charles Kumkumian, Yeretzgin and Edward Onanian, Diocesan Council Liaison. Mr. Dean Shahinian chose to remain as an outside consultant-advisor. The first of this program for the clergy education will be implemented during the week of February 9-15, 1986. My deeply felt gratitude to the members of these committees and to Mr. Dean Shahinian who is taking an active role in the weeklong program as one of the lecturers and seminar leaders.

3. April 24. Since there was a directive from the Diocese not to conflict the major event that was organized here in Washington, our efforts to mark the 70th Anniversary of the 1915 Genocide was at a low key. But we did pay our tribute to the martyrs in the following fashion.

- a. In February we had a special service at the Washington Cathedral with a wreath-laying ceremony and requiem service at the tomb of President Woodrow Wilson. The Primate presided over the services with the Primate of Western and Canadian Dioceses present. Also present were several other out-of-town clergymen including the former Primate Archbishop Sion Manogian. Our church was responsible in organizing the entire program with our choir and deacons participating.
- b. During the Holy Week we had the survivors participate in the Washing of the Feet ceremony. The Washington Post covered the event, thanks to Mr. H. Naltchayan.
- c. On the eve of April 24 we had a night vigil with Holy Badarak. Several of our young parishioners read passages from the newspaper and magazine coverage from 1915-20's.
- d. On the following Sunday we offered requiem service for the souls of the martyrs with the Sunday School and the Armenian School students placing flowers on the memorial wreath. Madagh was distributed for the occasion.

4. During the summer we had the opportunity again to host at our picnic the young Armenian Interns who were serving in the various governmental and business offices in their chosen fields.

5. Baltimore Community. This is the seventh year that we have been conducting Christmas Services with our own Choir participating. I continue to be in touch with this community and have made myself available for their spiritual needs and social services.

6. Altar Care and Mas. With the help of Mrs. R. Alexander, Mrs. O. O'Gulian, Mrs. A. Kumkumian, Miss A. Kavookian, Miss A. Manigian, Mrs. H. Garabedian and Mrs. J. Oskoian Dougharty the altar received the best care.

I thank the ladies who continuously and lovingly but anonymously have prepared and donated the Mas. I thank them all and pray for their continuous good health.

7. Ordination of Deacons. On December 8, Mr. Arshavir Ozsongur Hovhannessian, Dr. Hratch Semerjian, Mr. Vartkes Keshishian and Mr. Yenovk Bashalian were ordained as Archdeacons by the Primate. It must be noted with great pride and Happiness that it was an historic day for St. Mary's to have four such gentlemen to be called upon to serve the church as Archdeacons. We congratulate them again and pray that God may always continue to enrich their lives with His blessings and graces.

8. 25th Anniversary. I take this opportunity to thank once again for the recognition you afforded me by celebrating the 25th Anniversary of my ordination into the priesthood. Yerezgin and I, along with our sons are grateful for the love and affection expressed by approximately 250 friends and parishioners who attended banquet and all those who couldn't, but sent their best wishes. I take this opportunity to thank you also for the gifts which totaled \$2,500. As Yerezgin and I have indicated, this sum has been forwarded to the Armenian Church Endowment Fund so that the proceeds may be used annually for the youth of this parish who want to attend the St. Nersess Summer Study Conference and Deacon's Training Program.

9. Special Acknowledgements. The names of those parishioners to whom I feel particularly indebted both as a person and as the pastor are numerous, but I hope I am forgiven to mention a few. My thanks to:

- Mr. George Derderian for his continuous advice and counsel and Christian commitment to the mission of the church in general and charitable activities in particular.
- Mrs. Anna Derderian who not only shares with George the same concerns and commitment, but as the Superintendent of the Sunday School is doing a superb job with meticulous attention to both program and people.
- Mrs. Jeannette Torokhanian whom I designate as the Volunteer of the Year for the work she has done with love and perseverance. I am sure you would concur with me.

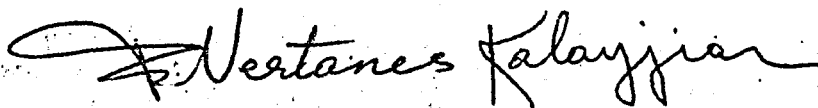
Together with her husband Leo and Mr. Berj Koukeyan they accomplished the renovation of the kitchen. For that and more they deserve our gratitude.

- Mr. Jerry Hekimian who patiently, steadily and with a sense of humor continues to serve as the Superintendent of the Armenian School.
- Mrs. Queenie Avedikian, who constantly remained alert and continuously informed others and me on some important details that normally escape our attention.
- Mrs. Arousiag Kumkumian who provides care for the organizational needs of the Ararat Avak Society together with Mrs. Elizabeth Kevorkian, Mrs. Queenie Avedikian, Mrs. Ida Guerigian and Yerezgin.
- Mr. Mike Tashjian whose term on the parish council expires, having served three consecutive terms, three years of which he was the Chairman. His even temper and steady patience were the most valuable attributes to have in the Parish Council.
- Mrs. Lucy Murad, Miss Alenoush and Mr. Varoujan Varoujanian who helped as advisors to carry on the work of the ACYOA Jr. Group with additional organizational-advisory help from Yerezgin.
- Mr. Mike Tashjian, and Mr. Raffi Sahakyan who kept the Hye Club together and somewhat active.

- Mr. Greg Kukkumian and Mr Michael Sahagian who kept the Sr. ACYOA together and somewhat active.
- Mr. Gary Avedikian who with secretarial help from Mrs. Queenie Avedikian, managed the Bookstore. It is a particular source of pride to have the Bookstore, which provides cultural-historic and religious literature for those who wish to build their home libraries. Our gratitude to both Gary and Queenie for keeping it in operation.
- To the members of the Choir and the Deacons, one and all, I express my deep gratitude for their regular attendance and participation in the services. On many occasions they have served lovingly and faithfully beyond the call of their normal duties. They deserve our collective gratitude.
- It is with a heavy heart and sense of great loss I mention Mr. Armenak Boyajian, our late Choirmaster, who passed away on August 18, 1985 the day of the Feast of Assumption of the Virgin Mary. We will cherish his memory as a dedicated and loving father for his family and equally loving and dedicated person for his church and his people. Let us also remember Zepure Hatchikian, a very dedicated parishioner whom we lost during the year. May the Lord reward them in His eternal peace.
- Last but not least my thanks to Yeretzgin not only for her loving patience and endurance which enabled me to cope with the frequent absences from home, but for her willingness to step in wherever and whenever she was needed.

As the new year begins, along with some of the visible accomplishments for which we are proud and thankful to our Lord and grateful to all participating parishioners, we face new challenges. There are higher grounds in spiritual maturity and social concern which we look forward to occupying. With God's blessing and your cooperation we hope to meet those new challenges during the months ahead.

Prayerfully yours,



Fr. Vertanes Kalayjian, Pastor