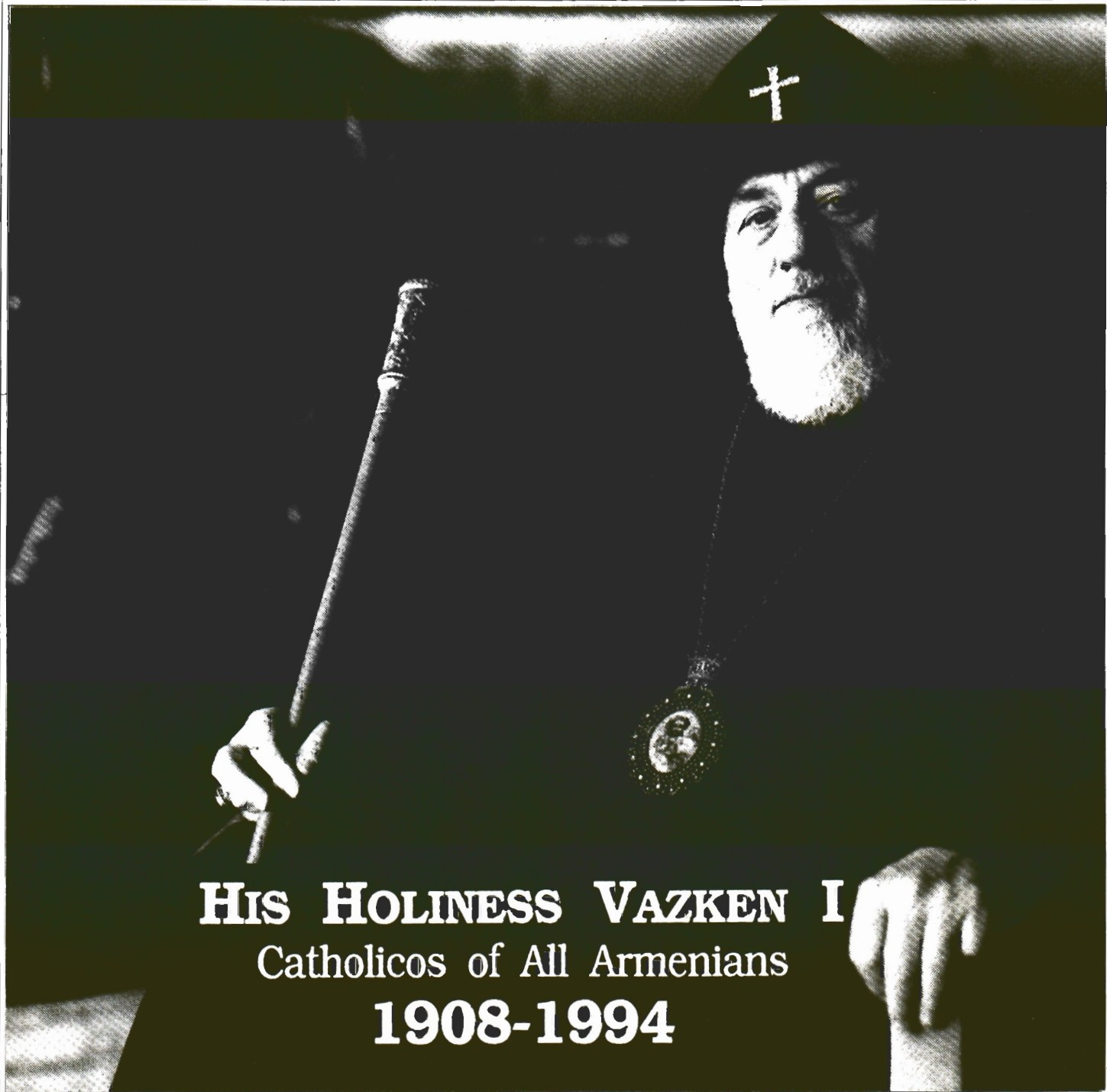


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WINDOW VIEW OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH



HIS HOLINESS VAZKEN I
Catholicos of All Armenians
1908-1994



Window view of the Armenian Church

Volume IV Number 2 — 1994

Memoriam—His Holiness Vazken I
page 3

**Pontifical Election and the
National Ecclesiastical Assembly**
Michael Findikyan
page 4

Pontifical Stats
page 5

The Elections of 1955 & 1977
pages 6 & 7

The Candidates of 1994
pages 8 & 9

Nation Building and the Church
A Conversation with His Holiness Karekin II
page 11

Going for the Gold
Vazken Movsestan
page 13

Evangelization in the Former Soviet Union
Vatican Document
page 15

Letters
page 19

window

PUBLISHER
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GROUP

EDITORS
FR VAZKEN MOVSESIAN
DN HRATCH TCHILINGIRIAN

ART DIRECTOR
YN SUSAN MOVSESIAN

DISTRIBUTIONS
ALICE ATAMIAN

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ROUPEN NAHABEDIAN

PHOTOGRAPHY
BRUCE BURR

LIAISON
DN MICHAEL FINDIKYAN
ABRAHAM SLDRIAN

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSIST.
SOSI TOPJIAN

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MEMORIAM

His Holiness Vazken I

Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians

1908-1994

HIS HOLINESS VAZKEN I was born Levon Karapet Baljian on September 20, 1908. He was the only son of Abraham, a humble shoemaker, and Siranoush, a young teacher, of Rodosto (Turkey). In 1898, escaping the oppression of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire – his parents emigrated to Bucharest, Romania, where Levon was born. In 1928, Levon graduated high school and became a teacher in the Armenian School of Bucharest. While teaching, he continued his higher education at the University of Bucharest, graduating in 1936 with a degree in pedagogy and psychology.

Levon Baljian was a very active member of the Armenian community of Romania. In 1937, he established and edited a monthly magazine, *Herg* [Harvest]. In 1943, after the death of the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Romania, the community was left without a religious leader and a vacuum was created in the life of the church in Romania. Levon Baljian, as a young man, responded to God's call and under the most difficult conditions (the Nazi period), traveled to Greece to receive ordination to the holy rank of priesthood in the Armenian Church. He was renamed Vazken.

Upon his ordination in Athens, he returned to Romania and took charge of the affairs of the church and community. In 1948, he was elected Primate of Romania, and thereupon was consecrated a Bishop by his predecessor, His Holiness Kevork VI. Subsequently, he was elected Primate of the Diocese of Bulgaria as well.

In 1955, following the death of Catholicos Kevork VI, the National Ecclesiastical Assembly of the Armenian Church, convened in Etchmiadzin and elected young Bishop Vazken Baljian as the Catholicos of All Armenians.

The Pontificate of Vazken I extended over four decades. He is among the few catholicos in the Armenian Church who had a long and illustrious tenure and who provided tremendous leadership to the Armenian nation. He passed away on August 17, 1994 in Yerevan, Armenia.

The thirty-nine year tenure of His Holiness Vazken I coincided with one of the most difficult chapters of Armenian history. All throughout the Communist period, His Holiness preserved the integrity of the Armenian Church, and lead the mission of the Armenian Church with courage, dedication and wisdom. The passing of His Holiness Vazken I obviates the end of an era in the Armenian Church – an era marked by the death of Communism on the one hand, and the resurrection of Independent Armenian on the other.

May The Lord accept the soul of Vazken I in His eternal Kingdom and May he give the comfort of the Holy Spirit to the entire Armenian Nation.



PONTIFICAL ELECTION AND THE NATIONAL ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLY

Compiled by
Deacon Michael Findikyan

The election of the Catholicos of All Armenians is a momentous event in the life of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Unlike other churches, the Armenian supreme patriarch is elected by the clergy and the people in a "National-Ecclesiastical Assembly" [Ազգային-Եկեղեցական ժողով] which is convened in Etchmiadzin, Armenia, especially for that purpose.

In the absence of clear procedures and bylaws, we present the following description of the election process based on the official documentation of the last pontifical election in 1955. The minutes of the national-ecclesiastical assembly of that year, as well as other articles describing the election of His Holiness Vazken I are published in *Etchmiadzin*, the official journal of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin.

One of the more significant documents published in the 1955 volume of the Mother See's journal is the "Procedure for Convening the National-Ecclesiastical Assembly," which was prepared by the 1945 National-Ecclesiastical Assembly and ratified by Kevork VI, who was elected Catholicos of All Armenians at that assembly. This document defines the nature and purpose of the Assembly and provides valuable information on the procedure for electing the Catholicos. Beyond a few specific regulations, the Assembly has broad powers to decide specific issues relating to the election procedure.

The National-Ecclesiastical Assembly

The National-Ecclesiastical Assembly is the supreme legislative body of the Holy Apostolic Church of Armenia. It is convoked in Etchmiadzin,

when necessary, by the Catholicos of all Armenians, who is its president. In the event that the Catholicos is unable to preside, the assembly is presided over by the Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia or the Patriarch of Jerusalem or the Patriarch of Constantinople. In the absence of these three hierarchs, the Catholicos of All Armenians will appoint a *locum tenens* for that express purpose.

Principle responsibilities of the Assembly:

- Election of the Catholicos of All Armenians.
- Election of the members of the Supreme Ecclesiastical Council.
- Establishment of the national-ecclesiastical constitution.
- Examination and resolution of ecclesiastical and canonical issues.
- Stewardship of the church's financial affairs.

Participants of the Assembly

- The members of the Supreme Ecclesiastical Council
- The Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia together with the bishops of the Cilician See
- The Patriarchs of Jerusalem and Constantinople
- All diocesan primates of the Armenian Church
- All bishops of the Armenian Church
- One representative each of the following monastic brotherhoods: Holy Etchmiadzin, the Great House of Cilicia, Jerusalem and the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

(continued from page 10)

Pontifical Stats

Apostolic Successton in the Armenian Church is traced to the Apostles Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew, the "First Enlighteners" of Armenia. There have been 140 chiefbishops of the Church since the Apostles and 130 Catholicoi since St. Gregory the "Second Illuminator" of Armenia (301). St. Gregory is regarded as the first Catholicos of Armenians. He received episcopal consecration by Patriarch Leontius, Archbishop of Caesara in Cappadocia in 302 A.D. He founded the Pontifical Seat in the city of Vagharshapat, known today as Etchmiadzin.

The Mother See has moved 10 ten times since it was first established. The locations apart from Etchmiadzin were D'win, Argtna, Tsaravank/Aghtamar, Ani, Tav'blour, Tzavrandos, Tzovk/T'ghiah, Hromglay and Sis.

Catholicos at the age of 20

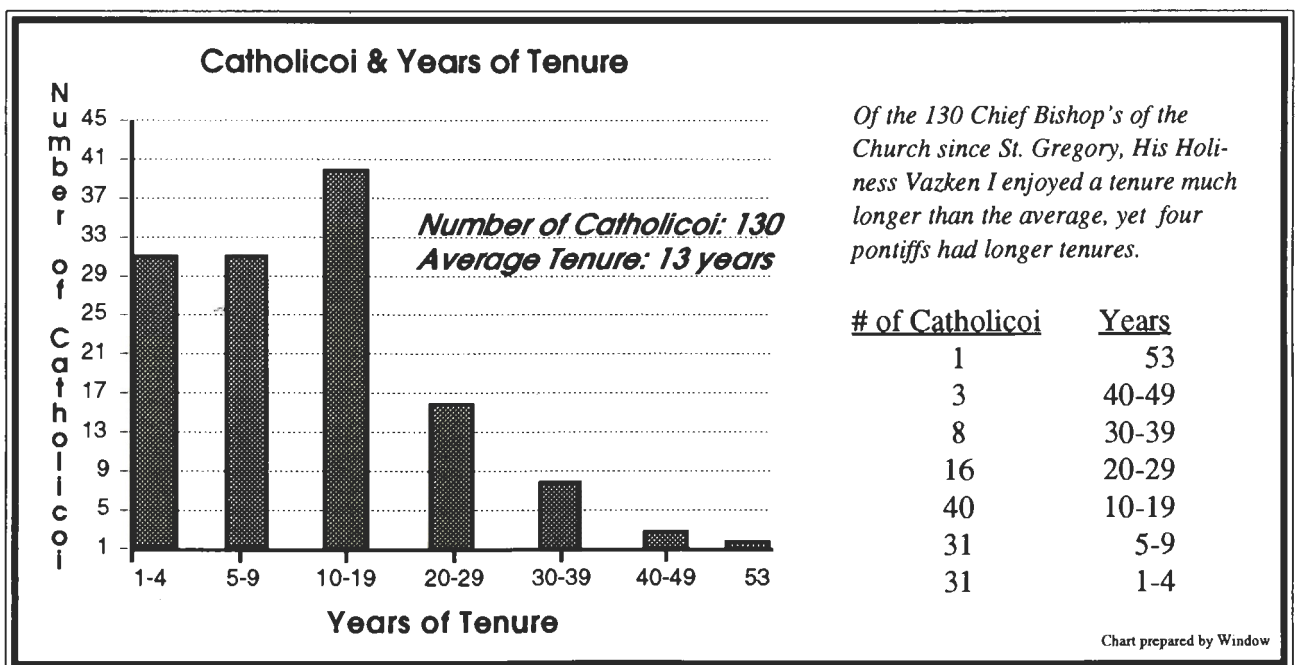
The youngest Catholicos in the history of the Armenian Church is Gregory III Bahlavuni, whose tenure lasted over half a century (1113-1156). According to historian, Abp. Ormanian, Catholicos Gregory V kayaser (1066-1105) had left a will where he proposed his nephew Basil to succeed him and upon Basil's death his grand nephew Gregory as Catholicos.

Gregory was 20 years old when he was consecrated Catholicos. He was already a bishop at the time of his predecessor's death. Despite his young age, Gregory III became one of the most prominent catholicoi in the Armenian Church, both in terms of administrating the affairs of the Church and in terms of enriching

the religious and liturgical tradition of the Armenian Church.

Seven Catholicoi from one family

The Bahlavuni clan has given seven catholicoi who's combined tenure extends over 137 years. Gregory Bahlavuni was succeeded by his brother Nersess Shnorhali, the Gracious, (1166-1173). St. Nersess was succeeded by his brother's eldest son, Gregory IV D'gha (1173-1193). He was succeeded by his nephew, Gregory V Karavej who was assassinated after a tenure of less than one year. Gregory D'gha's cousin, Gregory VI Apirat became Catholicos from 1194-1203, thus ending the Bahlavuni family domination of the Patriarchal See.



The Holy See of the Catholicosate of All Armenians

1955

Election of Vazken I

The last the National Ecclesiastical Assembly to elect a Catholicos of All Armenians convened in 1955. The election itself was conducted much like that of any civic or church organization. On the day of the election, the Assembly convened in the Seminary auditorium as usual. From there, the delegates were led in procession to the Cathedral. At the entrance to the Cathedral a previously elected credentials committee comprised of clergy and lay members individually checked the credentials of each delegate before allowing them to enter the Cathedral for the election. When all the delegates had entered, the doors were closed; no one except official delegates and official photographers were permitted into the Cathedral.

After the opening of this session, the names of each of the bishops were read. Three persons were elected to monitor the voting procedure and count the ballots. Official ballots had been prepared and were distributed to the delegates. As their names were called, the delegates approached the ballot box one by one and deposited their ballots. After all the delegates had voted, the senior bishop of the committee monitoring the elections read each ballot out loud as the others tabulated the results. Out of 137 possible votes Bishop Vazken Baljian, Primate of Romania and Bulgaria received 125 and was heralded the new Catholicos of All Armenians.

All of the bishops congratulated the new Catholicos, who then addressed the Assembly and offered his first benediction as Catholicos and closed that session of the Assembly. Subsequent sessions of the Assembly were presided over by the new Catholicos of All Armenians.



Source: Minutes of the 1955 Election, Etchmiadzin Journal (Sep-Oct. 1955)

1955 DELEGATE TOTAL : 140

Delegates from Armenia: 52

Diocese of Shirak: 19
Diocese of Ararat: 30
Etchmiadzin: 3

Delegates from the Soviet Republics: 56

Diocese of Nor Nakhichevan & Rostov: 18
Diocese of Azerbaijan & Turkestan: 20
Diocese of Georgia: 18

Diaspora Delegates: 32

California (Western): 4
France: 5
Bulgaria: 3
United States (Eastern): 9
Jerusalem: 2
Egypt: 3
England: 2
Romania: 2
Cilician Catholicosate: 2

1955 ASSEMBLY EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Presidents

- 1- Archbishop Mampré Siroonian (Primate of Egypt)
- 2- Archbishop Mampré Kalfayan (Primate of Eastern Diocese)
- 3- Bishop Vazken Baljian (Primate of Bulgaria & Romania)

Chairmen

- 1- Avedik Isahakian (Poet)
- 2- Mardiros Saryan (Artist)
- 3- Hrant Nasibian (Egypt)
- 4- Sarkis Kurkjian (London)

Secretaries

- 1- Very Rev. Shnork Kalustian (Primate of California)
- 2- Haig Arakelian (Chancellor of the Mother See)
- 3- Sempad Devletian (Diocese of Georgia)

Clerks

- 1- Very Rev. Serovpé Manoogian (Pontifical Legate to Europe)
- 2- Prof. A.G. Abrahamian
- 3- Prof. A. Gharbian

Parliamentarians

- 1- Very Rev. Haigazoun Abrahamian (Jerusalem Patriarchate)
- 2- Humayag Setkarian (chief financial officer of Mother See)
- 3- Haig Arakelian (Chancellor of the Mother See)

The See of the Great House of Cilicia

1977 DELEGATE TOTAL: 180*

Diocesan prelates: 9
 Brotherhood of the Cilician Catholicosate: 22
 Diocese of Lebanon: 41
 Diocese of Syria: 24
 Diocese of Cyprus: 3
 Diocese of United States (Eastern & Canada): 20
 Diocese of United States (Western): 11
 Diocese of Tabriz, Iran: 7
 Diocese of Tehran, Iran: 28
 Diocese of New Julfa, Iran: 5
 Diocese of Greece: 3
 Holy See of Etchmiadzin: 2
 [Assembly Officers: 5]

*clergy: 1/3
 *layity: 2/3

In the history of the Cilician See, there have been three other instances when a Catholicos-Coadjutor has been elected to serve with the Catholicos:

Bedros Gargaretzi (1601)
 Bedros Periatzi (1708)
 Papken Gulesserian (1931)

Clergy and lay members work together to administer the Armenian Church. This tradition dates back to the earliest period of Armenian Church history. Throughout history the clergy have never been considered absolute masters. Except for sacramental acts (which require ordination), nothing is done in ecclesiastical administration without the cooperation of the lay element.

"The Church of Armenia has unity in her. Because in whatever part of the world Armenians are found, whether clergy or laity, they have an inward spiritual unity between themselves having the same faith, rites, canons, traditions, in accordance with those of the Apostolic See, which is the center of the unity of the national church."

—Archbishop Khoren Narbey (1841–1892)

1977

Election of Karekin II

His Holiness Khoren I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, due to his failing health, called for the election of a Catholicos-Coadjutor, in an Encyclical dated January 26, 1977. On May 22, 1977, the Electoral Assembly of the Cilician See convened in the Cathedral of the Catholicosate under the presidency of His Holiness Khoren I.

Levon Boyajian, the senior delegate and Mourad Topalian, the junior delegate, were appointed temporary executives. Following the inspection of credentials, a formal executive body was elected, with Khatchig Babigian, Esq., Chairman and Yervant Pamboukian, Vice Chairman.

At the opening of the Assembly, His Holiness Khoren I said that it was with great regret, due to his health, that he would be unable to continue the Pontifical responsibilities of his See. "I therefore invite, the Electoral Assembly, to elect a Catholicos-Coadjutor to take charge of all administrative responsibilities and to eventually succeed me."

According to the accepted tradition of the Cilician See, the Catholicos is elected by an Assembly composed of one-third clergymen and two-thirds laymen. The number of seats is determined according to the numerical size of the dioceses under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate.

One hundred eighty (180) delegates participated in the election, among which were two delegates representing the Holy See of Etchmiadzin.

On the second ballot Archbishop Karekin Sarkissian, having received 151 votes was proclaimed Catholicos-Coadjutor. His Holiness Khoren I placed his pontifical ring on Archbishop Sarkissian's finger and addressed him with the title, *Vehapar* ("Your Holiness").

At the conclusion of the procedure, the two Catholicos walked out of the cathedral into the courtyard to the thunderous applause and approval of the overflow crowd.

Source: Iris Papazian, *Faith, Hope, Love: The Election and Consecration of His Holiness Karekin II*, (New Jersey, Michael Barour Publications).

The Candidates of 1994

*Last Name	First	Rank	Age	DOB	p/h	Ordnd.	Epsc.	Cons. b/h	Currently	Location
Ajemian	Shahe	Archbishop	68	1926	18	1947	29	1965	E Bishop	Jerusalem
Arabajian	Anania	Bishop	43	1951	10	1973	11	1983	E Bishop	Armenia
Arisdagesian	Asoghig	Bishop	35	1959	5	1983	6	1988	E Bishop	Armenia
Assadourian	Avak	Archbishop	52	1942	5	1977	12	1982	E Primate	Iraq
Aykazian	Viken	Bishop	44	1950	21	1971	2	1992	J Primate	Switzerland
Baghdasian	Housig	Bishop	60	1934	33	1959	2	1992	J Bishop	Jerusalem
Baliozian	Aghan	Archbishop	46	1948	14	1968	12	1982	J Primate	Australia
Barsamian	Khajag	Archbishop	43	1951	19	1971	4	1990	J Primate	New York
Bekjian	Karekin	Bishop	52	1942	27	1965	2	1992	C Primate	Germany
Berberian	Arsen	Archbishop	57	1937	11	1962	21	1973	E Primate	Armenia
Bogharian	Norair	Archbishop	90	1904	23	1928	43	1951	J Bishop	Jerusalem
Bozabalian	Nerses	Archbishop	57	1937	18	1955	21	1973	E Chancellor	Armenia
Chinchinian	Zaven	Archbishop	65	1929	14	1951	29	1965	E Primate	Egypt
Derderian	Hovnan	Archbishop	37	1957	10	1980	4	1990	E Primate	Canada
Geureghian	Diran	Archbishop	46	1948	16	1972	6	1988	E Primate	Moscow
Gharibian	Datev	Archbishop	57	1937	21	1963	10	1984	J Primate	Brazil
Gharibian	Sevan	Bishop	54	1940	20	1968	6	1988	J Bishop	Jerusalem
Gizirian	Yeghishe	Archbishop	68	1926	35	1947	12	1982	E Primate	England
Hovepian	Vatche	Archbishop	64	1930	16	1951	27	1967	E Primate	California
Jerejian	Knel	Archbishop	79	1915	21	1937	36	1958	E Primate	Damascus
Jerejian	Daron	Bishop	57	1937	29	1963	2	1992	E Bishop	France
Kalpakian	Vosgan	Archbishop	53	1941	17	1965	12	1982	E Primate	Greece
Kapikian	Geuregh	Bishop	73	1921	25	1951	18	1976	J Bishop	Jerusalem
Kazanjian	Karekin	Archbishop	67	1927	16	1950	28	1966	C Patriarch	Turkey
Kelenjian	Hagop	Archbishop	39	1955	19	1971	4	1990	E Primate	Uruguay
Khachadourian	Vagharsh	Bishop	53	1941	27	1961	6	1988	J Bishop	Jerusalem
Krikorian	Mesrob	Archbishop	62	1932	33	1953	8	1986	E Primate	Austria
Manoogian	Torkom	Archbishop	75	1919	23	1939	32	1962	J Patriarch	Jerusalem
Mardigian	Dirayr	Archbishop	64	1930	6	1956	32	1962	E Primate	Romania
Mardirossian	Barkev	Bishop	40	1954	3	1985	6	1988	E Primate	Karabakh
Mouradian	Kisag	Archbishop	43	1951	19	1971	4	1990	J Primate	Argentina
Mutafyan	Mesrob	Archbishop	38	1956	7	1979	8	1986	C Bishop	Turkey
Nakashian	Keud	Archbishop	61	1933	18	1955	21	1973	E Primate	Paris
Nersissian	Karekin	Archbishop	43	1951	11	1972	11	1983	E Primate	Armenia
Pouniatian	Krikoris	Archbishop	48	1946	14	1969	11	1983	E Primate	Armenia
Sahagian	Tavit	Archbishop	59	1935	19	1957	18	1976	J G.Sacristan	Jerusalem
Santourian	Housig	Archbishop	74	1920	6	1956	32	1962	E G.Sacristan	Armenia
Seraydarian	Kevork	Archbishop	56	1938	9	1964	21	1973	E Primate	Georgia
Shakarian	Nareg	Bishop	62	1932	11	1962	21	1973	E Bishop	France
Shirvanian	Aris	Bishop	60	1934	17	1957	20	1974	E Bishop	San Francisco
Svajian	Shahan	Archbishop	68	1926	12	1954	28	1966	C Bishop	Turkey
Topalian	Vahan	Bishop	53	1941	25	1963	6	1988	J Bishop	Jerusalem
Varjabedian	Papken	Bishop	76	1918	16	1941	37	1957	E Legate	Washington,DC
Vartanian	Hagop	Archbishop	76	1918	26	1939	29	1965	J (Retired)	France
Zakarian	Norvan	Bishop	54	1940	14	1968	12	1982	E Bishop	France

*LEGEND

Listing is in alphabetical order
 DOB—Date of Birth
 p/h—years served as a priest

Ordnd.— Date of Ordination
 Episc.— Years served as bishop
 Cons.— Year of Consecration as bishop

b/h— Brotherhood

E: Etchmiadzin
 J: Jerusalem
 C: Constantinople

Researched and compiled by WINDOW staff

About the Candidates...

Total Number of Candidates (bishops): 45
 Number of Candidates consecrated by Vazken I: 44
 Combined years of service to the Church by the Candidates: 1,501
 Averagenumber of years of serviceto the Church: 34
 Age of oldest candidate: 90
 Age of youngest candidate: 35
 Average age of candidates: 57
 Average number of years served as priest (before consecration as bishop): 17
 Average number of years served as bishop: 16
 Bishops of the Brotherhood of Etchmiadzin (only): 27
 Bishops of the Brotherhood of Jerusalem: 14
 Bishops of the Brotherhood of Constantinople: 4
 Number serving as Diocesan Primate: 23
 Number serving in the Diaspora: 36

BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood is comprised of celibate priests (and bishops) who are morally and jurisdictionally tied to one of the monestaries or Holy Sees. Presently, the Armenian Church has four brotherhoods: Etchmiadzin, Antelias, Jerusalem and Constantinople.

COLLEGE OF BISHOPS

The *College of Bishops* (Synod) is the successor to the Convocation of the Apostles. In the Roman Church, the term *college* is not understood in a strictly juridical sense, but analogically, i.e., *college* is not a "group of equals who entrust their power to their president," but a stable group whose structure and authority are to be deduced from revelation. It was by Christ's design that the college came to be (apostles).

CATHOLICOS/POPE

The *Catholicos* is Supreme Patriarch and chief bishop of the Church. The *Pope* is supreme among pontiffs (bishops). The relationship between the Roman Pontiff and the bishops is like that of Peter among the Apostles and not like that of Christ to the Apostles.

ELECTION (continued from page 4)

- Each diocese is further represented by one elected delegate for every 25,000 Armenians. There should be a fair distribution of delegates from the various geographical regions of one diocese. Delegates must be at least 30 years of age.
- Communities of at least 5000 persons may elect one delegate. Where appropriate smaller communities should join together to elect a delegate.

Election of delegates to the National-Ecclesiastical Assembly is to be conducted according to local diocesan constitutions, canons, or other customary procedures.

The Election of the Catholicos

Elections for a new Catholicos are held no earlier than six months from the date of his passing. At that time, the National-Ecclesiastical Assembly is called by the *locum tenens* of the Catholicos of All Armenians and the Supreme Ecclesiastical Council. The National-Ecclesiastical Assembly convenes in Etchmiadzin and the actual election is held in the Cathedral.

The Candidates

Every bishop of the Armenian Church is eligible to be elected Catholicos of All Armenians by the Assembly. (In 1955 the issue was raised whether a bishop must be present at the Assembly to be eligible. It was decided that all bishops were eligible for election whether present at the Assembly or not. The delegates felt that this was in keeping with "the ancient tradition of the Armenian Apostolic Church.")

The Agenda of the Assembly

Aside from the election of the Catholicos, the assembly may discuss other issues facing the Church as necessary. (At the assembly of 1955 several issues were addressed including the financial situation of the Holy See. These sessions were held in the auditorium of the Seminary building on the grounds of the monastery.)

FOR FURTHER READING:

Etchmiadzin Journal, Jan 1944, p. 13; Oct-Dec. 1944, p. 1-6; June-July 1945; Aug.-Oct. 1945, pp. 17-18; Nov.-Dec. 1945, pp. 38-39; Dec. 1955 pp.9-15; Oct-Nov. 1955 pp. 9, 14-24, 50-67, 68-77.

Requirements for the office of Catholicos

According to the rubric found in the Service of Consecration of a Catholicos, the candidate for the office of Catholicos should have a virtuous, holy and spotless life, with a record of good deeds. He should further be learned and full of wisdom, capable of leading the people of God. He must profess the orthodox faith and uphold the Holy Tradition of the Church, "because he is called to the Pontifical throne of Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew and the throne of the Confessor of Christ, St. Gregory the Illuminator, so that he may be worthy to receive the Grace and Power from the Almighty Siver of All Goodness."

NATION BUILDING AND THE CHURCH

Reflections on the Mission of the Armenian Church Today

A Conversation with
His Holiness Karekin II
Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia

by Hratch Tchilingirian

Q. As Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, how do you see the mission of the Armenian Church today?

KAREKIN II: I would like to answer this question in two parts:

First, the general mission of the Armenian Church – throughout the centuries – has been and is the same: making faith in Christ alive and effective in the life of the Armenian nation. This was the mission of the Armenian Church yesterday, is today, and will be tomorrow, in the future.

Second, based on the conditions of contemporary times, the broad mission of the Armenian Church should have a new direction. With the regeneration of our homeland – after seventy years of dictatorship – a new era has opened before us, through the fruition of the self-independence of the Armenian nation. As such, the role of the church in the life of our nation acquired a new significance and importance.

In this respect, I am convinced that today the Armenian Church in Armenia should have a *new apostolate* – an evangelistic role in the life of our people. Our people is in need of Christianization. The population is Christian, nominally, through its history, heritage, tradition, but we need to explicate Christian faith in such a way – in contemporary life of our people – that they may see the values that are vital to the moral health and happiness of a person and of a nation.

Q. How do you understand this new apostolate?

KAREKIN II: I use the term *apostolate* in the same sense as it was understood and practiced in the early centuries of Christianity, that is, activate evangelistic ministry which will penetrate into the people's consciousness and lifestyle in their application of the Christian faith. We should not feel sufficed by just preaching

general Christian truths, in a theoretical or abstract way. No. But we should rather preach what Jesus says in relation to the diverse aspects of human life. What does the Gospel say about life and its dynamics. Christian faith should be connected to life. It should not be just theoretical formulations about God or the Trinity or other truths – by which people are left to think that these have no relevancy to their everyday life. For example, in Armenia, in order for our people to rebuild their country, they need work, they need to take personal initiatives and not wait for foreign or outside aid. There is a *nation building* process. When the Asian and African countries came out of colonialism and became independent nations, starting with India, the churches in these countries developed a *theology of nation building* – how to build a nation. For instance, which Christian truths contribute to the well being of a nation? Today, we should interpret the Biblical say-

ing, "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread..." [Genesis 3:19] in such a way that the soil of Armenia – the natural resources of Armenia – would become the field of work for our people. You are well aware that during the Soviet era – under the domination of the Soviet regime – people felt used and cheated by a force that was above its will and control, which resulted in a work ethic that was void of honesty and persistence.

Let us take the example of the German nation. After WWII, Germany overcame the destruction of the war and became a economically powerful nation in the world – by work force. In those days, I remember the great efforts of the German churches to make Christian faith an active and practical aspect of their peoples lives, rather than just a pietistic expression or an abstract understanding of salvation of souls. There are many other aspects in the moral sphere of our national life which need to be reformed through our Christian faith, as well as the experience of faith that our forefathers bequeathed us.

Q. How about the Armenian Church in the Diaspora?

KAREKIN II: As far as the Diaspora is concerned, I believe that the role of our church today should primarily be the transmission of our Christian faith through the revitalization of our national tradition and not just by formalistic and mere preservation of that tradition. In most countries – whether in Europe or the United States – our people live in Christian societies. The

Roman Catholics or the Protestants preach the same Gospel, however, where is the specificity of the Armenian Church's mission? I believe that the specificity of the Armenian Church is in her unique Armenian coloration of Christian faith which our forefathers transmitted it to us throughout the centuries. For example, let us take the theology of the Cross. In the western societies – whether in Roman Catholic or Evangelical circles – the Cross is the abstraction of suffering. You rarely see the word "crucifixion"

was in Germany to deliver a sermon and there I made the distinction between the Cross and Crucifixion. I said, we are here in this Christian world to bear witness to the fact that the cross is not an ornament to wear or a reminder of the crucifixion of Christ, but it is participation in the act of crucifixion. That is to say, sharing the suffering of others, and by sharing that suffering, we manifest our love in a supreme way. Therefore, we need to transmit those traditions and perceptions that we have inherited from our

forebearers. Our fathers have given a certain Armenian color to Christian faith, which springs out from Armenian experience in history and time. Second in this respect, we need to be able to explain to our people the fact that *n a t i o n h o o d* (Azkootyune) is not opposed to religion. It is *nationalism* that repudiates Christian faith – nationalism that is exclusivist, i.e., that which does not

*We need to be able to explain to our people the fact that **nationalism** is not opposed to religion. It is **nationalism** that repudiates Christian faith – nationalism that is exclusivist, i.e., that which does not recognize anything beyond itself, that which absolutizes itself.*

used in western literature. However, we need to teach our people that Christian faith is lived through sacrifice and not through complacency. Christianity is not a badge you put on your chest. Christianity is a part of your existence. Therefore, we need to tell our people that when the idea of sacrifice is lost in life, then – according to our Armenian understanding – we cannot justifiably live a Christian life.

Q. Your Holiness, could you further explain this "theology of the cross?"

KAREKIN II: Let me share with you an experience. One day, I

recognize anything beyond itself, that which absolutizes itself. Therefore, the national character of our church is a unique character and we should not ignore it. Just because we live in a pluralistic society, it does not mean that the national character of the church is unimportant. This will hurt our church.

Let me give you the example of other churches. I have lived and studied in England and I have seen how the Anglican Church is intermingled with the British nation. And this is not an obstacle to the preaching of the Gospel. In fact, recently, a new term has found popularity in the-
continued on p. 14

Going for the Gold

Fr. Vazken Movsesian

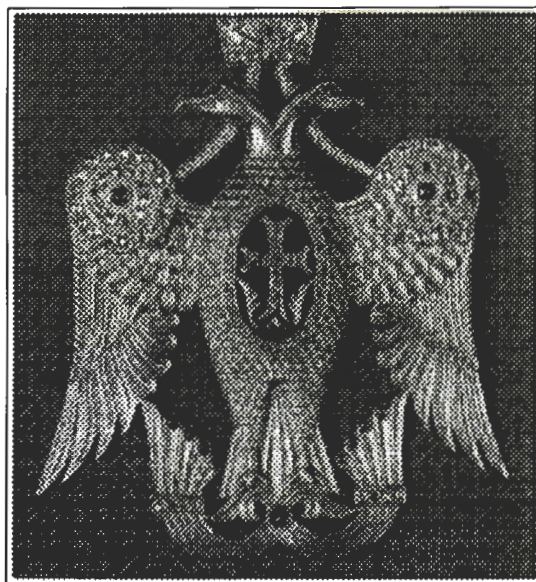
[Jesus said,] "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.... Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

—Acts 1:8-14

As we prepared this issue of *Window* we were naturally given cause to reflect on the direction of the Armenian Church in the wake of His Holiness' long and fruitful tenure.

Vazken I had a difficult challenge before him when he took office. Post World War II society, Stalinism, McCarthyism in the States, the Cold War were the outside factors, while schisms among the Armenian people had contributed to assassinations and internal fighting. Yet the 47 year old bishop from Romania took the helm of our ancient Church and became the 140th successor to the Apostolic throne. He fought the atheism of the Soviet state with caution and tact. The fact that Armenia enjoyed a religious life was a testament to His Holiness' diplomatic style.

Now the world scene has changed and so has the Church's effectiveness and role in the lives of the Armenian people. The "enemies" of the Church are not as obvious as a proclaimed atheist state. The challenge of reviving and awaking spirituality among the children of the Church can no longer be avoided. The spiritual mission of the Church —



including educating, marketing, PR, etc.—must be on the agenda of the new Catholicos. If we are to see the Armenian Church survive in the Apostolic tradition, it is essential that the next Catholicos not be concerned with the maintaining of the status quo. The discontented children of the Church will not tolerate stagnation (as is apparent by the current losses faced by the church).

As we compiled and researched information for this issue of *Window* it became apparent that the election process will have its share of difficulties. The rules for electing a Catholicos, as set forth in 1945 and used in the 1955 election do not reflect the current state of the Church. Today, already, dioceses are beginning to inflate their sphere of influence with exaggerated numbers of "communicants" thereby increasing their number of delegates. Defining rules and functions will be essential for a smooth running assembly, but the assembly must be more than rules and regulations. In 1955 the National Ecclesiastical Assembly was chaired by Armenian poet Avedik Isahakian and Armenian artist Mardiros Saryan. Is it possible they captured and interjected into the agenda the visions and dreams of a people? Is it through their provided inspiration that a man such as His Holiness Vazken I was elected as chief bishop? Maybe. Maybe not. But one thing is for certain: without vision and dreams we cannot lift our functionality beyond the temporal plane.

As we prepare to elect a new Catholicos, may we refocus our attention to our belief that the Church is ordained by God, established by Christ and moved by the Holy Spirit. In the end, we have to put ambition aside and allow the power of the Holy Spirit to guide the Church, if it is to remain a holy and living institution. Only in this sense will we be true and worthy inheritors of the Apostolic title.

continued from p. 12

ology, philosophy and sociology: the word *enculturation*. Whenever Christianity has been introduced into a country or has been permeated into the life of a nation, it has been influenced by the culture of that given country. But most important, in turn, it has influenced the culture of that nation. No nation, no collective entity lives without a cultural environment. In the United States, when we say American culture, we do not understand a monolithic culture, it is multi-faceted. The last time when I was in Los Angeles, the correspondent of *Los Angeles Times* asked me: "what do you think of America, do you believe that it is still a melting pot or a salad bowl?" I said, "I don't like neither of these expressions. For me, for my own understanding and experience of American life, American culture is a mosaic, in which the colors get their values in the harmony in which the artist puts them." Likewise for us Armenians in America, obviously we live in the American culture and we cannot consider that culture foreign to us. However, as Armenians, we can contribute to the American mosaic with our unique color – a color that has been formed and shaped through our centuries-old experience. On the other hand, if we identify hundred percent with those realities that are connected with various aspects and their consequence in life, then we lose our "saltiness," we lose our distinctive features.

That is why I believe that today the mission of our church – both in Armenia and the Diaspora – is in need of a new orientation, with a renewed energy and a clear vision. Without a clear vision, our activities become routine – without an impact on the people.

**This interview was conducted in Antelias, Lebanon, on June 22, 1994.
Translated from Armenian
by Hratch Tchilingirian.*

New Publication

THE Deaconess

IN THE ARMENIAN CHURCH

A Brief Survey

by

Fr. Abel Oghlukian

(translated from the Armenian by S. Peter Cowe)

The issue of bestowing the diaconate on women is not a novel phenomenon in the Armenian Church. Since at least the eleventh century this office developed steadily in several fairly clear stages. Its focus in lively contemporary debate is rather connected with discussion of the principle of legal equality between men and women in our social and societal contexts. If women have achieved striking advances in political, economic, educational and cultural fields, the question arises as to what their proper place is in church, what premises can be found in tradition for extending their scope for service, facilitating and properly evaluating their work for the church. These are the subjects the present study addresses.

It is hoped that readers will find in the proposals of this survey material for broad-minded, unbiased consideration to assist Armenian women with a calling in committed diaconal service to Christ as established in the Armenian Church.

— Fr. Abel Oghlukian

Fr. Abel Oghlukian, Ph.D., is currently the Vicar General of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Canada. He has been an assistant professor at the Institute of Oriental Studies, University of Vienna and is a lecturer in Dogmatic Theology at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary.

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DOCUMENTS

Since the independence of Armenia, the relationship of churches, particularly between the Vatican and Etchmiadzin, has been complicated by the so called "invasion of denomination and cults" into Armenia. For the benefit of Armenian clergy and lay interested individuals, we present here the official word and policy of the Vatican concerning Russia and the CIS, and hope that this will contribute to the ongoing debate concerning the issue. -EDITORS OF WINDOW

THE VATICAN

EVANGELIZATION & ECUMENISM
IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION**General Principles and Practical Norms for
Coordinating the Evangelizing Activity and
Ecumenical Commitment of the Catholic
Church in Russia and in the Other Coun-
tries of the C.I.S. by the
PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR RUSSIA**

In the course of June 1992, the Pontifical Commission for Russia issued to all concerned the document reprinted here, offering principles and norms which must guide the Catholic Church's pastoral activity in the territories of the former Soviet Union.

INTRODUCTION

The church has received from Christ the mission of bringing the Gospel of salvation to all peoples; as a messianic people, she has been "established by Christ as a communion of life, love and truth; by him too she has been taken up as the instrument of salvation for all, and sent forth to the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth (cf. Mt 5:13-16)" (*Lumen Gentium*, 9).

As the sacrament of the communion between God and men, the Church is a sign and leaven of the unity of humanity. She invites everyone to benefit from the abundance of God's gifts, which derive from Christ's redemptive sacrifice and from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, who renews the face of the earth. In carrying out the mission entrusted to her by Christ, the Catholic Church

encounters other communities which also have their point of reference in Christ, and in particular the Orthodox Churches, with whom she share a great part of the ecclesial heritage.

Those to whom the Gospel message is addressed in one and the same area do not all receive it in the same way: there are faithful who are members of the Catholic church, brothers and sisters from other Christian denominations and traditions, and traditions, and there are also those who although they have received that message have not made it their own but have become non-believers or atheists. The concern of the Catholic Church is directed to all, in accordance with their individual circumstances.

The Directives issued in this document concern the particular situations of the territories of the former Soviet Union and of Eastern Europe, and take into consideration the centuries-old presence of the Orthodox Church and the painful history of those peoples under the Communist régime. State norms concerning religious freedom now allow the Churches to carry out their mission with a renewed sense of responsibil-

ity, not only toward those who suffered persecution but also toward those who are seeking the truth and the means of salvation. It is not in competition but in a shared esteem for the unity willed by Christ that Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church are called upon to carry out their mission, and to do so in such a way that their witness, both in each one's own activities and in joint undertakings, will respond fully to the will of Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, respecting the conscience of every individual as well as the free distribution of the charisms of the Holy Spirit.

I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Reorganization of hierarchy

1. After 70 years of official atheism in the territories of the former Soviet Union, the Catholic communities of the Latin, Byzantine and Armenian rites are in particular need of a new evangelization.

This need has prompted a careful reorganization of the local hierarchy, with the appointment of bishops or apostolic administrators for the Latin communities of Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine (*a), the recognition and the *missio canonica* of bishops of the Ukrainian Byzantine-rite Catholic Church who had been clandestinely ordained, the erection of the Ordinariate for Armenian Catholics.

Right and duty to provide spiritual care

2. The bishops and the apostolic administrators thus have the *right and the duty to provide for the spiritual needs* of the Catholics entrusted to their pastoral care. They must concern themselves with ensuring the presence of a priest in the various communities, so that even the numerically smaller ones can at least occasionally have the assistance of a priest for the celebration of the Eucharist and other sacraments, and can receive the religious instruction they need.

Indeed, Saint Paul's remark in his letter to the Romans remains as valid as ever: "But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a

preacher? ...Faith come from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ" (Rom 10:14-17).

In order to carry out this work of evangelization, until such time as there is an adequately trained local clergy, the bishops and apostolic administrators should try to obtain necessary cooperation from episcopal conferences and Religious Orders in other countries. They should also pay due attention to the linguistic needs of their communities, so as to respect the rights, including the religious rights, of the ethnic minorities present in the countries of the C.I.S.

With regard to the Oriental rite communities, consideration can be given to the possibility of calling upon the assistance of bi-ritual priests whenever the priests of the local rite are not sufficient. Such priests should be well-instructed not only in the liturgy but also in the traditions and sensibilities of the Church they are sent to serve.

Proper apostolic structures

3. The *apostolic structures* which the bishops and apostolic administrators organize in the territories entrusted to them *are meant to respond to the needs of the Catholic communities present in those territories*. They are in no way intended to bring the Catholic Church into competition with the Russian Orthodox Church or with other Christian Churches present in the same territory. So-called proselytism, meaning the exercise of any sort of pressure on people's consciences, what ever form it may take and by whoever it may be practised, is completely different from the apostolate and it is certainly not the method used by the Pastors of the Catholic Church. In this regard the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council solemnly teaches that "the Church strictly forbids that anyone should be forced to accept the faith, or be induced by unworthy devices" (*Ad Gentes*, 13)

Unity in faithfulness

4. Apostolic activity in the territories of the C.I.S. and Eastern Europe requires of Catholics both fidelity to their own mission and a true concern for their Orthodox brothers and sisters, with respect for the

latter's faith, so that they can join with them in preparing for the ecclesial unity willed by Christ. In short, it is a question of bringing about that unity in the truth for which Christ prayed (cf. apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 54). This preparation for the unity which is so greatly desired will be carried out by developing fraternal trust between the bishops, priests and faithful of the two Churches.

Respect for religious freedom

5. In full respect for religious freedom, which is an inalienable right of every person, bishops and priests will take care to consider attentively the motives of those who ask to enter the Catholic Church. Such people must also be made aware of their obligations toward their own community of origin.

The Declaration on Religious Liberty (*Dignitatis Humanae*) issued by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council represents for the Catholic Church a fundamental document in this regard. Whenever the opportunity arises, it will be good to recall these principles, and to invite everyone to respect the religious choice of each believer.

Commitment to ecumenism

6. Every Catholic is well aware the "the Church is of its very nature missionary" (*Ad Gentes*, 2). But every Catholic is likewise aware that *the commitment to promote Christian unity* is part of that mission of proclaiming to the world the Good News of salvation in Christ, in the unity of the one Body, one baptism and one faith.

For this reason, the apostolic activity of the Catholic Church in the territories of the C.I.S. must now more than ever have an *ecumenical dimension*. It must in every way promote *dialogue between Christians* in the light of the principles affirmed by the Second Vatican Council and the related post-conciliar documents, and it must constitute for the institutions of the Catholic Church a *pastoral priority* in the territories of the C.I.S. In fact, the way to achieve Christian unity is certainly not proselytism but rather fraternal dialogue between the followers of Christ — a dialogue foster by prayer and developed in charity, with the aim of

reestablishing that full communion between the Byzantine Church and the Church of Rome which existed in the first millennium. This dialogue must take place as much on the local level as on the regional and universal levels, and its purpose is to promote mutual trust, in such a way that all Christians of different denominations can cooperate in certain apostolic, social and cultural undertakings, in order "the word of God may run on triumph" (2 Thess 3:1).

By acknowledging each other as members of Churches which preserve a great part of the common heritage — sacramental, liturgical, spiritual and theological — Catholics and Orthodox can bear common witness to Christ before a world which yearns for its own unity. The common heritage is such as to favor common activity, with respect for the traditions proper to each.

Recognizing Orthodox traditions

7. It is of course true that the activity of the Catholic Church in the territories of the C.I.S., which are so deeply imbued with the presence and the activity of the Orthodox and Armenian traditions, needs to be conducted in ways which differ substantially from those of the mission *ad gentes*.

In particular, Latin Catholics must not forget the special circumstances of the birth and growth of the Churches of the East, the liturgical and spiritual tradition of the Orientals, and their great love for the Mother of God, As the Holy Father said in his message *Magnum Baptismi Donum* of 14 February 1988 to Ukrainian Catholics on the occasion of the millennium of the baptism of the Kievan Rus', "the [Second Vatican] Council emphasized the great values of the liturgical, spiritual, disciplinary and theological traditions found in these Churches, as well as their tight and duty to live those traditions, which pertain to the full catholicity and apostolicity of the Church" (No 6; AAS 80 [1988] pp 993f.).

The *Latin-rite Catholic Church* in those lands must therefore hold in great esteem the Eastern traditions which are deeply rooted in them, and particularly those of the Orthodox Church. Having herself emerged from a long period of persecution, difficulties and conditionings of every kind,

the Orthodox church is now faced with the challenge of a new evangelization of traditionally Orthodox peoples who have been brought up in atheism.

Therefore, in fraternal dialogue with the local bishops of the Orthodox Church and with full respect for the citizens' religious confession, the Pastors of the Latin Church should try to *promote cooperation with the Orthodox Church* in all areas where this is possible, so that everyone may become clearly aware of the unity in charity which must reign between the two Churches, as a prelude to full ecclesial communion.

The *Oriental Churches in communion with the Apostolic See of Rome*, particularly the *Catholic Church of the Ukrainian Byzantine rite*, are reminded by the Second Vatican Council that they have "the special responsibility of furthering the unity of all Christians, especially Eastern Christians, according to the principles of the Synod's decree on ecumenism, firstly with prayers, then by the examples of their life, religious fidelity toward ancient eastern traditions, better mutual understanding, working together and a sensitive appreciation of realities and feelings" (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum* 24).

Catholic-Orthodox tensions

8. Unfortunately, the process of reorganizing the Catholic Church in the countries of the C.I.S. has been accompanied by *tensions with the Orthodox Church*.

This has occurred in Ukraine, particularly in the matter of the assignment of places of worship, following the recognition of freedom of conscience by evil authorities of the former USSR and the consequent recognition of the Byzantine rite Catholic Church, which had been suppressed in 1946 (*b).

One certainly cannot consider as "proselytism" the fact that entire communities, headed by their priests, which during the years of suppression and persecution of the "Greek-Catholic" Catholic were forced, in order to survive, to declare themselves Orthodox, have now, having regained their freedom, manifested their membership of the "Greek-Catholic" Church. It is a matter of free initiative on the part of

people who before 1946 had openly professed their Catholic faith.

Nevertheless the disputes over places of worship have been a painful incident along the path of ecumenism.

The Holy See, in agreement with the Moscow Patriarchate, had tried to prevent this, and in January 1990 had laid down guidelines which should have ensured a peaceful distribution of places of worship. Unfortunately, this step was not successful, due to local conditions inherited from the recent past. But responsibility for the failure of the work undertaken by the "Quadripartite Commission" cannot be imputed to one of the parties alone.

Today there still remain situations of uneasiness and tension, and the exhortation addressed by the Holy Father on 31 May 1991 to the Bishops of Europe remains valid: "All must be convinced that also in cases such as these disputes over relatively contingent and practical matters, dialogue still remains the best instrument for embarking upon a fraternal exchange which aims at settling the issue in a spirit of justice, charity and forgiveness" (Letter of Pope John Paul II to the Bishops of Europe on relations between Catholics and Orthodox in the new situation of Central and Eastern Europe, 2).

II. PRACTICAL DIRECTIVES

In the light of the principles stated above, and with a view to dispelling the apprehensions which have arisen in the Orthodox church and to reestablishing the mutual trust essential for an authentic ecumenical dialogue between the two Churches on the local and international levels, the following practical guidelines are issued:

Promoting cooperation

1. The bishops and apostolic administrators in the territories of their competence should make efforts to *promote* the sound ecumenical training of all pastoral agents (priests, men and women Religious and laity), so that everyone will develop an "ecumenical mentality" in conformity with the principles enunciated by the Second Vatican Council and in conformity with the directives

of the Holy See, with due regard for their own experiences (cf. *Code of Canons of the Eastern Church* [CCEO], can 904).

They should also promote in every way a good understanding with the local authorities of the Orthodox church, appreciating the difficulties which the latter is experiencing, in order to help create a climate of trust and peaceful cooperation. Even if reasons for opposition existed in the past, they should remind the faithful that only conversion of heart, with sincere forgiveness of those who have offended them, enables them to call themselves real followers of Christ.

In cases where such understanding might prove difficult, the bishops and apostolic administrators should make a point of informing the papal representative and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and, in cases falling within their competence, the other offices of the Roman Curia. In fact, the cooperation of these higher authorities can offer considerable help in resolving particular cases, which can be discussed with the Moscow Patriarchate or with the central authorities of other Churches.

No "parallel structures"

2. The bishops and apostolic administrators, who are responsible for and guarantee all pastoral initiatives aimed at promoting the religious life of the Catholic communities, must take care to ensure that no activity undertaken within their ecclesiastical circumscriptions can be easily misconstrued as a "parallel structure of evangelization" (*c). In this regard, canon 905 of the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* prescribes that both false ecumenism and "immoderate zeal" are to be avoided.

In conformity with the provisions of Church law (CIC, can 394 § 1; CCEO, can 203), priests, Religious and members of lay movements who wish to exercise an apostolate in the countries of the C.I.S., must act in close cooperation with and in dependence upon the local ordinaries, refraining from any undertaking that has not been previously approved by the same ordinaries and scrupulously respecting the directives which, obviously, within the limits of their own jurisdiction, the ordinaries have issued.

Should situations of grave difficulty occur, they are to inform the papal representative and the Apostolic See without delay.

Informing the Orthodox

3. Also for the sake of promoting a harmonious coexistence with the Orthodox Church and in order to give proof of the openness which should exist in all the pastoral initiatives of the Catholic Church, the bishops and apostolic administrators are to inform the ordinaries of the Orthodox Church of all important pastoral initiatives, particularly those regarding the erection of new parishes intended to meet the needs of local Catholic communities.

The Holy See is certain that the Orthodox bishops, who share the same concern for evangelization with regard to their own faithful, will be happy to promote the spiritual assistance of the Catholic communities existing in the territories of their diocese, also by restoring churches to the Oriental or Latin Catholic communities where the latter are still deprived of them.

However, should there be as a result of particular circumstances conflicting opinions regarding the appropriateness of a pastoral initiative which a bishop or apostolic administrator considers necessary for the spiritual good of a group of the Catholic faithful, even a small one, the bishop or apostolic administrator, having exhausted the means of dialogue mentioned above, may act in accordance with his conscience, inasmuch as he is the one responsible before God for the spiritual life of each and every individual member of the Catholic Church. For more serious questions, he will take care to consult the papal representative and the competent departments of the Roman Curia.

Cooperation in pastoral initiatives

4. Should circumstances permit, the pastors of the Catholic Church, out of missionary zeal and concern for the evangelization of millions of people who do not yet know Christ, should endeavor to cooperate with the Orthodox bishops in developing pastoral initiatives of the Orthodox church. They should be pleased if by their contribution they can help to train good Christians.

Social initiatives

5. It is appropriate to bring to the attention of the authorities of the Orthodox church the initiatives of a social character (educational, charitable, etc.) which institutions of the Catholic Church in Western countries may be invited to undertake as a contribution to the common good of the countries of the C.I.S. or of Eastern Europe.

When it is the State or a civic body that requests the cooperation of Religious Orders and of other agencies juridically dependent on the Catholic hierarchy, charity demands that the competent authorities of the Orthodox communities should be informed of this, even if it can be presumed that these same civic bodies have done so on their own.

Informing the Patriarchate

6. Should priests or bishops from other nations be invited by State agencies (cultural, scientific, etc.) to attend certain particular events, courtesy dictates that this should be brought to the attention of the Orthodox or Armenian Patriarchate. Similarly, when a senior Orthodox figure is invited to take part in an event promoted by the Catholic Church in the territories of the C.I.S., it will be appropriate to give prior notice to the Patriarchate.

Pastoral attention to ethnic minorities

7. The bishops and apostolic administrators should take care to ensure the celebration of the sacraments in the languages spoken by the ethnic minorities in the different countries. This does not necessarily mean that liturgical assemblies will be turned into factors of division of instruments of militant nationalism. At the same time, the bishops and apostolic administrators are to promote the integration of minorities present either permanently or temporarily into the dominant social context of the countries accepting them, without this involving the loss of their own identity. For all Catholics, in fact, diversity offers an opportunity to share the treasures of others.

Places of worship

8. The place of worship necessary for the liturgical and ecclesial life of the Christian communities must

respond to the latter's needs, which arise from the personal right to exercise — individually or in groups — the religious acts of one's own faith. These needs depend on local conditions: The importance of the community, material possibilities, pastoral care. Priority for the distribution of already existing places of worship depends on the proportion — numerical as well as social and historical — of the faithful living in a particular place. If is a matter of erecting a new building care must be taken to determine whether such a building is needed, before requesting the necessary agreement of the diocesan bishop (CIC, can 1215 §1; CCEO, can 870). It will sometimes be advisable to provide for the common use of the same place of worship, after an agreement has been reached between the Catholic and Orthodox communities or other Christian denominations; this agreement is to be submitted to the approval of the respective hierarchical authorities.

CONCLUSION

The preaching of the Gospel to all creation cannot ignore the great commandment of love, for Jesus says: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35). The means, ways and methods put forward here for the Catholic communities are meant to help them to respond with complete openness to this vocation and grace: to be witnesses to the unity willed by Christ.

All are called upon to renew the spirit of communion promoted by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, so that the fraternal relations which should exist between Christ's disciples can lead to full communion of faith and charity. In this there way there will be banished "all feeling of rivalry or strife" (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, 18), and once the wall dividing the Western from the Eastern Church is removed there will finally be single dwelling-place, solidly established upon the cornerstone, Christ Jesus, who will make them both one.

English text as issued by the Pontifical Commission for Russia. Title and additional paragraph subtitles by Catholic International. SOURCE: *Catholic International*, October 1992, Vol. 3, No. 18.

Letters

Dear Editors:

I enjoyed Fr. Vazken's "Ending Denial" editorial in the last *Window*. I agree with your overall assessment of the situation — there are a lot of empty churches, low memberships, decreasing donations and apathy. Meanwhile, too many of our leaders react by large spending on publicity and constructing or renovating buildings, which hide the problems. A few leaders appear to prefer the churches to be relatively empty, because this is easier to manage. Sadly, many church veterans strongly support the status quo while subtly telling their children and grandchildren not to be involved in the Armenian Church.

The editorial noted that the Church is struggling without a vision for the future. Interestingly, at the same time, some church leaders have very clear and ambitious visions for themselves and work actively, using church financial and human resources, to realize these personal goals. Of course, meanwhile, the Church as a whole suffers.

However, there is hope for the future if enough people make a realistic assessment of the situation, share goals and aspirations for the Armenian-American Christian community, and invite God to do His will among us.

Window is promoting this hope. I wish *Window* continued success in the fourth year, in providing an honest forum to stimulate our thinking.

—Dean V. Shahinian, Esq.
Mt. Vernon, VA

Dear Editors:

Thank you for the *Window* quarterly. Aside from the usual component of information, it more importantly presents a fresh view of the Armenian Church and the loud cry for a more Christ-centered Church.

My late husband, Martin, and I have continually prayed for the work toward that goal — the return of Christ to the hearts of our people and particularly our clergy. Only with a spiritual revival will our Church grow, unify, experience true Christian love and fellowship, and ultimately proclaim the Gospel of Salvation to all without negative labels.

I particularly concur with Fr. Vazken Movsesian's views in the last issue on the "Denial" that exists in our Church. We have tried to put a bandage upon our wounds instead of looking to the Great Physician, Jesus Christ.

There are many in my community who feel as I do and will be happy to hear that we do not stand alone; and that men and women around the country, such as you, share our mission. In fact, many are surprised that a publication such as *Window* is available.

May God continue to give you the boldness and courage to defend and proclaim the true mission of the Armenian Church.

—Violet Ketshian Cholaktan,
Troy, MI



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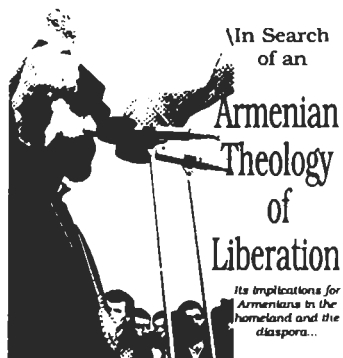
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PAST WINDOWS

Window Vol. I, No. 1 **PREMIER ISSUE**

The first issue of *Window* is an eight-page introduction that sets the tone and scope of this "new" publication. It consists of three articles written by the editors and a translation of Patriarch Torkom Kushagian's "Revival in the Armenian Church."



Window Vol. I, No. 2 **"ARMENIAN THEOLOGY OF LIBERATION"**

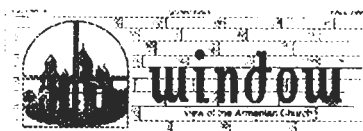
This issue provides a series of articles in search of an Armenian theology of Liberation, stimulating discussion and dialogue between Armenian church members and theologians. The issue provides a descriptive and interpretive study of the subject and underlines its application in the Armenian Church.

Window Vol. I, No. 3 **"1915—THE YEAR THE CHURCH DIED"**

This entire issue is dedicated to the martyred clergy of the Armenian Church during the Genocide of 1915. With this issue, *Window* turns the views of its readers back 75 years and provides a glimpse of the pre-Genocide Armenian Church. For the first time in the English language, the monumental work of Teotig—a scribe who tediously recorded the lives of the martyrdom of the Armenian clergy—is presented with statistical and analytical charts. Addressed in this issue are the issue of remembrance, the problem of canonization of the victims and the silence of Church leadership concerning religious treasures.

Window Vol. I, No. 4 **"IS THE COLLAR CHOKING THE PRIEST?"**

This issue discusses the role for the Armenian priest from the perspective of both the Armenian community and the Church. In doing so, it dispels some of the stereotypes and myths associated with the Armenian clergy. Issues such as reform, recruitment, and contemporary challenges to the church are discussed in a very sincere and open forum.



Window Vol. II, No. 1 **"CULTS IN ARMENIA"**

In an attempt to educate the Armenian community on the dangers of cults, this issue provides an extensive coverage of cults presently operating in Armenia. The deep psychological wounds caused by the 1988 earthquake have facilitated the infiltration of various cults into Armenia under false pretenses. This issue of *Window* poses a challenge to the Armenian community and the Church, by the fact that "the cults will do what we neglect! They will extend where we cannot reach! They will be heard where our voice is silent."

Window Vol. II, No. 2 **"INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF ARMENIAN CLERGY"**

The first ever International Conference of Armenian Clergy held in New York, June 17-21, 1991 is covered with exclusive interviews and analysis by the *Window* editors. An inside view of the conference is provided. Detailed information about the current situation in Armenia by the directors and leaders of the Center for the Propagation of Faith. Candid and alarming revelations regarding the religious awakening in Armenia and the Church's ability (or inability) to provide for the needs of the people. Must reading for anyone concerned with the current and future state of the Armenian Church in Armenia and the diaspora.

YOU MAY HAVE MISSED...

Window Vol. II, No. 3 **"ARE ALL BRANDS THE SAME?"**

This issue of Window explores the Armenian Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, providing a history of their development and place within the Armenian Community. A candid discussion of possible means of rapprochement is provided. Also, the place of the Armenian Church within the world Church community is explored with statements by the Orthodox Churches and reflections concerning the cost of unity. This issue is filled with facts and information. A map of religions is provided as a centerpiece to this important volume.



Window Vol. II, No. 4 **"TESTING THE MYTH AND BEYOND"**

The understanding of myths and their place in religious perception is the theme of this issue, especially as it is applied in the Armenian Church and community. The main article gives an excellent definition and explanation of what Myth is. Of particular interest is a discussion of Vahé Oshagan and the controversy surrounding a piece of his writing, entitled *Odzoom*. Also, two articles discuss services in the liturgical tradition of the Armenian Church, namely Blessing of Madagh and Chrismation.

Window Vol. III, No. 1 **"THE CHURCH IN ARMENIA"**

This issue presents a series of interviews conducted in Armenia, which give a general view of the state of the church and religion in the post-soviet Republic of Armenia. There are conversations with the Catholicos, representatives of Armenian political parties; Armenian "skinheads," and others who are closely involved with the church. The guest editorial is written by Bishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Armenian Church of Canada.

Window Vol. III, No. 2 **"HYPOCRISY"**

Hypocrisy is among those topics that are normally avoided in church life. However, in this issue, ordained and lay workers in the church candidly write about their experiences in the Armenian Church and share their thoughts about hypocrisy in the community. While the contributors discuss various aspects of church life, they provide practical suggestions and programs that could tackle some of the burning issues in the Armenian Church.

Window Vol. III, No. 3 & 4 **"DEATH: THE KEVORKIAN FACTOR"**

Death and Dying, Euthanasia and assisted suicide are among the main topics of this issue. The articles discuss the issues in the context of the controversy of assisted suicide that became a matter of public debate, especially through the actions of Dr. Jack Kevorkian, or "Doctor Death" as he became known by the American media.

Window Vol. IV, No. 1 **"THEOLOGY OF WAR: KARABAKH"**

The main focus of this issue is the religious revival in Nagorno-Karabakh, despite the war in the region. Two significant interviews – with the Primate of the Diocese of Karabakh and the Editor of Kantzasar Theological Journal – are the highlights of this issue.

See next page for ordering instructions.

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ACRAG

The Armenian Church Research and Analysis Group (ACRAG) was founded in 1989 by a group of clergy and laity of the Armenian Church. ACRAG attempts to feel the need for a professional and innovative approach to the matters facing the Armenian people in general and the Armenian Church in particular. With a firm commitment to the Traditions of the Church and sharing the vision of St. Gregory the Illuminator, ACRAG, through its *Window*, provides a forum for contemporary Church thought. The aims of ACRAG are: Through research and observations, highlight the role of the Armenian Church in the life of the Armenian people; To provide a forum for dialogue and discussion on matters concerning the Church today; To provide publications that would further contribute to the growth of the Armenian community in the Faith of their forefathers; To fill the gap between the National and Religious characteristics of the Armenian Community.

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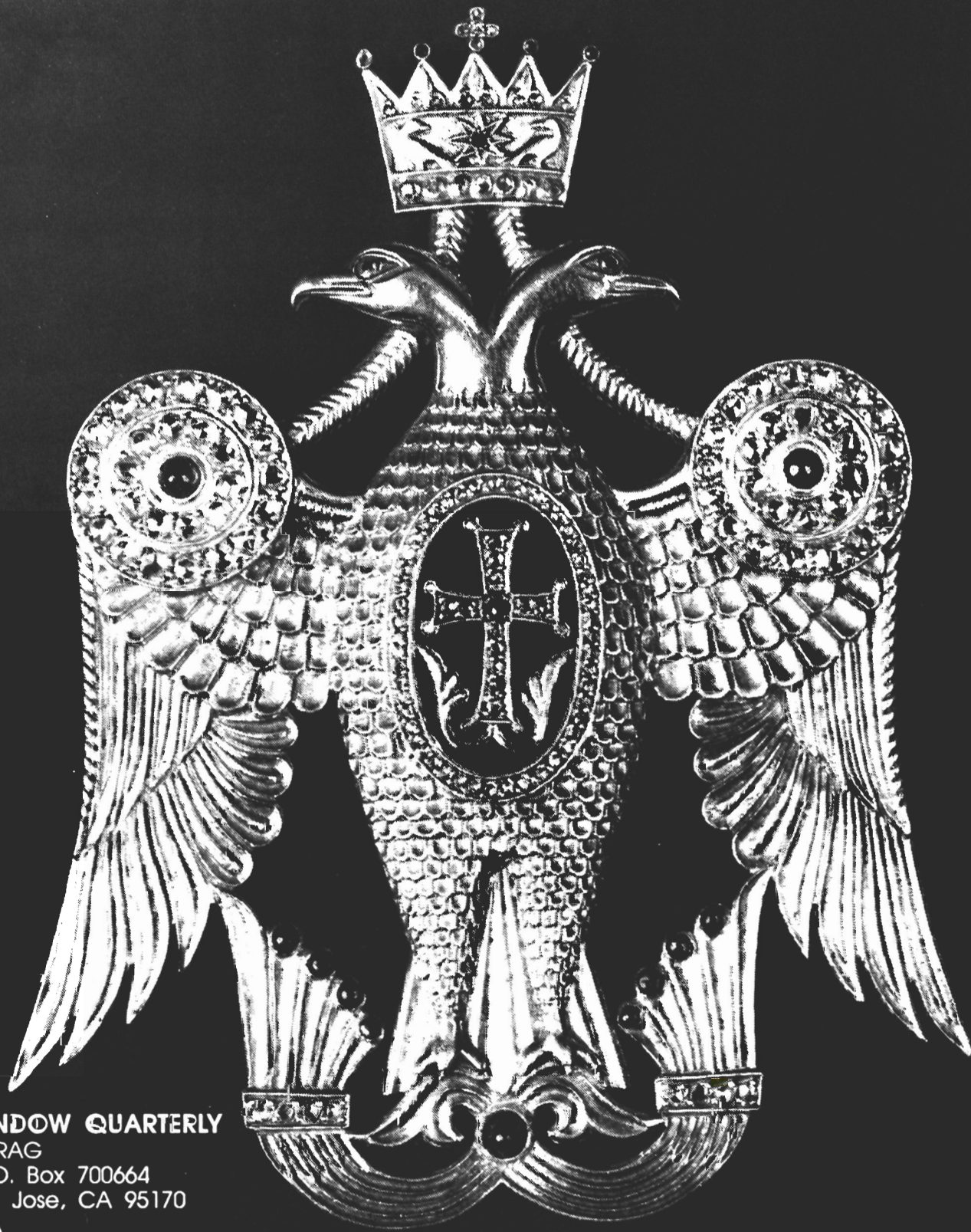
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The Armenian Church is making new roads on the Information Superhighway with the availability of the Window on the Internet. The Armenian Church Research and Analysis Group (ACRAG), publishers of Window have joined forces with the St. Andrew Information Network (SAIN) to make Window available through the SAIN archive server. Electronic subscriptions and downloading of past issues are now available from any site on or connected to the internet.

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ACRAG
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