

June 1, 1985
June 7, 1985

THREE NEW PARISHES FORMED IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA
BY THE DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA.

The Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, paid special pastoral visits to three Armenian communities in the state of Florida, and formally established three parishes in Orlando, Ocala, and St. Petersburg. Accompanying the Archbishop were the Rev. Fr. Zaven Arzoumanian, Pastor of the Armenian Church of South Florida, the Rev. Fr. Terenig Kondralian Pastor of St. John the Baptist Armenian Church of Miami, and the Very Rev. Ghevont Samoorian, a member of the Diocesan Council.

All four of the Diocesan representatives met in Orlando on May 7, and the first celebration of the Armenian Church Divine Liturgy in the area was offered by Rev. Father Zaven Arzoumanian at Christ Episcopal Church the same evening, assisted by the Rev. Father Terenig Kondralian. An ad hoc choir sang the Badarak amazingly well with Mrs. Rebecca Cooke accompanying on the organ, and assisted by Fr. Ghevont Samoorian. All 65 Armenians who attended received Holy Communion and the Primate delivered the sermon. Following the worship, a reception was given honoring the Primate, at which time Fr. Terenig Kondralian presented a program dedicated to Mothers' Day. The main speaker of the evening was Archbishop Manoogian, who stressed the importance of an activated parish in the area and, having already consulted with the members of the community, officially established the Soorp Garabed Armenian Church parish of Orlando, with the appointment of the members of the first Parish council, as follows: Chairman, Richard Cook; Vice Chairman,

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Ted Takvorian; Corresponding Secretary, Rebecca Cook; Recording Secretary, Lucine M. Harvey; Treasurer, Edward Pashian; Assistant Treasurer, Bill Piloyan; Public Relations, John Harvey; Advisors, Dr. Eddy Moses and Ann Polasek.

The next trip of the Primate took him and his assisting priests to the city of Ocala. In Ocala there are Armenians scattered in and around the city, and some in the next largest city of Gainsburg. The Primate and the Diocesan priests were escorted by Mr. Manuel Jamian to a country club on the lake where 45 Armenians were waiting to welcome the clergymen. Dinner was served, followed by a worship service, conducted by the Archbishop and assisted by the three priests. Holy Communion was administered to all. During the program of the evening, Father Zaven showed his slides taken in Holy Etchmiadzin during the Blessing of Holy Muron, as well as the slides of the historic Armenian churches and cathedrals. The Primate gave the closing message and formally established the Armenian parish of Ocala and named it Soorp Sarkis Armenian Church parish, with the appointment of the members of the first Parish Council as follows: Chairman, Charles Manuelian; Vice Chairman, Azad Merian; Corresponding Secretary, Melineh Kuntz; Recording Secretary, Anna Balian; Treasurer, Charles Takesian; Assistant Treasurer, Edward Kuntz; Public Relations, Manuel Jamian; Advisors, Armen Samarjian, Vera Samerjian, Brian Jamian, Jennifer Gooch and Marge Antonian.

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The last stop of the Primate was St. Petersburg and Tampa. Following a brief reception at Dr. & Mrs. Haig Yarfumian's residence, Soorp Badarak was celebrated at an Episcopal church in St. Petersburg, offered by the Rev. Zaven Arzoumanian, and presided over by the Primate, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, who also delivered the sermon. The choir, conducted by Mrs. Louise Yardumian on the organ, sang the Divine Liturgy. A requiem service followed in memory of Hagop Janoian, a community leader of the parish and a deacon, who had died a few weeks before. Many received Holy Communion, and mothers individually received roses from the hands of the Archbishop on the occasion of Mothers' Day.

At the church hall, the same evening, a reception was given in honor of the Primate, who gave his message to the parishioners and formally established the Parish of Soorp Hagop Armenian Church of St. Petersburg, with the appointment of the first Parish Council members as follows: Chairman, Edward B. Korkoian; Vice-Chairman, Louise Yardumian; Corresponding Secretary, Ardameas Janoyan; Recording Secretary, Ida CeCehini; Treasurer, Leon S. Sarkisian; Assistant Treasurer, Nishan Voskian; Public Relations, Marian Lowrie; Advisors, Priscilla Sarkissian and Margaret Harnishfeger.

With the addition of these three newly established mission parishes, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America at present has five parishes in Florida under her jurisdiction. This includes St. John The Baptist Armenian Apostolic Church of Miami and the Armenian Apostolic Church of South Florida at Fort Lauderdale.