

ARAM

SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST AND WITH THE UNFATHOMABLE WILL OF GOD
AND THE ELECTION OF OUR NATION, HEAD OF BISHOPS AND
CATHOLICOS OF THE ARMENIANS OF THE GREAT HOUSE OF CILICIA

GRACE, LOVE AND PEACE FROM THE LORD AND PONTIFICAL GREETINGS
FROM US AND BLESSING FROM THE RIGHT HAND OF OUR FATHER,
SAINT GREGORY THE ILLUMINATOR

MESSAGE OF BLESSING AND APPRECIATION
TO OUR BELOVED AND TRUE SON OF THE
HOLY SEE OF THE GREAT HOUSE OF CILICIA
HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP OSHAGAN CHOLOYAN
NEW YORK, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

We joyfully learned through a letter from His Grace Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar General of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, that the 50th anniversary of your ordination will be celebrated on October 29, 2017.

With warm Christian love, pontifical blessing, and spiritual joyfulness, we greet this important milestone in your spiritual life and service. Truly, during the past 50 years by way of the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia, you chose your life's holy calling to serve God, our church and people. You traveled on the difficult road of service with deep faith and exemplary dedication with honorable faithfulness and complete love.

We have known you well from the beginning of your Seminary studies, to your monastic days, and later your many years of pursuing higher education in the United States, and your leadership duties as Prelate in Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States. We are familiar with your mission and zealousness for ecumenical relationships, as well as the working relationship between the two Pontifical Sees, and generally within the sphere of our Holy See's life and witness. We are also aware of the important role you devoted to the translation of the Bible into modern Armenian.

Truly, you performed on a high level all of the duties and responsibilities you assumed with hard work and dedication, love and loyalty. Specifically the last two decades of your service in the United States were years filled with many and varied challenges. Thereafter, through your profound vocation and labor you overcame all kinds of challenges, and provided spiritual and national renewal and vigor to the Prelacy, especially in the preparation and ordination of new and young pastors.

The criteria for appreciation given to a clergyman are service and faithfulness. These were not merely words for you, but rather they were the quality of life and the guide in your field of service.

Dear Srpazan, the rich legacy of your service brings meritorious happiness not only to you, but also to our Brotherhood and our Holy See. At the same time it is a reminder to our younger celibate clergy brothers, and generally to all the shepherds of our church, that the road of an Armenian clergyman is self-sacrificing service and life's supreme and sanctifying purpose is again, and always, complete service.

On this joyful occasion, we extend to you our high appreciation and warm love and pray to Almighty God that the new era facing your life will be filled with new and plentiful deeds of service.

May you live forever in the Lord, be strengthened with the grace of the Holy Spirit, and be forever blessed by us. Amen.

ARAM I
CATHOLICOS OF THE GREAT HOUSE OF CILICIA

Encyclical delivered at the Catholicosate in
Antelias, Lebanon, in the year of our Lord,
August 25, 2017, and the Armenian year of 1466.