MESSAGE

On the occasion of my first year anniversary of my election

Dear Parishioners and Friends:

I give thanks to Almighty God that yesterday, September 8, the first year of my election as Prelate was completed. On this occasion I wanted to share my thoughts with you.

I am happy to inform you that we have concluded a successful and a fruitful year through the cooperation and support of the Executive and Religious Councils of the Eastern Prelacy, the NRA delegates, parish priests and Boards of Trustees and all the auxiliary bodies, sister organizations, Prelacy staff and our parishioners and friends. With a quick glance over the past year, I would like to present a brief overview of our year-long activities.

Following in the spirit of our predecessors dedicated ministry, we continued their God-pleasing ministry, and we enriched the mission of the Armenian Prelacy with new programs offered to our people.

1) We established a Prelacy Thanksgiving Day in order to thank, without exception, our people, for their unwavering dedication to all Prelacy sponsored programs. Every year we will spotlight a different program. In the first place, we will celebrate the services of the “Saint Nerses the Great Charitable Organization,” which was born with the Armenian earthquake, and seeks to bring its modest remedy to the sufferings in our homeland. Last year, it concluded its 25th year of service. Therefore, on November 17, we will celebrate its 25th+1 anniversary ceremoniously.

2) In order to strengthen the bond between the Prelacy and our parishes, in addition to our visits, we have been holding monthly conference calls with our parish priests, so that we become closely acquainted with our communal concerns and challenges, and by working together heart to heart, we keep the church as the heartbeat of the people.

3) Since last October, Crossroads, the Prelacy’s weekly e-newsletter, is being offered in Armenian as well. We are happy to inform you that our readers of both the English and the Armenian versions in general encourage and appreciate its rich content. Soon, in October, during cultural month, Crossroads will bring a new feature to its faithful readers.

4) The family, being the nucleus of a nation, constitutes the priority of the Prelacy’s activities. We are happy to inform you that the Young Couple’s Club was brought to life through the initiatives of New Jersey residents, Mr. and Mrs. Vahe and Talyn Chaglasian. A special committee is working to make this newly established program a reality in all our parishes, making our newly formed families and their children actively involved in the life of the Church.
5) The youth, constituting the effective element of renewal in any community, is the object of our constant attention of our activities. The Salt & Light youth ministry, created four years ago, has created great enthusiasm at St. Sarkis Church (Douglasont, NY), St. Illuminator’s Cathedral (NYC), St. Sarkis Church (Dearborn, MI), St. Gregory the Illuminator Church (Philadelphia, PA), and at Sts. Vartanantz Church (RI). Efforts are being made to start the Salt & Light youth ministry at Sts. Vartanantz Church (NJ), St. Stephen’s Church (MA), and All Saints’ Church (IL) in the coming months. We are hopeful that St. Hagop Church in Racine, Wisconsin, after a short break, will soon resume this youth ministry program.

6) Again relating to youth, we are happy to inform you that through the initiative of His Holiness Catholics Aram I, last year, a special two-week program was established for the young adults of North America. This year, thirteen students participated in this spiritually and intellectually enriching program — five participants from Sts. Vartanantz Church (RI), three from St. Sarkis Church (Douglasont, NY), two from St. Stephen’s Church (MA), two from St. Sarkis Church (MI), and one from All Saints’ Church (IL). I am sure you have read in previous issues of Crossroads the personal testimony of the participants regarding the experience they enjoyed.

7) The St. Gregory of Datev Institute, popularly known as the “Datev” Program, constitutes the Prelacy’s main Christian educational program for our youth. This year the Institute completed its 33rd anniversary. It is an intensive four year program, the goal of which is to familiarize the participant with the scriptures, Armenian Church history, its theology and liturgical services, and Armenian history, as well as to discuss contemporary social issues. This year 40 students participated.

8) Efforts are being made to revamp the Siamanto Academy. In October, classes will take place at the Prelacy with a new program.

9) Children’s Armenian and religious education being of great importance to our perseverance and to the preservation of our identity, the Prelacy’s ANEC and AREC departments endeavor to both modernize the teaching methods and enhance the lesson plans. Personally, we are closely following the implementation of these programs, through teleconferences with the school directors, to make the Armenian faith and culture helpful and appealing to our youth.

10) Regarding publications, we are happy to inform you that on the occasion of my election as Prelate, Hamasdeh’s “Aghotaran” (House of Prayer) was published in Armenian and in English. The English translation was done by Dr. Vartan Matossian. For our English speaking youth, the book Armenian Language Matters authored by Dr. Vartan Matossian was published. Soon, a collection of prayers from the Book of Hours (Zhamakeerk) of the Armenian Apostolic Church will be published in English, translated by Dn. Shant Kazanjian. Like every year, the 2020 “Diary” will be dedicated to a theme affecting Armenian life. We are certain you will soon have your copy in your hands.

With God’s blessings and with your unreserved support we were able to accomplish all this, and we hope to do the same and more in the future. And as we pray for you, we ask that you also pray for us, so that we may serve with God’s grace and filled with Armenian spirit.

Prayerfully

[Signature]

Archbishop Anoushavan
Prelate
Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church

September 9, 2019