

Saint Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church



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MEDIA RELEASE

ARMENIAN LANGUAGE LAB COMES TO NIAGARA FALLS

On Sunday and Monday, October 12,13, Miss Sylva Der Stepanian brought the resources of the Diocesan Armenian Language Lab to St. Sarkis Armenian Church in Niagara Falls, New York for an intensive workshop in conversational Armenian. The workshop took place in two five (5) hour sessions. Due to the format and experimental nature of the material, Miss Der Stepanian asked that only a few individuals participate. In Niagara Falls, two persons came forward - husband and wife, the husband being an 'odar'.

Upon her arrival, Miss Der Stepanian got right down to work, unpacking the 600 large picture cards which are arranged to illustrate simple Armenian conversations on various topics. Holding up the first card which showed a radiant sun shining down on two young people she carefully enunciated 'Pare Looy's'. The students repeated several times and then proceeded to do the same with the next picture. Each new picture introduced a new word or phrase or concept which was carefully pronounced and repeated thus impressing itself on the memory.

After the first 5 hour session, having mastered, repeated, and retained 300 phrases associated with pictures, the tired but pleased instructor and pupils adjourned for the day. On Monday the same exercise was repeated with the next 300 pictures.

cont.

Armenian Language Lab Comes to Niagara Falls (cont.)

At one point Miss Der Stepanian actually pulled from her briefcase a menu, in Armenian, and took the pupils into an imaginary 'Jasharan' where they proceeded to order from the menu in careful but clear and correct Armenian!

Having completed the 600 lessons, the students were informed that it was now time for the big test. To determine if this particular method of teaching is worthwhile, one must test the students retention of the phrases associated with the picture cards. So once again the two pupils reviewed the 600 picture cards. At the end of the two day session, they had with very little effort retained between 550 and 575 Armenian conversational phrases! The students were very surprised and pleased to realize that they had done so well. They commented that they hope the method will be further developed and printed by the Diocese for distribution to all the Parishes. One does not even have to be an expert in Armenian to teach others with this method as the appropriate phrases and ques are written on the back of the cards.

The Mr. and Mrs. team from St. Sarkis Church in Niagara Falls feel that the efforts of Miss Der Stepanian served them very well in that it has advanced them in their knowledge of the language. Their only concern is that through lack of funds, or lack of concern, such excellent programs as this one, will not be given the attention it deserves to carry on and expand. They fear that what they, and others have learned in two days will be lost if something more is not forth coming. But they are optimistic that with the talented Miss Der Stepanian at the helm of the Language Lab, much more will be forthcoming.

Copies to:

1. Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate
2. Miss Sylva Der Stepanian
3. Rev. Fr. Ghevont Samoorian
4. Miss Lynn Nakashian