

*Chazzy group to
review + meet w/ him*

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Dearborn, Michigan 48124
September 20, 1994

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate
Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America
630 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Your Grace:

First, let me convey my condolences and prayers on the passing of our Catholicos. It is also a very testing burden that has been placed upon the princes of our church, such as yourself, and community leaders to begin and implement the process of election of the new Catholicos. I pray that God guide our leaders in their choice.

Although I realize that this is a "time of urgency", I am writing to ask about the status of my ordination into the priesthood--we had discussed this last year in Detroit. I do not need to bore you with the details of what has been accomplished in Ann Arbor thus far, and there is much, much more to be done. I have also tried to work with Fr. Yeprem in stimulating community needs in Waukegan, Illinois.

I believe that you might be more open in discussing ordination if I were to give you more options:

- Work with a community outside of Michigan, such as Waukegan
- Work with three small communities on a part-time basis, e.g. Lansing, Ann Arbor, Toledo
- Work full-time as an assistant pastor in some community
- Work full-time as a pastor in a community

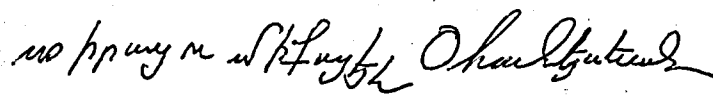
I am opening up the options for discussion so that I might be sure that your Grace does not feel cornered as to what to do with me. I realize that you do not want to set any bad precedent, but I also have some concerns. I am frequently hearing that communities are running out of funds and struggling as to what to do with their resident priest. My wife and myself are trying to start a family; and it could be difficult to move every year or two. That is why I offer you the option of part-time availability for working with new and small communities anywhere in the country (maybe even Canada)--where the new and upcoming families seem to reside and where monies are low. We even offer financial support to Ann Arbor on a monthly basis while I still pay dues to St. John's in Southfield. My secular job affords me more opportunities in working with Armenians that might not occur otherwise--like St. Paul the tentmaker. The example of Cleveland comes to mind: people were so frustrated a few years ago (as you know) that they wanted to close the church and just have a political club--I helped in part to save that situation with Torkom Srpazan at the time.

If it appears that I do not have the kind of credentials that your Grace wants (or even needs), then please inform me. Your honesty will help me to decide

what is next for me--whether working with our Church or moving on to other experiences. There is an advantage to having clergy that are perhaps middle aged AND younger in age. I am young at heart and will always be. As Steve Mangigian has put it about me: "There are no cultural barriers for you."

With respect to your position as our leader, I await your response and humbly pray God always remain in your life as well as mine.

Prayerfully and in His name,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Deacon Michael Ohanesian".

Deacon Michael Ohanesian